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*Editorial Sub-committee*

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## OUR EMBLEM AND MOTTO

The WEALTH, both MATERIAL and CULTURAL, of the PAST, from which has arisen the WEALTH of the PRESENT and from which will grow the WEALTH of the FUTURE, is the subject-matter of ARCHAEOLOGY. THE WEALTH of the three Kālas is symbolised as—

Ś R Ī

Seated on Purity, the LOTUS, which rises from Plenty, the WATERS, and in the midst of the Hordes of Substances, the NIDHIS, the Treasures,—which, though symbolically nine, are usually mentioned, for clarity, as two, the ŚANKHA (Conch) and the PADMA (Lotus) NIDHIS,—shone upon by the Light given off by the Substances and lustrated by ELEPHANTS who are the Showerers of the WEALTH of the QUARTERS, SHE causes WEALTH coming to be attained to by EFFORT, without any giving by Her and without any coming by Her to give, She lacking feet that could give.

V I J Ñ Ā N A M B R A H M A

KNOWLEDGE IS TRUTH

The ancient injunction is: MEDITATE ON KNOWLEDGE obtained from SPECIAL ENQUIRY, FOR ITS TRUTH. The Archaeologist, in his specialised ways, seeks Knowledge for Truth.

The EMBLEM copies a sculptured piece of about the 9th century A.D., from Kāvērīpākkam, near Kāñchīpuram.

The MOTTO, which is taken from *Taittirīya Upanishad*, being in Samskr̥ta, is also rendered in the representative languages of the South and is written in the most ancient characters used for the several languages, as well.



# INTRODUCTION

BY

Rao Sahib N. Murugesu Mudaliar,

*President*

This is the seventh in the series of the Transactions published by the Archaeological Society of South India.

Writing on the Archaeological Progress in South India in *Oriental Art*, Vol. IX, No. 4, (1963) Mr. William Willets referred to the useful role of the Society to provide a forum for the periodical presentation of papers on archaeological studies by scholars and a meeting ground for foreign scholars visiting India and passing through Madras. Mr. Willets also referred to the tremendous intellectual ferment at work not only within the Society but also in several similar bodies. He also reviewed appreciatively the contents of the last Silver Jubilee year Transactions, 1962.

The Archaeological Society of South India founded in January 1935 is an autonomous body of scholars interested among other things, in the study and evolution of Indian culture and civilisation with special reference to South India. The Society was registered in 1964 under the Indian Societies Registration Act XXI of 1860. Many eminent scholars have been associated with the Society from its inception. This is the pre-eminent Society in South India and probably in the whole of India working for the coordination of the activities of individual Scholars, Archaeologists and other Departments, Universities, Societies, Museums and Research Institutions engaged in the study of Archaeology and bringing their findings to the knowledge of a wider circle to create an interest and incentive for further studies. The Society arranges for periodical lectures on subjects of interest by working archaeologists, University men and non-official scholars and scholars from abroad to gain the above object. It also publishes annually the Transactions of the Society which have gained international attention. The Society has also among its objects the sponsoring of research activities and studies and of seminars and conferences.

The present Transactions published here contain a large number of carefully selected papers embracing a wide range of subjects read by scholars, viz., Archaeology and Prehistory, Epigraphy, Iconography, Temple architecture, Traditional cults. Numismatics, Linguistics and Anthropology. This only indicates that there is no lack of subjects in Indian Archaeology and allied fields for scholars to conduct perennial research. Particularly after the Mohenjodaro and Harappan excavations, the recent excavations at Kalibhangan, Lothal, Nagarjunasagar and other places have widened the horizon calling for research in depth and particularly the need for actual inspection of sites and examination of the finds. Similarly recent interpretations of some of the very large collection of epigraphs have shed new light on some of the aspects of South Indian history.

The papers of Mr. S. R. Rao on the Kaverippumpattinam excavations (Pumpuhar) throw authentic light on the civilisation and culture of the Tamils in the 2nd Century A.D. The three remarkable structures excavated, viz., the wharf, water reservoir and Buddhist monastery are objects testifying to the high watermark of secular and cultural development of those times. The wharf whose date is fixed at 2nd Century A.D., is testified to by the Sangam literature. The Roman coins and rouletted pottery found also provide further material for research. It is to be hoped that further excavations would be made in this potential area for research.

The papers of Mr. T. N. Subrahmanyam and Mr. P. R. Srinivasan on the Dalavaipuram Copper plate of Parantaka Varanarayana Pandya and the Sivakasi Copper plate of Vira Pandya contain useful discussions on the reconstruction of Pandyan history. The details given in the Copper plate which have been read by these scholars will give scope for further fruitful research and speculation. The observation of Mr. Subrahmanyam that the date of Varaguna Pandya inferred from the Dalavaipuram plate, viz., 863 A.D. would settle the date of St. Manickavacaga is at best only an opinion as it is generally held that there might have been earlier Pandyas bearing the name Varaguna.

The lengthy paper on Murugan by Prof. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, the doyen of scholars in South Indian history, is one that deserves to be carefully read. He has discussed the question whether Murugan is a deity peculiar to the Tamils of



immemorial antiquity or He is like many other Gods the final result of syncretism between Aryan and Pre-Aryan beliefs and he concludes that his study is only an essay in history and archaeology and does not concern itself with religious faith or practices. He has mapped out the references to Muruga in Tamil literature and in Sanskrit texts, the Aranyakas, Dharmasutras, the Ramayana and the Puranas. He has also referred to the prevalence of Karthikeya cult as evidenced in the early Ujjain coins. The suggestion that the Muruga cult could be ultimately of Indo-Iranian origin based on the old Persian word *murgh* meaning a cock might be fanciful but his general thesis is that there is no recognisable trait of this cult that can be regarded as of exclusively Tamil origin and that Muruga is a Tamilised Indo-Aryan god may not be unexceptionable. It may be observed that the study of Muruga cult has attracted Western scholars and I have come across two scholars Prof. Carl Keller of Lausanne and Mr. Fred Clothey of the Theological Seminary, New York.

There are two very informative papers on Rajasimha's temples in Tondaimandalam and the Linga cult in the Pallava temples by Mr. K. V. Soundararajan and they contain very minute details of temple art and architecture and their significant variations. In the former paper the author has clearly shown that Rajasimha's temples show an idiom and evolutionary character that are at variance with the style, content and degree of interior concept and iconographic differential of the rock cut mandapas and monoliths of Mamalla's and Paramesvaravarman's time. He appears to contradict impliedly a recent theory obscurely mooted that the Mamallapuram rathas were actually finished in Rajasimha's time. In the other paper on the cult in Pallava temples the author's main thesis is that Somaskanda in the cella was the deity in worship in the early rock-cut temples and the installation of *linga* was a later development after the evolution of regular Agamic injunctions for the installation and rituals connected with *linga* worship. The probability is that the early rock-cut shrines were more objects of art than regular places of worship and the speculation on the origin of *linga* cult cannot be based on the composition of these structures, particularly what appears to be a minor but rather over-worked point about the absence of *vārimarga* in the structures. One important point brought out by Mr. Soundararajan is that *linga* is not a phallic symbol and he has cleared the misconception about *yoni* by pointing out that *yoni* is a technical term along with five other

factors like vyāya, āya, rksa, tithi and vāra called āyādisadvargas involving arithmetical formula laid down in the Agamas in the Ayādilaksana section. These two papers connect the thread of development from rock-cut rathas to Panamali, Kailasanatha etc., and are most interesting.

Mr. T. G. Aravamuthan's paper on the Narayana-Nataraja complex at Chidambaram deals with a recondite and mystical problem. It is well known that Chidambaram is not the traditional Agamic lay-out and it is not correct to speculate whether Nataraja and Govindaraja are two independent sanctum sanctorums or whether one is an auxiliary deity. The author's significant contribution is not this discussion but his concept of the unity of Godhood at the highest level as glimpsed in the Rig Veda:—Uttanapad as the creator of the universe from water, i.e., Narayana, and Siva as the maintainer of cosmos instead of chaos by his dance, i.e., Nataraja. In Chidambaram one could simultaneously worship Duality without losing the sense of Oneness, i.e., *Tad-Ekam*. The author is at pains to suggest that there is no priority in origin for Visnu or Nataraja, that both must have been set up simultaneously and sectarianism must have supervened later. Mr. Aravamuthan's other paper on Pancha-Viras is an exceedingly interesting study of the Tiruvallikeni shrine where Venkatakrishna stands in the sanctum sanctorum along with Rukmini, Balarama, Pradyumna, Aniruddha and Satyaki (all the deities having only two arms). The author traces the Panchavira adoration to *Vayupurana* and also gives references to groups of four or more than four (even eleven at Tiruttangal in Ramanathapuram Dt) in various parts of India. There seems to be no need to seek for origins in Rigveda which is very remote as the cult must have gained strength after the Mahabaratha period. It is a matter of gratification that Mr. Aravamuthan in his ripe age and maturity is turning towards interpretation, through sculpture and archaeology, of the concept of the One.

In his interesting paper on the evolution of coinage in Ancient India Mr. S. Ramayya, a well-known connoisseur, has traced the history of coinage in India from the silver punch marked coins of the 6th century B.C., to inscribed coins of a later date and subsequently the usage of copper coins of various shapes and sizes. He rightly stresses that in this study archaeological evidence is more reliable than literary. Mr. M. S. Gopalakrishnan's paper on Mother Goddess worship in Kerala and the East Coast is an interesting anthropological study of the

cult from the earliest times upto the present day. Mr. Shanmukam Pillai's paper on Cults in Sangam classis bears evidence of his deep study of the subject. Dr. M. S. Katre has drawn timely attention to the need for the use of linguistic techniques as well as archaeological techniques for historical research. The linguistic approach is indispensable in the evaluation of not only in palaeontological but also literary evidence and it is a matter for gratification that there is at present an outburst of interest in the study of Dravidian linguistics.

It will be seen that these Transactions cover a wide and interesting field with original contributions from scholars and they are in demand from scholars and from abroad. A number of plates has also been included at considerable cost. In the present issue, for the sake of information and reference, a consolidated Bibliography of the contents of all previous issues has also been included.

## II

It is gratifying that there is increasing interest lately in archaeological studies, taking archaeology in a wider sense to include all allied fields. The starting of State Departments of Archaeology in a few States and the opening of Departments of Archaeology in an increasing number of Universities (including Madras) are a good augury. Nevertheless coordination of all information and knowledge is not satisfactory. In the very nature of things the Central Departments of Archaeology and Epigraphy could be the only resourceful agency for comprehensive work, viz., exploration, collection, publication and interpretation. However, the lack of publicity to the issue of their Reports and the non-availability of the publications even months after their issue in public libraries are serious handicaps to independent scholars. Further, preliminary and intermediate reports get publicity only in newspapers and journals in a popular way and they are scattered. A semi-technical monthly journal or monthly newsletter is a desideratum. The Society could well take up the project but at present it has not the financial means or personnel. The Society is keen on building up a Reference Library with the cooperation of Departments of Government and the Universities as a first step.

The interest in Archaeology received a boost in connection with the II International Tamil Conference-Seminar held in

Madras from 3rd to 10th January 1968 which was attended by a large number of scholars. The Madras State Government brought out a Souvenir and the State Department of Archaeology also organised an exhibition and issued an Handbook. Some of the Society's members read papers and participated in the Conference-Seminar. A folder giving an account of the activities of the Society was distributed to the members and visitors to the Conference.

Another handicap not usually noticed is that matters relating to Archaeology are rarely discussed in Parliament or State Legislatures, inspite of their importance, during the Budget or other sessions with the result that there is very little publicity to the doings of the Departments. However there is a general feeling that very little excavation projects are started in the Southern region which has great potentialities. This inadequacy is doubtless due to the insufficient appropriations given to these Departments and institutions and public opinion should be aroused in these matters. Similarly Universities should take greater interest in Archaeological studies and stimulate more students to take up Post-graduate studies in these subjects as the scope for research here is unlimited and the fruits of research may at times be most useful. There should also be greater use made of the Museums by University Departments and Educational institutions.

Generally, the interest in our ancient monuments, apart from the tourist interest, is not as strong as it should be. To cite one example, the danger to the Mohenjodaro and Harappan excavations due to water seepage recently drawn attention to by the report of Sir Mortimer Wheeler has not evoked national or international reactions. It is to be hoped that the Indian Government would take suitable steps and an International body like the UNESCO steps forward for the conservation of these monuments.

There is little liaison between us and learned bodies in other countries for a mutual dialogue. Curently, a conference on Kushan dynasty is announced in USSR and a Seminar on Dravidian civilisation in the University of Texas. Even if we cannot take interest in the archaeology of other countries owing to language difficulty, we must keep ourselves posted on the results of foreign research in the Indian field

taking it to cover South East Asia etc. These must be a World Organisation for Archaeology.

There must be an integration of work and mutual exchange of programmes between the Government and the Universities, learned bodies and individual scholars. This Society is fulfilling this function in a very limited and humble way. The Archaeology Department sometime ago offered to give a grant to the Society to make a topographical list of monuments in South India provided it secures a matching grant from the State Governments. The Society could not take it up as the proposal was impracticable.

The Society is grateful to the scholars who contributed papers comprised in these Transactions. It is profoundly thankful to the Government of Madras for its limited grant-in-aid for this publication. It must also express its word of appreciation to the Editorial Sub-committee and the Honorary Secretary who carefully edited the papers and saw them through the press. The Society owes a melancholy duty to express its indebtedness to late Mr. S. T. Srinivasagopalachari, then President, for all his interest in the Society and for exhibiting his valuable collection of icons, coins, rare books etc. as a regular feature at our meetings.

I thank all my colleagues for their assistance in bringing out these Transactions which I hope will be found useful to researchers in many parts of the world.

Madras, }  
11th Nov. 1968 }

N. MURUGESA MUDALIAR.



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**1968 — 69**

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# THE DALAVAYPURAM COPPER PLATE

## GRANT OF

### PARANTAKA VIRA NARAYANA PANDYA\*

by

T. N. SUBRAMANIAM, MADRAS.

Early in the year 1958, Sri T. P. Minakshisundaram Pillai, M.A., M.L., M.O.L., then Chief Professor of Tamil in the Presidency College, Madras (now the Vice-Chancellor of the Madurai University) gave me a set of twelve photo prints, each of an inscribed side of a copper-plate grant, with a tentative transcript of the Tamil portion of the grant in the Vaṭṭeḷuttu script, and wanted me to transcribe the Sanskrit portion in the Grantha script and check the reading of the Tamil portion. Excepting the information that these were received from Sri T. V. Sadasiva Pandarattar, Lecturer in Tamil of the Annamalai University, no other particulars were given to me. The photographs had been taken of each inscribed face with the plates held in tact by the ring. Consequently few letters on the left margin of each face were obscured by the ring or its shade. In two or three of the prints the top or bottom lines had not come out in full, the upper or bottom portions of the entire lines having become cut off. Further, the prints were very small in size. It was, therefore, difficult to read with any amount of certainty the Vaṭṭeḷuttu portion in which some of the different letters had been written in nearly identical forms. Still I was able to make a few corrections in the reading. But when a tentative transcript of the Sanskrit portion was prepared it was found that there were differences between the two portions in some important respects, like the date of the grant, name of the donor's grandfather, etc. I gave these details to the Professor and suggested to him that either the original grant or an ink-impression of the inscribed faces might be procured to facilitate making a correct transcript

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\* Paper read before the Archaeological Society of South India on 22-10-58.

of both the Sanskrit and the Tamil portions. I was then informed that the prints given to me were photographic reproductions of original photographs, thus magnifying the defects in the light and shade inherent in such reproductions. I was also informed that the original photographs, which were more clear, then in the possession of Sri Pandarattar, would be obtained for my use. But they were never received. In the meanwhile Sri (Rao Sahib) P.K. Arunachala Goundar, Professor of Tamil and Vice-Principal of the M. D. T. Hindu College, Tirunelveli, during one of his casual visits, saw me labouring with the defective prints and recognised them immediately. He told me that he had with him one set of the original photograph-prints and that the original copper-plate grant belonged to the family of Sri Mēḍai Daḷavāy Mudaliyār of Tirunelveli and that it would be possible for him to make both of them available for my examination. Accordingly, he very kindly sent me the photographs on his return to Tirunelveli and some time later gave me the original grant itself for study.<sup>1</sup>

From enquiries made it is learnt that the set was unearthed in the outskirts of Daḷavāyapuram in Kovilpatti taluk, Tirunelveli district. It is reported that in the course of some digging the shovel struck a hard substance which, on clearing up, was found to be a wooden box. The box was taken out and the nails having been removed the plates were seen in tact. It appears that the plates were buried under the soil not very long ago. The plates were dug out of the lands belonging to Mēḍai Daḷavāy family and hence they were found with them. No more details about them are forthcoming.

The grant consists of seven copper-plates, each measuring 1' 6" long and 5' 6" wide, strung to a copper ring, the ends of which are not soldered to the bottom of the seal as is usual, but flattened, placed one over the other and rivetted with two copper nails. The ring was uncut when I received the set. The seal is bell shaped and strung to the ring like the inscribed plates through a hole at its top. The face of the seal contains in bold relief the figures of the double carps and a tiger with a bow below

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1. This has since been reviewed by the Department of Epigraphy in its *Annual Report* for the year 1958-1959, C.P. No. 14.

the two. Along the edge of this face encircling these figures is a legend embossed in high relief. It consists of a single *anushṭubh* verse in Sanskrit written in the Grantha script as follows :—

Śrī [l\*] Samasta-vasudh-ādhīśa chū[lā]ratn-āmbu[śu]rājishu[l\*]

Śāsanañ-jagadī[tī]-bhartur-idam Jaṭila[va]rmmaṇaḥ[l\*]

Of the seven plates, the outer faces of the first and the last plates are left blank, the inner sides only being inscribed, while the other five plates are written on both the sides. The first and the last plates are not numbered while the others are numbered on their first sides to the left of the ring-holes, the numbers 2 to 6 running consecutively.

As usual the grant consists of two parts: the Sanskrit portion is written in the Grantha script and the Tamil portion is written in the Vaṭṭeḷuttu script. Both these scripts resemble very closely those employed in the Larger Śiṅṅamaṇūr plates of Rājasimha, the son and successor of the donor of this grant. The Grantha section of the charter consists of 65 lines engraved in the first and second, and in the third plate it stops at the fourth line of the second side ending with the benediction *Namaśśivāya*. It may be noted here that some Tamil words or syllables occur in the midst of the Sanskrit section and they are engraved in Tamil script (ll. 39, 41, 42, 44) and not in the Vaṭṭeḷuttu script in which the Tamil section is engraved. This is however not an unknown feature as we already find it in the Larger Śiṅṅamaṇūr plates (S. I. I., III, p. 453, ll. 55, 58-60, 68 and 69.)

In the Grantha script one peculiarity, which is also found in many other records of the period, has to be noted. The letter *ksha*, both in its primary form and also in combination with medial vowels, is found written as *tsha*. In editing such records it is usual to transcribe the letter as *tsha* in the first instance and then correct it as *ksha*, in the foot-notes. According to Sanskrit grammar, *ksha* is not a primary consonant, but only a ligature made up of two letters, the pure consonant, *k* and the vowelled consonant *sha*. But in South India, at least in the Grantha script, it is treated as a separate and independent consonant letter, placed

at the end of the series and taught to students, as such. The expression, from the *a-kāra* to the *ksha-kāra* (*akārādi kshakāranta*) literally, 'beginning with *a-kāra* and ending with *ksha-kāra*' used to denote all the letters of the Sanskrit alphabet, in the same way the expression 'from A to Z' is used in the case of all the letters of the English alphabet, is also in support of this contention. It is very likely that the separate form, as distinct from the ligature *ksha* which is also sometimes found in inscriptions and thus not unknown, was evolved to indicate this new consonant and it is significant that this new form has remained to this day almost unchanged.

Both the Sanskrit and the Tamil parts of the grant are entirely in verse. The poets who composed the respective portions appear to have had high attainments and their styles are pleasing. The Tamil portion is in a majestic style. The expression *Ōngu tirai viyaṇ parappil* with which it commences is the opening line of the work *Madurai-k-kāñchi*, the sixth poem in the anthology *Pattu-p-pattu*, a Sangam Classic, sung by Māṅguḍi Marudaṇār on another Pāṇḍya, Neḍuñ-Śeḷiyaṇ, the victor in the battle at Talaiyālaṅgaṇam.

The Sanskrit portion begins with an invocation to Viṣṇu. Then it describes the birth of Brahmā from his navel. Brahmā is said to have created the Moon from whom the Pāṇḍya dynasty sprang up. This line of kings is stated to have had Agastya as the guiding personality. The charter then refers to the traditional achievements of the Pāṇḍya kings, viz., (1) the breaking of the wristlet on the head of Indra, (2) the undertaking of a peace mission on the request of Rāvaṇa, (3) the destruction of Duryōdhana's army in the Bhārata war, and (4) the cutting of his own crowned head to stop the dance of head-less trunks.

After many kings of this line including Sundara had passed away came Māra, born to king Parāntaka. This king vanquished in battles the kings of Kēraḷa, Siṃhaḷa, Dēva and others. Then Varaguṇa is introduced in a verse (15) extolling his virtues with a play on the word *varaguṇa*. Then his younger brother Śrī Vīra Nārāyaṇa is introduced as a great warrior. He was born to Akkaḷanimmaṭi, the daughter of Śrīkaṇṭha Chōḷa. He patronised

the learned brāhmaṇas and gave them many villages like Śrīvallabhamāṅgalam to be enjoyed as *ākabhōga* gifts. A similar grant was also made for the worship (*archchanā*) of Nārāyaṇa and Īśāna. It was made in the year opposite (*samāyām*, literally 'equal to') to the years of forty augmented by three and one having expired (i.e., the forty-fourth year expired, or forty-fifth year current), when the king was residing at Karavandapura.

The previous history of the gift-village is then narrated. In former times, Mānam-pērtta-Kaṭumkōṇ gave away the village of Śrīmaṅgalam in the Āśināḍu to twelve brāhmaṇas. Another village Chōmāchikurichchi was given to Kāṭhaka Sōmayāji by the king who went to heaven at Kaḷudūr. A portion of it was sometime later appropriated by the Śūdras and named Madhurasthāna-sat-grāma. Keśava born in Chōmāchikurichchi, son of Nārāyaṇa and grandson of Māya of the Vāna-gōtra, petitioned to the king that these two villages of Śrīmaṅgalam and Chōmāchikurichchi might be combined into one and granted to brāhmaṇas and the king accordingly gave it with a copper-plate. Ilayā-Nakkaṇ described as a *mantrin* and as a devotee of Viṣṇu was the *aiṇāpti* of the charter. Subrahmaṇya, son of Datta-bhaṭṭa was the *dharmā-dhyaksha*. The charter then describes one Mādhava a poet residing in Śrīvallabhamāṅgalam as the author of the *prasasti*. He is stated to be the son of Yōgeśvara who was the brother and son of Dēvēśvara and Gaṇasvāmin respectively. To the poet Mādhava who composed the *prasasti* two fields named Mahāvijāl and Paruttivayakkal were given with the rights in the wells situated therein. The poet who composed the remaining part of the *prasasti* (i.e., the Tamil portion) and the scribe who incised the grant on the copper-plate were given three fields, Kaṇṇan-kiran vayakkal, Śīrukkulā Valāl and Sōmayājivayakkal along with the rights in the wells in such fields. The grant was written by Nakkan, of Kuṇ[ṭ]ūr, and the chief of the *Karmmaras* and who bore the epithet Nripasēkhara.

The Tamil portion<sup>1</sup> begins with the praise of Viṣṇu reposing on the watery bed of the ocean who figures at the top of the

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1. The tentative transcript of this portion by Sri Pandarattar, incorporating the corrections made by me in the first reading with the aid of the second-hand photograph, has been included as an annexure to the book

mythical genealogy of the Pāṇḍya family. From the lotus emanating from the navel of Viṣṇu was born Brahmā from whom came the mind-born sage Atri. The moon-god *Chandra* was born of this sage and to him was born Budha. Puru was born to Budha through Ilā, a king of the solar race, during the period when he was changed into a woman by the curse of god Śiva. After him many kings had ruled over the earth and then came the king whose feet were washed by the sea. Then came many kings who had the sage Agastya as the *purohita* and who performed many heroic deeds and beneficial acts, like (1) churning the ocean and obtaining the *amṛita* therefrom; (2) engraving the pair of carps on the northern mountain, i.e., the Himālaya; (3) wearing the garland of Harihaya, i.e., Indra; (4) breaking his crown along with his bracelet; (5) making the sea recede by throwing the javelin; (6) conquering in the battle of the *dēvas* and the *asuras*; (7) discussing (and settling) the Tamil language with the sage Agastya; (8) destroying the heroic kings of great valour; (9) undertaking a peace-mission for Rāvaṇa; (10) leading the elephants causing wholesale destruction of the army of Dhṛitarāṣṭras; (11) relieving Arjuna from the curse of Vasu; (12) destroying the city of Hariśchandra and capturing his numerous retinue; (13) bathing in the four oceans in a single day; (14) giving away thousands of elephants in return for many literary works; (15) causing many strong (kings) to ascend the heavens; (16) engraving the youthful fish on the golden Himālaya mountains; (17) raising the embankments of many tanks looking like the ocean at the mouth of a river; (18) founding Madurāpuri in the South and (19) establishing the Śaṅgam and developing the Tamil (language). The first 'historical' personage of the Pāṇḍya dynasty is then introduced by a reference to a king who established himself after winning a battle at Ālaṅgāṇam. He is apparently identical with Neḍuñṣeliyan of Classical fame who was the victor in the battle of Talaiyālaṅgāṇam. Another as the uprooter of the hordes called Kaḷappālar is next referred to. After many kings of such fame passed away came another group of kings who appeared in the family of one who

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*Śāsanach-Cheyuḷ-maṇḍari* compiled by Sri Mayilai Seeni Venkataswami and published with the aid of the *Sahitya Akademi*. A comparison of the same with the text given here will show the defective and incomplete nature of it.

won the battles at Idaiyārai and Venbaikkudi. After many such kings of this illustrious family had passed away came king Śadaiyaṇ having the name Parāntaka who defeated the Kāḍava (i.e. Pallava) at Karuvūr. His son was Śrī Vallabha who gained a victory at Kuṇṇūr, took Īlam (Ceylon), killed the Villava (Chēra) at Viḷiṇam, drove away the Kāḍava (Pallava) in the battle at Kaḍal-Ānūr and gained a victory at Kuḍandai (Kumbhakōṇam) over the Kuṭṭuvar (Chēra) of the west, the Chōḷās of the east, Kūpakas of the south and the northern kings in which the son of Amarvallān was killed. He had the epithets *Yampuraśila* and *upāya-bahulan*. After his death Varaguṇa, who is described as "our king", was protecting the earth, meditating upon god Pinākapāṇi wearing the crescent moon on his matted lock (Śiva). Then the *praśasti* introduces Parāntaka Mahārājan also known as Vira-nārayaṇa, giving details about his mother and maternal grand-father. His mother was Akkaḷanimmaṭi, daughter of Śrīkaṇṭha-rājan of the Pottappi Chōḷa family, whose praises are enumerated in eloquent terms. This Śrīkaṇṭha is described as a great monarch, Toṇḍiyarkōn (king of the Toṇḍiyar), nephew (sister's son) of Mānābharāṇa, *Mayilaiyarkōn* (king of Mayilai) and *Mattamāmalai-vaḷavan*, (the Vallabha of mountain-like elephant, in Hastigiri, Attigiri, i.e., Kañchi). The exploits of Parāntaka Vira Nārayaṇa are then described. He is said to have won a victory at Sennilam over his elder brother. He conquered the battles at Kuṇrai, Western Koṅgu, Pokkarāṇi, Tenmāyal, Vengai and Parāntakam and captured the *vastu-vāhana* of those who opposed him.

He founded many fountain-heads of rivers and erected many temples and also took the city of Southern Viḷiṇam. He wielded his fiery spear so that the Western Koṅgas dried from the Koṅgu up to the limits of Tēnūr and also bridled Vira-Tuṅga. He had the epithets *Kalippagai*, *Kaṇḍarol-kaṇḍan* and the like. In the year forty augmented by three and two of his reign, i.e., in his

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The Vēlvikuḍi grant also refers to Kaḍuṅgōn as *māṇam pērtta tānai-vēndaṇ* (*Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XVII, p. 300, lines 44-45). Rao Bahadur H. Krishna Sastri has translated the expression *māṇam pērtta* as "who wore (the cloak of) dignity" correcting the second word as *pōrtta* (*Ibid.* p. 306). The word *pērtta* means 'having the name of'.

forty-fifth regnal year, while staying at Kaḷakkuḍi in the Kaḷakkuḍināḍu, he made the grant described in these plates. King Kaḍuṅgōn who was pleased to have the name Māṇa and who gained victory over the Kaḷappālar (i.e., the Kaḷabhras) granted in the olden days the village of Tirumaṅgalam to twelve learned brāhmaṇas and gave them a copper-plate charter. The king who made the *siddhi* at Kaḷudūr gave away similarly the village of Sōmāsikuruchchi as *ēkabhōga* to Kāṭhaka Sōmayāji. The copper-plate charters of these two villages were lost in the troublous times (*māra-k-kēḍu*). Subsequently the *Kiḷavan* of Kaḍarrirukkai fixed the boundaries of Sōmāsikuruchchi appropriating it for himself, and converted the remaining land as *Kuḍinilam* (farming by tenants) under the name Madhurataranallūr. At this stage, Nārāyaṇan Keśavan, a resident of Tirumaṅgalam, a *brahmadēya* in the Āsi-nāḍu and 'lord' of Sōmāsikuruchchi petitioned to the king to remove the status of *Kuḍinilam* making the *puravu* (land tax) payable to Sōmāsikuruchchi, club the two villages into one and issue a fresh charter. The petitioner is described as of the son of Māyā-nārāyaṇa bhaṭṭar, who was the younger brother of Māyā-nambi bhaṭṭar belonging to the Vāna gōtra and the Baudhāyana Kalpa and also as a trusted officer of the Pāṇḍya Vīra Nārāyaṇa, having mastered the duties of a *kshatriya*. The king assigned the *puravu* (land-tax) to Sōmāsikuruchchi and gave it along with Tirumaṅgalam circumambulating the villages with the female elephant.

The *anatti* (executor) of the grant was the officer (*adhikari*) named Iḷaiyā-nakkan, a brāhmaṇa of Pullūr village belonging to the Vātsa-gōtra, also known as Vaikuṇṭha Vala-nāḍan and Āyiratti-aiññūrruṇan. Śendaṇ-kiḷavan, the *kiḷavan* of Peruntūvelli in Veṇbu-nāḍu was the *madhyasta* (*naḍuvu-nilai-nāyakan*). The accountants (*Kaṇakkar*) were 1) Śāttam-paṭṭalakan, the chief (*kōṇ*) of the Aḷarru-nāḍu a poet in Tamil and a resident of Muṣukuruchchi in Aḷarrunāḍu, and (2) Kiḷavan-kōṇ, surnamed Tēyamānikkam of Peruṅkakkūr. The boundaries of the gift village were fixed and the female elephant circumambulated in the presence of the *naṭṭar* of Āsināḍu and Nēchchūrā-nāḍu. The boundaries are described there. We find the name of Tiruviruppūr, the river Veḷḷāru and Iḷanēchchuram among the boundaries.



The gift village after planting the boundary stones was given inclusive of the *kāraṇmai* and *miyātccchi* rights without losing the nature of a *brahmadēya* to the *sabha* of Tirumaṅgalam and the brāhmaṇas of Śōmāśikuruchchi. The *praśasti* was composed by Śrī Mādhava, the younger brother of Yōgēśvarabhaṭṭa and son of Gaṇasvāmibhaṭṭa and a resident of Śrī Vallabhamāṅgalam and he was given two pieces of land along with two wells, under the same terms applicable to the *sabha* of the place. Similarly the poet who drafted the Tamil *praśasti* and the scribe Mārttāṇḍa got three pieces of land with three wells and certain other rights along with a note of the *mahasabha* approving the same. Then follows a Sanskrit verse stating that the remaining portion of the *praśasti*, i.e. the Tamil section, was composed by the poet Pāṇḍya-draṇiḷābharaṇa who was the chief of *Karṇmāra-śrēṇi*. Two other verses are then found. The first one states that the Tamil *praśasti* was composed by Śrī Vallabha *alias* Pāṇḍi-mārāya-p-peruṅkollan who had the epithet Pāṇḍi-t- Tamil-ābaraṇan. He is described as Vaikuṇṭha-vaṇaṇāḍan and a resident of Kuṇḍūr and belonging to the lineage of the great sage Manu who prepared the battle-axe '*paraśu*' to god Śiva at the latter's request. The last verse says that the grant was incised by Nakkan *alias* Nripaśēkhara-p-peruṅkollan, the father of the poet who composed the Tamil *praśasti* and who came in the lineage of the sculptors who had in former times engraved at the command of the Pāṇḍya kings their royal emblems on the Himālayas.

The grant is important in being the fifth copper-plate charter<sup>1</sup> of the early Pāṇḍyas so far known and the seal of the present grant is the only one now available for study.<sup>2</sup> The present

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1. The other four are 1) the Vēlvikuḍi plates (*Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XVII), 2) the Madras Museum plates (*Ind. Ant.*, Vol. XXII), both of Parāntaka Neḍuṇ S'adaiyan 3) and 4) the two incomplete ones from S'innamanūr (*SII*, Vol. III. Part IV) the Smaller one issued probably by the same king and the Larger one, by Rājasimha, the son of Parāntaka Viranārayana. Another, the sixth, grant, issued by Vira Pāṇḍya, since discovered, is also edited below.

2. Sri P. R. Srinivasan, then Curator of the Archaeological Section of the Madras Government Museum (now the Superintendent for Epigraphy, Archaeological Survey of India, Mysore) informed the meeting that the seal of the Madras Museum plates was available in the Museum. But the late Venkayya in editing the grant remarked that the seal was not available.

charter furnishes many new informations about the Pāṇdyas and also incidentally of some of the contemporary powers.

The father of Śrīmāraṇ Śrīvallabha is named herein as Parāntaka while according to the Larger Śinnamanūr plates it is Varaguṇa, thus indicating that both the names refer to the same person which is in support of the identification of the king with the donor of the Vēlvikuḍi and the Madras Museum plates proposed by Prof. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri.

Śrīvallabha married Akkaḷanimmaṭi, the daughter of Śrikanṭha Chōḷa of the Pottappi line, and the issue of this union was Parāntaka Viranārāyaṇa, the donor of the present grant. The only Akkaḷanimmaṭi hitherto known was the Kadamba princess married to the Pallava monarch Dantivarman. The existence of the Pottappi line of the Chōḷas at the early period was hitherto unknown. The founding of this branch is generally placed at a later date. But the way in which this branch is mentioned in the grant suggests that it should have come into existence much earlier. A certain Srikanṭha, belonging to one of the branches of the Telugu Chōḍas, figures as the donor of the Madras Museum plates which on palaeographical grounds may be assigned to the period of the present grant.<sup>1</sup> In the Anbil plates<sup>2</sup> of Sundara Chōḷa Parantaka II, the earliest of the copper-plate grants of the Imperial Chōḷas of Tañjāvūr in the Tamil country, a Śrikanṭha Chōḷa is mentioned as a predecessor of Vijayālaya. It is possible that all the three refer to the same person.

The glowing terms in which Śrikanṭha Chōḷa is introduced in this grant suggest that he was a great and powerful monarch holding sway over the Toṇḍai-nāḍu, i.e., the home-land of the Pallavas. This could have been possible only if there had been a break in the Pallava rule. No inscription of Dantivarman is found for more than twenty-five years in any part of the country. Probably the rule of Śrikanṭha Chōḷa has to be accommodated in this gap. This rise to power of the Chōḷa evidently took place in the early part of the 9th century A.D. after and as a result of the battle of Kumbakōṇam.

1. *Journal of Indian History*, Vol. xv, p. 30-49.

2. *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. xv, p. 44-72.

In this battle Śrīmāra Śrīvallabha had to fight against a confederation of enemies. In the present grant it is said that a son of Amarvallān lost his life in this battle. According to the Larger Sīnnamanūr plates, the Kālingas and the Māgadhas also fought against the Pāṇḍyas. This Amarvallān may be identified with the Śailendra king whose name was conformable to 'the foremost warrior in battle-fields' (Samarāgraviraḥ) mentioned in the Nālandā plates of Dēvapāladēva,<sup>1</sup> the Pala king of Magadha, as the father of Bālaputradēva, the donor of the grant referred to therein.

Varaguṇa 'meditating on Lord Śiva' was the nominal 'king' protecting the earth at the time when the present grant was issued. But the actual ruler was his younger brother Parāntaka and it was he who really made the grant. It thus becomes clear that both the brothers were ruling jointly, the elder only in name and the younger, the *de facto* ruler. Tradition avers that the Śaiva saint Māṇikkavāchaka, before he turned into a saint, was, a minister under the Pāṇḍya king Varaguṇa and this king is eulogised by the saint in his immortal work *Tiru-k-kōvaiyār* or *Tiru-ch-chirrambala-k-kōvai*. Another Śaiva saint Paṭṭinattār refers in his work *Tiruvīḍaimarudūr munmaṇi-k-kōvai* to the great devotion of a Pāṇḍya monarch Varaguṇa towards Śiva. There can be no doubt that these references relate to Varaguṇa of this grant and thus the date of Māṇikkavāchaka is settled.

The exploits of Parāntaka, the actual donor of the grant, are described in detail in the grant. The first victory mentioned is that gained by him over his elder brother, who is also referred to as a king, in the battle at Sēnnilam. The identity of this elder brother is rather intriguing.

Another victory attributed to him is that over the heroic Tuṅga (Vira Tunga) whom he is said to have bridled as a horse. This Tuṅga is probably the Rāshṭrakūṭa king Amoghavarsha known as Nṛipatuṅga and who also bore the epithet of Vira Nārāyaṇa just like his Pāṇḍyan contemporary.

One other interesting information which can be gleaned from this grant is about the interpretation of the term *uttara-mantri*.

1. *Ibid.*, Vol. xvii, pp. 321-327.

The *anatti*, executor, named in the grant, *Ilaiyā-ṇakkaṇ* is described in the Tamil portion as *āyiratt-aiññūṟṟuvaṇ* and in the Sanskrit portion as the minister (*mantri*). The term *āyiratt-aiññūṟṟuvaṇ*, literally means 'he of the Thousand and Five Hundred' and indicates a member of the mercantile organisation known as the *nāṇadēsi*. The word *uttara* has evidently to be taken in the sense of the 'left-hand' as opposed to *dakshina* 'the right-hand' and thus the term *utlāra-mantri* is to be taken as referring to the Minister in charge of Trade and Commerce.

The date of accession of this Varaguṇa is placed by scholars in 863 A.D. identifying him with his name-sake mentioned in the Aivarmalai record dated in Śaka 792, corresponding to A.D. 870 which was his eighth regnal year. From the present record it is known that he was ruling jointly with his brother at least for forty-five years. His grandfather Parāntaka Neḍuñ-Sādaiyaṇ, the donor of the Vēlvikuḍi grant, is known to have ascended the throne in 768 A.D. Thus the total reign period of his father and grand-father would be 95 years. It is rather unusual for successive generations of kings to have such long periods of reign. There are also other factors which necessitate a review of the Pāṇḍyan chronology of this period. These will be discussed in detail in the forth-coming paper editing this record for publication in the *Epigraphia Indica* jointly with Sri. K. G. Krishnan.

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TEXT<sup>1</sup>

## FIRST PLATE — SECOND SIDE

1. Svasti Śrī [ 1\* ] Lakshmī<sup>2</sup> - nāthād = abhavad = udayo<sup>3</sup>  
yasya viśv - ādhināthād = yasy - otpādyā sa - sura -  
danuj - ambho -
2. dhayaḥ sapta - lokāḥ [ 1\* ] śācīpatya - prabhṛiti - phalado  
yasya so mukhya - leśo bhūyo bhūyaḥ ka -
3. mala - bhavano bhūṭaye vaḥ sa bhūyāt ॥७ [ 1\* ]  
Pratyaksh - ānumiti - samatva - bodha - kṛipti jñānānā -
4. m = avishaya - bhūta - rūpa - tatvam [ 1\* ] vedānt-āva-  
gatam = anādi - madhya - hāni - jyotir - vvo - haratu  
harer - amaṅga -
5. lānī ॥७ [ 2\* ] Nispanda - mārutam = achanchala - sūryya-  
somaṁ viśṭabdhā - tārakam = akampita - sindhu - nā-  
tham [ 1\* ] anta -
6. r - mukh - āksha - gaṇam = ānmani śāmanārtthaṁ yogāsa-  
nam bhavatu vaḥ śivadāyī Śaivam ॥७ [ 3\* ] Babhūva Nā -
7. rāyaṇa - nābhi - paṁkajān - mukhaś - chaturbhis - chatur-  
ānana - grīṇan [ 1\* ] hit - āhitānām pi -
8. tṛi - mātrī - vākyavat = pramāṇa - bhūtan - nigamān -  
aghachchhitāḥ ॥७ [ 4\* ] Sa - nirmmame trin - tapasām  
parāyaṇa -
9. ñ - char - āchar - ānugraha - nigrāha - kshamam [ 1\* ] sa -  
nirmmame lochanato jaga - trayī - sukhāvaha -

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1. Read from the original plates direct.

2. For reasons already stated, the letter written here and also in the following lines as *tsha* has been read as *ksha*.

3. In Sanskrit, the vowels *e* and *o*, both primary and secondary, have only one form, without any distinction between the long and the short. Accordingly these have been written without any diacritical mark.

10. ñ - jyotisham = oshad - íśvaram ॥७॥ [ 5\* ] Tasmād =  
āsīd - amṛita - kiraṇād - anvayo - manvayātān = apy =  
āchārān = alam - anusara -
11. nn = āryya - sammānanīyān [ 1\* ] tejo - vṛiddhyā ravim =  
adharayan = rātri - nātham prasatyā jñān - onnatyā  
patim = api girān Pa -
12. ṇḍya - deś - ēśvarāṇām ॥७॥ [ 6\* ] Vindhyam loka - tritaya -  
vivaraṃ svānmanā pūrayantaṃ śail - ākāre niyatam = a -
13. karod - agra - pād - ārppaṇena [ 1\* ] tīryag - bhūtaṃ sura -  
gaṇa - patiṃ bindum = apy = ambu - rāśim yasy - eśāno  
muni - parisha -
14. dām kumbha - yoniḥ purodhāḥ ॥७॥ [ 7\* ] Śūchitayā  
chitayā dhana - sampadā rahitay - āhitayā tamasā dhi  
yā [ 1\* ]
15. samatayā matayā mahitām mahīm akṛitayo kṛita -  
yoshid - atisprīhaḥ ॥७॥ [ 8\* ] kalp - ānte kabaḷayat - o -

## SECOND PLATE — FIRST SIDE <sup>1</sup>

16. pī - viśva - lokān = durvvār - odgamana - javam payaḥ -  
payo - dheḥ [ 1\* ] yat - sūter = abhavad = avasthita -
17. sya rājño na - ai - vālañ = charaṇa - saroja - laṃghanāya  
॥७॥ [ 9\* ] Ind - ūtpādaka - śārṅga - dhanva - matayā sā
18. hāyva - śuśrūshayā rājñām = maulishu bhagna - śiṣṭa -  
valaya - ddhvamsena maulau hareḥ [ 1\* ] sandhāv - a -
19. rtthyatayā nīśā - chara - pater = jetuñ = chavajr = āyudham  
yasy = ālamkṛitayo babbhūvur = akhila - kshmā - nātha -  
vandyā nṛi -

1. The plate is numbered 2 on this side. The numeral is written in the margin to the left of the ring-hole, both of them enclosed in four lines forming a rectangle.

20. pāḥ ॥ [ 10\* ] Prātaḥ kṛit - āgni - havanaḥ samare  
kurūpān = duryodhaniya - bala - tarppita - mṛityu -  
chetāḥ [ 1\* ] praty = āga -
21. t = onu - dinam = ānma - puran = nar-endro yat - sambha-  
vo-tanuta sāyam = api sva - homam ॥ [ 11\* ] yad =  
udbhav - otharvva - vi -
22. dhāna - drishṭyā rājy = ebhishiktaṁ guruṇ = ānurāgāt  
[ 1\* ] nijan = nikṛitya svayam = uttam - āṅgam kava -
23. ndha-jālaṁ śamayām-babhūva ॥ [ 12\* ] Etad - anvaya-  
bhaveshv = anekasāḥ sundarādishu nṛipeshu
24. karmmabhiḥ [ 1\* ] devatām = upagateshu Māra = ity =  
ākhyay = ājani nṛipaḥ Parāntakāt ॥ [ 13\* ] Sa - Kera
25. śeśam yudhi Siṃhaḥ - endran = devaṅ = cha durddhar -  
shatamān bal - aughaiḥ [ 1\* ] vijitya vege -
26. na tadiya kośaiḥ - śisṭān = prahṛisṭān = akarod = adhi-  
śriḥ ॥ [ 14\* ] Varaguṇa = iti = nāma = dhārayann =  
avara -
27. guṇān = api sādhu - karmmaṇā [ 1\* ] Varaguṇa iti nāma  
dhārayann = abhavad = at = odhipatir - mmahī - bhujām  
॥ [ 15\* ] Tasy = ā -
28. nujo vahnir = arīndhanānām Śrī - Vira - nārāyaṇa - nāma-  
dheyah [ 1\* ] som - opamo - mitra - kumudvatina -
29. n = nāth = obhavad = vāridhi - mekhalāyāḥ ॥ [ 16\* ]  
Śrī - kaṇṭha - nāmn = Okkaḷānimmat = iti nāmnā śruta  
choḷa - kula -
30. pradīpāt [ 1\* ] ambho - nidher = ambhujā - vāsin = īva  
labdhodbhavāya = jjanayām babhūva ॥ [ 17\* ] Vidyā-  
para-dṛiśā -
31. m vinita-manasam vṛittaṁ pratishṭhāvatām vipr-āgre-  
saratā - jushām pravachana - vyākhyāna - nishṭhānmanām  
[ 1\* ] Pā -

## SECOND PLATE — SECOND SIDE

32. ṇḍyānān = tilakāya mānam = atula - śrī - s'ālinam s'āsva-  
taṃ ya s'rī - vallabha - maṅgalaṃ vihitavā -
33. n = grām - ottamam bhū - patiḥ lll [ 18\* ] Evaṃ vidhān =  
grāma - varān - aneka - bhogy = aika - bhogyān = avānī -  
su -
34. rāṇām [ 1\* ] nārāyaṇ - eśāna - sam - archan - ārtthān = api  
vyadhād = yo = vinihatya = dasyūn lll [ 19\* ] Kṛitaś =  
cha yen = ogra -
35. tara - pratāpa - prahv-āvan - indr-ātta-kara-prapañchaiḥ  
[ 1\* ] sampūrṇṇa - kośena guru - prakṛipta - grāma - pradā -
36. nīya-kar = ālpa-bhāvaḥ lll [ 20\* ] Das'akeshu chaturshu  
vatsarāṇān = trishu ch = ābdeshu gateshu saika -
37. keshu [ 1\* ] Karavandapure vasan samāyāṃ kshiti-  
pānām = adhipas - tataḥ parasyām lll [ 21\* ] Āśi -
38. nāt = iti vikhyāte khyāto jana - pad - ottame [ 1\* ] grāma -  
Śrī - maṅgala - śrīman = dvādaśa -
39. dvija - lambhitaḥ lll [ 22\* ] Mānam - pērtta<sup>1</sup> Kaṭumkon =  
ity = abhidhānam = upeyushā [ 1\* ] deva - de -
40. vasya guruṇā deva-lok-ādhipa-śriyā lll [ 23\* ] Grām =  
oparaḥ kāṭhaka soma - y[ā]
41. j = ity = anvarthta-nāmne vidushām parāya [ 1\* ] datto =  
dyu - lokam Kaḷudūr<sup>1</sup> - n - nivāsāt gatena rā -
42. jñā guruṇā tav = aiva lll [ 24\* ] Sa chomāchikurichch<sup>1</sup> =  
iti khyātas = tasy = aika - deśa - bhūḥ [ 1\* ] madhura -  
sthā -
43. na - sat - grāma - nāmnā śūdr - ābhiḷaṅghita lll [ 25\* ]  
Tām = ā[r]chchhidya tataḥ pūrvva - svāmi - bhogyām  
prakalpya

1. This is written in the Tamil script.



44. cha [1\*] tasyās' = śūdra - krit - akhyāna - vyāvṛittim =  
upādyā cha llḷ [26\*] Tad = eki - bhūto - Chomāchi-  
kuṛichchir<sup>1</sup> = ekatām sa -
45. ha [1\*] śrī-maṅgalena sampādyā śuddha - pustaka -  
lekhayā llḷ [27\*] Tat = grāma - dvaya - paurastya -  
tāmra - pa -
46. ṭṭa - pramāṇayoḥ [1\*] nāśa - doshan = nirākarttun =  
tayos' = ch = aikatva - buddhaye llḷ [28\*] Aikyena grā -

### THIRD PLATE — FIRST SIDE<sup>2</sup>

47. mayoḥ kṛitvā sīmānaṁ - kariṇī padaiḥ [1\*] tāmra -  
paṭṭa - pramāṇaṁ = cha kalpayitv = ādyā dīyatām llḷ  
[29\*] I -
48. ty = evaṁ vāna - gotre = kṛita - janana - bhavan - Māya  
sajñasya - kalpe = nalpe Bodbāyaniye sama -
49. dhigatimataḥ potra - bhāvaṁ = gatena [1\*] ānmo -  
dbhūtena bhūmi - tridaśa - gaṇa - manojñasya Nārāya -
50. ṇasya śrauta - smārtt - ādvagena śrita - hari - charaṇ -  
āmbho - ruhā keś'avena llḷ [30\*] Vijñāpito bu -
51. ddhimat = āgrahāre jātena Chomāchikuṛuchchi<sup>3</sup> - nāmni  
[1\*] kṛitvā yatoktan = tad = adād = vilikhya sat -  
tāmra -
52. paṭṭeshu mahi - surebhyah llḷ [31\*] Abhavat dvija -  
puṁgav = ottra karmmaṇy = alam = ājñāpayitā  
nare -
53. ndra - mantri [1\*] paramo hari - pāda - padma - bhājām  
= Īlayā - Nakka = iti s'rut - ābhidhānaḥ llḷ [32\*]  
Dha -

1. The name, excepting the first letter *Cho*, is in Tamil script.

2. The plate is numbered 3 on this side. The numeral is written on the left margin in the blank space near the ring-hole. There is no rectangular enclosure.

3. The letters *kuṛu* are written in Tamil.

54. [ r\* ] mm - ādhyaksh - obhavad = iha kṛito veda-śāstr-  
ānta - da [ r ] śś'i prajñā - medhā - prathita - yaśasa
55. labdha - kātyāyana - śrīḥ [ 1\* ] subrahmaṇyo budha -  
jana - suhṛid = yasya lakshmi - vibhūtyo -
56. r = ishṭan = dhāman = prūvarati pitā somapo Datta-  
bhaṭṭaḥ IIIa [ 33\* ] Yaṃ Yogēśvara - bhaṭṭam = aṣṭa -  
dharanī - de -
57. vēśvara - bhrātaram vidyā - vṛitta - nidhim vidur =  
guṇa - nidheḥ putram Gaṇasvāminah [ 1\* ] tat - putrasya  
mukhāt = pra -
58. śastir = uditā tīrtthasya śastreshv = iyam yaś' = śrī -  
vallabha - maṃgale vasatimān = vāgmī kavīḥ Mādha -
59. vaḥ IIIa [ 34\* ] Etaṃ grāmaṃ rakshatām bhū-  
patinām chātvar - otthāḥ prāṇibhiḥ prārthyamānāḥ  
[ 1\* ] dirgham kā -
60. laṃ vṛiddhim = ṛichchhantu pṛithvīn = dharmo =  
lakshmir - bhoga - śaktir = yaśascha IIIa [ 35\* ] Mahā-  
vilal = ity = abhidhām pa -
61. ruttivayakkal = ity = apy = abhidhān = dadhānau [ 1\* ]  
kūpau tad = aṇ - bhāg<sup>1</sup> = avanis' = cha dattaḥ praśasti-  
kṛin = Mādha -

### THIRD PLATE — SECOND SIDE

62. bhaṭṭa - nāmne IIIa [ 36\* ] Svasti Śrī [ 11\* ] Kaṇṇan -  
kīran - vayakkat - ch - chīrukkuḷavaḷal<sup>2</sup> = api [ 1\* ] soma-  
yāji = vayakkat - cha kūpās = ta -
63. t - kshetra - saṃyutaḥ IIIa [ 37\* ] Kartre praśasti -  
śeshasya praśaster = llekhakāya cha [ 1\* ] avibhaktata -

1. Perhaps to be read as *ardha - bhāg* .

2. The letters *chīgn* are in Tamil.

64. yā dattāḥ dvābhyām = ābhyām = ami = trayāḥ III<sub>a</sub>  
[ 38\* ] Alikhad = idan = niravadyam = rāja - niyogād  
= aśeśa -
65. śilp - isāḥ [ 1\* ] Nakkah Kuṇ [ t ] ūr - prabhavo nṛipa -  
śekhara - mukhya - karmmārah III<sub>a</sub> [ 39\* ] Namaśśivāya  
III<sub>a</sub>

(TAMIL PORTION) <sup>1</sup>

66. Svasti Śrī [ 11\* ] Ōṅgu - tirai viyaṇ - parappil udadhi  
ālayam = āga - t, - tēn - kamalu = malar neḍuṇ -
67. kaṭ - tiśai makaḷir mey - kāppa, viṇṇen peyarēy = aṇiya  
mēga - ṇāli vidāṇattiṇ, ra -
68. ṇ - ṇilar - kiḷ sahasra - phaṇa - maṇi - kiraṇam viḷakk -  
imaippa, bhujamgama - purassara - bhogi e -
69. ṇṇum poṇṇai miy - miśai - p, - payan taru Tumburu  
Nāradar paṇuva - ṇarapp - isai
70. śevi - [ y\* ] ura - p, - pūtala magaloḍu pūmagal pāda -  
sparśaṇai śeyya - k, - kaṇ - paḍuttā kār vaṇṇa -
71. ṇ - riṇ - paḍai māl śrī - bhū - pati, ādi - puruṣaṇ amara -  
nāyakaṇ alaḡ = amai nābhi - maṇḍa -
72. lattu - ch, - chōti marakata tuḷai - t - tāṭ - chuḍar por -  
rāmarai malar - miśai, viḷai -
73. vuṇṇu kaḷamakaniṣam = eṇṇa miḷirnd = ilaṅgu śaḍai -  
muḍi [ y\* ] ōḍ, = alaṇ = iyaṇṇa kamaṇḍa
74. lu - v - ōḍ = akshamālai - [ y\* ] - odu tonṇiṇa, chatur -  
bhujan chatur - vvaktran chatur - vvēdi chatur -  
dvay - ā
75. kshan, madu - k - kamal malar - k - kamala - yōṇi  
maṇṇan - tanta mā - muṇi Atri, aru - marapiṇ - pala -  
kāla -

1. The ends of metrical lines are indicated by a comma, supplied by the editor.

76. n - tavañ - śey - vuḷi avaṇ - kaṇṇil, = iruḷ parugum peruñ  
chōti<sup>1</sup> Indu - kiraṇan veli - p - pa -
77. ṭṭaṇaṇ [ l\* ], marṛ - avarṅku magan = āgiya maṇi - niḷ -  
muḍi - p - Putaṇṇukku - [ k\* ], - karṛai - ch - chen - kadir -  
k - ka -
78. ḍavuḷ vaḷivanda kaḷal - vēndaṇ, ēnd = eḷiṛ = rōḷ Iḷaṇ =  
oru nāl = iśaṇadu śāpam = ey -
79. di, pūn - taḷava maṇi - muruvar - poṇṇ = āgiya poṇ -  
vayirṇṇuḷ, pōr - vēndar talai - [ p\* ] - paḷippa van -
80. du tōṇṇiya Purūravar - p - piṇ, pār - vēndar = ēṇai - p -  
palarum pār - kaval pūṇḍ = u[ y\* ]tta - p:ṇ, tiśai
81. yāṇaiyiṇ kumbha - kūḍatt = ulaviya śeḷu makara - k -  
kulam, viśai - [ y\* ] - oḍu viṇ - mīṇ - ṇ - oḍu pōr -
82. mikḱ = eḷunda kaḍar - riraigaḷ, šeṇṇu tan śēv - aḍi - p -  
paṇiya aṇṇu niṇṇa oruva -
83. ṇ - piṇ, viṇjattiṇ vijñambhaṇaiyum peral Nahushan  
mada - vilāsamum, vañcha - t - toḷi -

#### FOURTH PLATE — FIRST SIDE<sup>2</sup>

84. l vātāpi śīr = āviyu = mah - odadhigaḷiṇ, śurūṅāda  
perun - taṇmaiṇiyum sukētu -
85. sutai sundarataiyum, = oruṅgu muṇ - nāl maḍivitta  
śīru - mēṇi uyar - tavattōṇ, ma -
86. ḍal = aviḷ = pū - malaiyattu mā - muṇi purōchitaṇṇ =  
āga - k, - kaḍal kaḍaṇḍ = amirdu k[o]ṇḍuṇ - ka -
87. yal = iṇai vaḍa - varai - p - poṇittum, Harihayanaḍ =  
āram pūṇḍum = avaṇ mudi - [ y\* ] - oḍu vaḷai

1. The letter *ti* seems to have been written originally in the Tamil script and then corrected into the *Vatṭeḷuttu*.

2. The plate is numbered 4 on this side. The numeral is written to the left of the ring hole, both of them enclosed in a square,

88. uḍaittum, viri-kaḍalai vēliṇ miṭṭum dēv - āsurāṇ - cheru  
venṇum, Agattiya -
89. ṇoḍu Tamil = ā [ y\* ] ndum miga - t - tiraṇ = uḍai  
vēnd = alittun, = Daśavadanaṇ - [ sandhākka ] - ch -  
chandu śey -
90. dun = Dhā [ r\* ] ttarāshṭrarar, paḍai muḷudun - kaḷatt =  
aviya bhāratattu - p - pakad = oṭṭiyum, maḍai - mi -
91. gu - vēl vāṇaraddhvajaṇ vasu - śāpam = agalvittum,<sup>1</sup>  
Hārischandraṇ - ṇagar = alitt = avaṇ paṛiśchandaṇ
92. pala kavarndum, nārkaḍal = oru pagal = āḍi nār - kōṭi  
poṇ ṇiyati nalgi, nūr -
93. kaḍalai - k karai - kaṇḍu non - pagaḍ = āyiram vaḷaṅgi -  
yum, uram - pōnda tiṇ - ḍōl = a
94. raisuga [ l\* ] śuram pōki - t - tuṛakkam = eydiyum, poṇṇ  
= imaiya - p - porupp = adaṇil ka -
95. ṇṇimaiyiṇ - kayal = eḷudiyum, pāyal mī - miśai nimirndu  
pal - l - uṇ
96. ḍi viruppuṇṇun, - kāyal - vāya - kaḍal - pōla - k - kuḷam  
palaviṇ karai - y - uyari -
97. yum, maṇ - ṇ - edirā - vagai venṇu Teṇ - Madurāpuraṇ -  
śeydum, aṅg = adaṇil - l - aruntamiḷ
98. nar - chaṅgam iri'i - t - tamiḷ vaḷarttum, Ālaṅgāṇatt =  
amar venṇu ṇālaṇ - kāval naṇ -
99. g = eydiyum, kaḍi - [ fi ] āru kaviṇ = alaṅgar - Kaḷappālar -  
kulaṇ - kaḷaindum, muḍi śūḍiya mura -
100. ṇ - manṇar ēṇai - p - palaru = munniganda piṇ, Idaiyā -  
ṇaiyum eḷil Venḇaikkudī -
101. yilum vel - koḍi eḍutta, kuḍai - vēndaṇ - ṇiru - k -  
kulattu - k kō - manṇar palar ka -

1. The letter *m* is written in the Grantha script.

102. lindapiṇ, Kāḍavaṇai - k - Karuvūril kāl - kalaṅga - k - kaḷiṇ  
= ugaitta, kūḍalar - kōṇ Śrī Parāntaka -
103. ṇ kurai - kaḷar - kō - ch - chaḍaiyarku - ch, - chēy = āgi  
velippaṭṭa śeṅgaṇmāl Śrī Vallabhaṇ, vē -
104. y - pōḷun - tōḷiyarkaḷ vidyādhara Hiranyagarbhaṇ,  
Kunṇūril = amar veṇṇuṇ - kurai - kaḍal = Ī.

#### FOURTH PLATE — SECOND SIDE

105. laṇ - koṇḍum, viṇ - ṇ - āḷa Villavaṇku Viḷiñattu viḍai  
kuḍuttum, Kāḍavaṇai - k - kaḍal = A -
106. nūr - p - pīḍ = aḷiya - p - piṇ - niṇṇuṇ, kuḍa - Kuṭṭuvar  
kuṇa - Śōḷar teṇ - Kūpakar vaḍa - pulavar,
107. aḍal = aḷindu kalaṇ - śera Amarvallāṇ magan paḍa - t -  
tan, kaḷiṇ = oṇṇu vaṇ - Kuḍantai - k - kadi kaṭṭi
108. Yampuraśilaṇ, oḷir = ilai - vēḷ upāyabahulaṇ umbar -  
vāṇ ulag - aṇaṇda - piṇ, marṇ = avar -
109. ku magan = āgiya korraṇaṇ = [e]ṇ - kō Varaguṇaṇ,  
pillai - [p\*] - pīrai śadaikk = aṇda Piṇākapaṇi
110. emberumāṇai, ullattil = iṇid = iruvi ulagaṇ kākkiṇṇa  
nāḷil [l\*] arav - araiśa -
111. ṇ pal - l - ūḷi āyiramāy = irun - talaiyāl, perid = aridiṇ  
poṇṇuṇṇa perum - poṇai maṇ -
112. magalaḷi - t - taṇ. t[o]di - t - tōḷil - l - eḷidu tāṅgiya  
Toṇḍiyar - kōṇ tuḷakk = illi, va -
113. ḍi - p - paḍai Māṇābharaṇaṇ tirumarugaṇ Mayilaiyar -  
kōṇ, Pottappi - k - kula - ch - Chōḷa -
114. ṇ pugalaḷ - taru Śiri Kaṇṭa rāśaṇ, matta - mā - malai  
valavaṇ maṇi - magalaḷ = Akkaḷanimmati,
115. tiru - vayiru karu - v - uryitta Śrī Parāntaka - mahārājaṇ,  
virai vari - t - tēr Vīra Nā -

116. raṇaṇ nuṇ - piṇanta vēl - vēndaṇai - ch, - chen - tāmarai  
malar - p - paḷaṇa - ch - chennilan - a
117. dai - ch - cheru - veṇṇuṇ, = kon - dār pūm - poliṇ - Kunṇai  
yuṇ - kuḍa - Koṇgilum
118. Pokkaraiyūn-, Ten - māya [ lu ] ñ - śeḷu - Veṇkaiyum  
Parāntakaṇṇuṇ - śi [ lai ] chch = edi -
119. rnda, maṇmāya - mā-miguttavar vastu-vāhanaṇ koṇḍum,  
āṇu pala talai - kaṇḍum
120. amar = ālaiyam pala śeyduṇ, - śēru - paḍu viyaṇ - kaḷaṇi -  
t - teṇ - Viḷiṇa - nagar koṇ -
121. duṇ, - Koṇgi - niṇru Tēṇūr = aḷavuṇ - Kuḍa - Koṇgar =  
uḍal maḍiya, veṇ - kaḍir vēl valaṇ - ko -
122. ṇḍum Vīra - Tuṇṇaṇai - k - kuṣai koṇḍum, eṇ - ṇ - iṇanda  
piramadēyamum eṇ-ṇ-iṇanda dēva -
123. dāṇamum, eṇ - ṇ - iṇanda tatakaṇḷalum iru - nilattil =  
iyaṇṇuvittum, niṇṇa - peru -
124. m-pugaḷālun nidi vaḷaṇḡu-koḍaiyālum, veṇṇi-p-pōr-t-  
tiruvālum vel-vē -
125. ndaril mēmpaṭṭa, kaḍir = āṇ kaḍuṇ-śuḍar = ilai - vēl  
Kalipagai Kaṇḍaroḷ - kaṇḍaṇ, Madhura -
126. pura - paramēśvaram Mānini Makara-kētanān, taṇ śeṅgō  
yāṇḍu nāṇpaḍiṇ mēl mūṇ -
127. ṛ = ōḍ = ir yāṇḍil, poṇ śiṇṇuḡā - maṇi - māḍa - p - puran-  
daraṇadu nagar poṇṇa, Kaḷakkuḍi
128. nāḍ = ada [ ni ] ṛ paḍṇṇ Kaḷakkuḍi vīṇ = ṛirund = aruḷi,  
Āśi - nāḍ = adaniṇ paḍum pirama -

### FIFTH PLATE — FIRST SIDE <sup>1</sup>

129. dēyam - aḡaṇ - kiḍakkai - t, - tēśamali Tirumaṇḡalam =  
idu paṇḍu Perunallūr = p,-

1. The plate is numbered 5 on this side near the ring-hole, but without any enclosure.

130. paḍuv - aḍanai - p - pāṅg = amainda kuḍigalaḍu kārāṇmai, mōḍ = eḷunda mudu - kombar - k -
131. kād = eḷundu kiḍand = aḍanai - k, - kaṛ - raṇindōr tīṇal parava - k - Kaḷappālarai - k - kaḷai - kat -
132. ta, maṛ - rira - tōṇ mā - k - Kaḍunkōṇ māṇa[ m\* ] pērtt = a[ ru ] ḷiya kōṇ, oṇṇu molind = irand = ōm -
133. pi oru mut - ti y - ulpaṭṭu, naṇṇu nāṇ - maṇai pēṇi aiy - vēḷivi nalam - paḍuttu, aṇu - toḷi -
134. ṛkaḷ mēmbaṭṭa maṇai[ y\* ] ōr pan - n - iruvarkku - k -, kārāṇmai miyāṭchi ul - ḷ - = aḍaṅga - k - kaṇḍ = amai -
135. ttu - ch, - cheppēḍu śeydu kuḍutt = aruḷiṇaṇ tēr - vēnda niṇ kula - muda[ l\* ] vaṇ[ l\* ] mai - p - paḍu kaṇ -
136. maḍa - magalir madavēḷ maṇu - samānaṇ, vaḷuvāda śēṅo - ṇaḍavi maṇ - magaṭkk = oru ko - v - āgi - k, - Ka -
137. ḷudūril siddhi - śeyda kaḍi - k - Kūḍa - ṇagar kāvalaṇ, Somāśi - kuṛuchchi - y - idu tollai
138. mēṇpaḍi kiḍandadaṇai, sōma - pāna - manō śuddhar = āgiya Kāṭhaka - sōmayājiyārkkku, e -
139. kabhōgam = aḍuvāga eḷir - cheppēṭṭ = oḍu kuḍuttanaṇ [ l\* ] āgiya iv - v - ūr = i -
140. raṇḍiṇ śēppēḍu maṇakkēṭṭil, iḷandu - pōyina - v - eṇṇum ēdam = il Sō -
141. māśikuṛuchchi - ch, - cheḷun - tagaiy nilattu - p - paḍum nilattai - k - Kaḍarriru -
142. kkaiy kiḷavaṇ, madi - taru peru - nāṅg = ellai iṭṭu - k - koṇḍu maṇṇ = aḍanai, Ma[ dhu ] ra -
143. taranallūr = eṇṇu pēr = iṭṭu - k - kuḍi - nilaṇ = āga - k, - koṇḍa nilam = aḍuvum ava -
144. ṇ kuḍi - nilaṇ = āgaiy taviṇdu, toṇḍu Sōmāśi - kuṛuchchi mēḷai purav = ēṇa - p - pe[ ru\* ] vad = e -



145.  $\eta\text{rum}$ ,  $\acute{\text{solliya}} - v - \bar{u}r = \text{iraṇḍun} - \text{tammil} = \text{ellai kalandu}$   
 $\text{kidaḱkum} = \text{ādalil}$ ,  $\text{oṇṇ} = \text{āga} - v - u -$
146.  $\text{ḍar} - \text{kūṭṭi} - p - \text{purav} = \text{eludi} - p - \text{piḍi} - \text{śūṇdu}$ ,  $\text{naṇṇ} =$   
 $\text{āgiya śāsanaṇ} - \text{śeydu nang} = \text{aruḷa vē} -$
147.  $\text{ṇḍum} = \text{eṇṇum}$ ,  $\text{vāsanaḷ} \text{ malar kamal} \text{ poḷil} - l - \text{Āśi} -$   
 $\text{nāṭṭuḷ} = \text{agram} = \text{āgiya}$ ,  $\text{karu} - v - \text{amainda kaṇa} -$
148.  $\text{ka} - \text{maḷigai} - t - \text{Tirumaṅgala} - \text{nagar} - t - \text{tōṇṇal}$ ,  $\text{Śōmāśi} -$   
 $\text{kurichchi ennuṇ} - \text{kāmar} - \text{vaṇ} - \text{padi} -$
149.  $\text{kāvalaṇ}$ ,  $\text{vaḍiv} = \text{amai Vāna} - \text{gōtrattu Baudhāyana}$   
 $\text{kalpattu} - k, - \text{kud}i \text{ viḷaṅga vēḷippa} -$
150.  $\text{ṭṭu guṇa} - \text{kaṇaṅgaṭk} = \text{iḍam} = \text{āgi}$ ,  $\text{maṇai nāṅgiṇ} - \text{ruṇai}$   
 $\text{pōgiya Māyānambi paṭṭarku} -$
151.  $\text{ch}, - \text{chiruvāṇ} = \text{āgiya perun} - \text{tagai} [y^*] \text{ōṇ} \text{ tiśai} - \text{mukaṇ}$   
 $\text{vēḷippaṭṭ} = \text{aṇai} [y^*] \text{ōṇ}$ ,  $\text{dharmma} - \text{vatsalaṇ} [a] -$
152.  $\text{dharmma} - \text{kōpi Māyā} - \text{nārāyaṇa paṭṭar mahāpanni vayir}$   
 $= \text{uyirtta}$ ,  $\text{śēy} = \text{āṇa tiru} - t - \text{tagai} [y^*] \text{ōṇ} \text{ Śrī} -$

### FIFTH PLATE — SECOND SIDE

153.  $\text{Nārāyaṇaṇ} \text{ Kēśavaṇ}$ ,  $\text{kalvi} - k - \text{kāḍal} \text{ karai} - \text{kaṇḍum}$   
 $\text{kshatriy} = \text{āṇumatam} = \text{uṇarndu}$ ,  $\text{śol} - \text{vittaka} -$
154.  $n - \text{taṇad} = \text{ākki śuddha} - \text{śil} = \text{āchāraṇ} = \text{āgi}$ ,  $\text{mīṇavaṇ}$   
 $\text{Vīraṇāraṇarku viśvāsa} - \text{kārmmaṅgaṭk}, = \text{āṇa} -$
155.  $\text{taṇmaiyaṇ} = \text{ādalīṇ} - n - \text{aruḷ} = \text{aṇindu} \text{ vinṇappyaṇ} - \text{śeya}$ ,  
 $\text{Madura} - \text{tara (tara) nallūr} = \text{eṇum vaḷa} -$
156.  $\text{mpadi Śōmāśikuṇuchchi}$ ,  $\text{adaṇ} - \text{mēlē} \text{ purav} = \text{ēṇṇi āṅg} =$   
 $\text{adu} [vu^*] n - \text{Tiru maṇ} [ga^*] \text{ lamum},$
157.  $\text{udaṇ} - \text{kūḍa} - p - \text{piḍi} \text{ śūḷvitt} = \text{ulag} = \text{aṇiya} - k - \text{kudutt}$   
 $= \text{aruḷiṇaṇ}$ ,  $\text{vaḍaṇ} - \text{kūḍu} \text{ mulai} - \text{maga} -$
158.  $\text{ḷir maṇmata vēḷ} \text{ maṇu} - \text{charitaṇ} \text{ llā} \text{ maṇṇ} = \text{iḍaṇukk}$   
 $= \text{āṇatti vaṇ} - \text{ḍamiḷ} - k - \text{kōṇ} = \text{adikāri},$

159. por = raḍam - pūṇ maṇi - mārbāṇ poliṇ - Pullūr = eḷiṇ -  
bhūsurāṇ, śey - y - undu puṇa -
160. r - cheruvīṇ śeṅgaḷunīṇ - mala [ r\* ] paḍugar, Vaiykunta -  
vaḷa - nāḍaṇ Vātsa - gōtra - chūḍā -
161. maṇi, Hari - charaṇa - kamala - śēkaraṇ āyiratt = aṇṇūṇ -  
ruvaṇ, Tirumagḷi = Ilaiyā - naḱkaṇ
162. tiṣai - nīrai perum puḡaḷāḷaṇ, buvaṇa - talam puḡaḷu -  
nidi avaṇisura - kula - tilakaṇ, tāḍalar
163. pūm - poli - raḷuvi - ch - chāli - viḷai vāya [ l\* ] vaḷattāḷ,  
mētagu puḡaḷ Venbu - nā -
164. tṭu - [ p\* ] - Peruntūveḷḷi eṇa - p - peyariya, tirundu - paḍi -  
k - kuḍi - t - talaivaṇ te -
165. nṇavan tiru - v - aruḷ śūḍiya, Peruntūveḷḷi kiḷavaṇ =  
āgiya peruntagaḷi
166. Śendaṇ - kiḷavaṇ, nalamali - śīr naḍuvunilai nāṅgu nāya -  
kaṇ = āgavum, alar
167. kaṇaḷum poṇal = Aḷaṇṇu - nāṭṭukk = akkiram = āgiya,  
mugi - rōy poliḷ Muṣukkuru -
168. chchi muṇ - kuḍippinōṇ kārmaḷaiya. aga = nīlattōṇ puḡaḷ  
= Aḷaṇṇu - nāṭṭu - k - kōṇ - n - arun -
169. tamiḷiṇ, pā - t - togu - poruḷ payaṇ = uṇarvōṇ koḍai -  
payil kaṇpaga - śilaṇ, Śāttam - baṭāraṇ = e -
170. na - p - piyariya takkōṇu = mikkōṇgu, kār - vāyal śūḷ  
kaḷāttirugai - p - pēr = araṇ śūḷ Pe -
171. ruṇḡakkūr - t, - talai - āgiya kula - k - kuruṣil tagu - tēya -  
māṇikkam, kalai payil Kiḷavaṇ -
172. kōṇum kaṇakku nūḷ - payil kaṇakkar = āgavum, māsil -  
vāṇa - akudi - t - tōṇṇiya Āśi - nāṭṭu nā -
173. tṭārum, machchuru vaḷam aṇai nivanda Nēchchura -  
nāṭṭu nāṭṭārum, uḍaṇ - āgi niṇṇ = ellai

174. kātta - p - piḍi śūlinda peru - nāṅ = ellai lla kil - ellai,  
puṇal puvaṇi puttēl mārutam
175. kaṇal iru - śuḍar yajamaṇaṇ, āgiya tīral = Aṣṭa-mūrtti  
amararkkum = aṇiv - ari [ y\* ] ōn, vē -
176. ga - veḷ - |viḍai ūrdi vishama - lōchanan maguḷnd = uṇai-  
yum, vāḷiyavāṇ riruvirup -

SIXTH PLATE — FIRST SIDE<sup>1</sup>

177. pūr mūḷi - niṇru teṇ - kiḷakku nōkki - p, - pōyiṇa Veḷ-  
lārrukkum āyiṇa Pe -
178. runallūr - ch - chiṇaikkum, vaṇkaḷḷi murambukkum  
Vaṇṇattār vaḷāgatti -
179. ṇ, nāṅ = uyar varamb = iṭṭukkum nalamigu Kaḷḷik -  
kuṇuchchi, mēlai - k - kaḷ -
180. ḷi murambukkum mētagu<sup>2</sup> naḍaiyāṭṭi kuḷattil, śāla -  
nīr - kōḷukkum ik - [ ku ] -
181. ḷattiṇ teṇ - kombiṇ maṇu - pākkum, pāṅ = amai paḍu -  
pāṇaikkum payantaru - kuḍi -
182. naḍai ēri, ōṅgiyavaṇ kuḷatt = agam - pāl - l - oḷugiya  
vaṇ - peruppukkum, ip -
183. peruppai ūḍ = aṇuttu śeppaḍu śeḷuṇ - kiḷakku nōkki,  
vārikkolḷi -
184. kkēy pōyiṇa vaḷi - y - adaṇkum vayal malinda, vāri - k -  
kolḷi - k - kuḷatti = nīr -
185. kōḷukkum aḍi - kuḷikkum mēkkum, teṇ - ṇ - ellai, tiru  
maru

1. This plate is numbered 6 on this side without any enclosure which, however, is found on the second side but without the numeral.

2. This may also be read as *mēṇku*.

186. nila - p - pāraikkum śēñ - śāli viḷai - kaḷaṇi, eriyānatai  
vaḍa - ka -
187. ḍai - k - kombir̥kum oḷugu kaḷḷi murambukkum, nīr =  
uḍai
188. aḷavai - ch - chuṇaikkum ūr = uḍaiyāṇ - kuḷi - t - teṇ -  
kaḍai - k - ko -
189. mbukkum, neḍu - maṇir̥ - kaṇ - r̥ālvukkum nīr - mārru -  
t - ti -
190. ḍalukkum, kaḍi - kamaḷ pūn - tār - k - kaṇattār kuḷikkum  
vaḍakku, mē -
191. l = ellai, kūrraṇ - kuḷi mīy - kuḷiyēy pōyiṇa paḍu -  
kālukkum, por̥ -
192. r̥arum āṇ - taṇa māṇi - k - kuḷattu - k - karai - p - perukuk -  
kum, nāḍari naṇ -
193. gaiyār kuḷiyiṇ mīy - kuḷiyēy kāḍaṇ = ērikkēy pōyiṇa  
vaḷik -
194. kum, = ēdam - il - l = eṇichchil vaḷikkum eḷil = amai  
Nēchchura nāṭṭōlai
195. kuḷatt = ellaikkum kiḷakkum, a [ da\* ] ṇ vaḍav ellai,  
vaḷamikka marudave -
196. li Iḷa - nechchur̥att = ellaikkum Vellārrukkum ter̥kum,  
I -

### SIXTH PLATE — SECOND PLATE

197. vviṣaitta peru - nāṅg = ellai uṇ - ṇilam = oṇṇ = oḷiyāmal,  
kāṇāṇmai
198. miyaḷchi uḷ - l - aḍaṅga - k - kaṇḍ = amaittu - ch, - chīr -  
śāṇra tiṣai - y - aṇaitti -
199. ṇ - ṇ - ellai - vāy - k - kaṇ - nāṭṭi - t -. tarumaṅgaḷir oṇṇu  
payil - Tirumaṅgalat -

200. tu - ch - chavaiyārkkum, tollai vaṇ - Śōmāsikuruṇchchi  
mallan mā - maraiyōr -
201. kkum, brahmadēya - sthiti valā vagaiy pṛithiviyaṇ - kaṇ -  
ṇilai - peruttu, dha -
202. rmma - karmma - parāyaṇaṇ = āgiya dharāpati koḍutt =  
aruḷi - p - piṇ, iṇḍiya perum
203. pugalaḷ = ēḍ = uṇu Śāṇḍilya gōttirattu, ēttār pugalaḷ  
ēka - sandhi Kātyāṇa
204. sūttirattu, vari - vaṇḍu maḍu - nugar - poliḷ - chiri -  
vallaḅha maṅgala -
205. ttu, chepp = ariya śeḷuṇ - śelvattu - p - pamapirāl  
mēḍakka, ka -
206. lai - payil Gaṇasvāmi bhaṭṭarku taṇperu - mā - madalai,  
ulavu śīrtti
207. Yōgēśvara bhaṭṭarku viśiṣṭaṇ = āgiya, Tiruvaḍi - ch -  
chōmāśi
208. yēṇṇuṇ - śīr - maraiyōṇ magalaḷ payanda, tiru - maru - śīr -  
ch - chiri -
209. mādhavan Śrī mādhava charaṇa - śekharaṇ, vēda -  
vēdāntaṅkaḷum vivi -
210. dha śāstramum taṇṇōḍu piṇar, = ōdi - k - keṭṭi = uṇarv  
= eyta<sup>1</sup> uraikkum = āchāryyaṇ = ā -
211. gi, perun - tagaiy piramadēyam = idaṅku praśasti śey -  
dōrku, tirundiya na -
212. ṇ peruvaḷālum śeḷum - puṇar - parutti - vayakkalum, iv -  
vayalgaḷ = ik -

1. The letter *ta* is corrected *ti*.

213. kiṇar = iraṇḍum ak - kiṇarrāl viḷai - nilaṇum, marr = avvūr mā śavai [y\*]ōr
214. perṛa pariśey koḍutta - piṇ, śīriya śelum paṇi idaṛku - ch - cheppēdu vācha -
215. kattai, āriyam virāy - t - tamil toḍutta madi [y\*]ō - rkum avai eḷdiya, kar -
216. p = amainda karatalattu - ch - chirpa Mā [r\*] ttāṇḍar - kkum, maṇ - ṇ - eṅgun - niṇainda vāṇ

### SEVENTH PLATE — FIRST SIDE<sup>1</sup>

217. pugai Kaṇṇaṇ - kīraṇ vayakkal, tiru - migu - nar - chiṅga - kuḷa - vaḷāl maruviya Śō -
218. māśi - vayakkal - l - eṇṇum, vayalkaiṇ - kiṇarugal - l - oru mūṇṇum ek - kālamum maṇ -
219. ṇu - k - kiṇarril viḷai vayal = aṇaittum iraiyili - y - āgavum, śolliya ik - kī -
220. ṇaru mūṇṇiṇ - iḍai - k - kiḍanda ton - ṇila - muḷuvadum, illa - vaḷāl = aduvāgavum eḷi -
221. ṇ - mfkka tōṭṭam = āgavum, val - l - erumai peru - nuvingal virālugaḷ puṇar - padi i -
222. daṇiṇ, kōl - l - urimaiyiṇ - śempāgamum mahasabhai kuṇip - p - oḍu - koḍuttu - p, - paga -
223. l - śeyyum paruti nāyyiṇum iravu - ch - cheyyum paṇi - madi [y\*]um, aḡal nālamum
224. ula - v - alavum śeppēdu śeydu koḍutt = aruḷiṇaṇ, maṇi nīl - muḍi - maṇ paṇi kaḷal

1. There is a border-like enclosure the ring-hole; but no numeral is found in it.

225. vasudhādhīpa vāsudevan, aṇi - niḷ puyatt = ahitāgni  
achalāchalan anavarjyan, konda -
226. lar - tār kō - ch - chaḍaiyaṇ kūḍar - kōṇ guru - chari-  
taṇ, Śen - tamīl - k - kōṇ Śrīnikē -
227. tanan Śrī Parāntaka - mahārājan llā praśasti śesha -  
krit - Pāṇḍya dramīl = ābha -
228. raṇaḥ kavīḥ [ 1\* ] karmmāra - śrēṇikā - mukhyaḥ Śiva -  
pādambuj = āśrītaḥ llā Tēr - mi
229. gu mā - k - kaḍar = rāṇai - t - teṇṇavar - kōṇ - r iruvaruḷar -  
chīr - mīgu śēppēṭṭu -
230. kku - ch - chēn - tamīl - p - pā - t - toḍai śeydōṇ, atbhutam  
= eṇum pālīkka
231. ḷ avir - śaḍai muḍi araṇ vēṇḍa, narparaśu - ni [ r\* ] mmit -  
tavaṇ = alir śadaimēl = alaṅgal perṛa,
232. mā - muṇi Maṇu vaḷi - vandōṇ pā - maru paṇḍita dāsan,  
poṇ varaṇṇi maṇi varaṇṇi aki -
233. l varaṇṇi - k - karai poru punar, - reṇ vaiygai vaḷa - nā -  
ḍaṇ Śeḷuṇ - kuṇḍūr nagar - t - tōṇṇal, pāṇḍi - t -
234. tamīlābaraṇaṇ = eṇnum pala sīrappum peyar = eydiya,  
Pāṇḍi - mārāya - p - peruṇ - ko -
235. llaṇ = āgiya Śirī - vallavaṇ llā Teṇṇavar - tan - tirāl =  
āṇai - ch - chilai [ y\* ] oḍu puli kayal = i
236. ṇai - maṇ, poṇṇimaiya - ch - chimaiyattu vīraṇ - karuvi  
[ y\* ] iṇ - pōkkun - toḷil, śeydu van -
237. dovar piṇṇōṇ śeyal pala payiṇṇōr muṇṇōṇ, tirumali  
śāsanam = idaṅku - ch - che
238. ḷun - tamīl pāḍiṇōṇ tantai Nirupaśekara - p - peruṇ  
kollaṇ niṇai puḷaḷ Nakkaṇ = eḷutt = ivai [ y\* ] ē [ ll\* ]





# THE ŚIVAKĀŚI COPPER - PLATE

GRANT OF

VĪRA PĀNDYA\*

BY

T. N. SUBRAMANIAM & P. R. SRINIVASAN

The set of copper - plates described below containing an inscription of Vira Pāṇḍya was found in the possession of Śrī Oragante Kanakayya Naidu of Śivakāśi in the Tirunelveli district and it is learnt that the grant had been in the family for a very long time. Nothing further is known about the previous history of the same. The grant has since been purchased for the Government Museum, Madras where it is now deposited.

We had an opportunity of examining the plates before their sale to the Museum. With the help of the ink - impressions then prepared, we are making a preliminary notice of the grant, with its text, reserving the fuller discussion in detail of the several interesting points and new light thrown by the same for our forthcoming paper editing the inscription in the *Epigraphia Indica*.

The set<sup>1</sup> consists of five plates of which the third and the fifth plates are broken. The third plate is broken into two and both the parts are available, while the last is in five pieces of which one has been irretrievably lost. Thus a few letters ranging from one to four or five, have been lost in the last seven lines of the grant. Further, one of the right-hand corners of the second plate is broken resulting in the loss of one or two letters at the end of one line, though they can be supplied with certainty.

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\* Paper read before the Archaeological Society of South India on 22 - 1 - 1960.

1. This has since been reviewed in the *Annual Report on Indian Epigraphy* for the year 1960-61 (C.P. No. 21).

Each plate has a hole on the left margin in the middle, to facilitate the plates being held together with a ring passing through such holes; but neither the ring nor the seal attached thereto has been found. It is not also known whether the seal was attached to the ring at the joint soldering both its ends, or was strung in the ring separately as found in the other Pāṇḍya grant mentioned above.

The first and the last plates have writing only on the inner sides, the outer faces being left blank, while the other three are written on both the sides. Thus there are eight sides of writing. All the plates excepting the first one, which has its first side blank, are numbered on the first side on the margin to the left of the ring-hole and the numerals 2 to 5 are found engraved on the consecutive plates.

As is usual with the copper-plate grants found in this part of the Tamil country, the present one also consists of two parts, the Sanskrit written in the Grantha script and the Tamil written in the Vaṭṭeḷuttu script, each complete in itself, and complementary to the other. The Tamil names occurring in the Sanskrit portion in other grants are found written in the Grantha script supplying the wanting letters like *ra* and *la* from the Tamil form; in this grant, however, they are found written with the Vaṭṭeḷuttu forms of those letters. A comparison of the contents of both the Sanskrit and Tamil parts would suggest that the Tamil portion was the official one and prepared in the first instance, that the Sanskrit portion was prepared subsequently based on the Tamil version and incised on the copper-plates when both of them were ready duly approved.

The Sanskrit portion begins with an invocation to the Hindu gods of Trinity, Viṣṇu, Brahmā and Śiva. The next verse is in praise of the Pāṇḍya family. Then the mythical ancestry of the family is mentioned. From the primeval lotus was born Brahmā, the lord of creation; from him was born Atri and from him, the moon (Śaśi). From the latter was born Pāṇḍya, the progenitor of the family. The members of this line performed many heroic acts like breaking the bracelet on the crown of Indra (Kuliśāyudha), acting as the messenger for the celestials, victory over the army of Kurus, and similar ones. In that family line

was born Tivrakōpa; from him was born Śrīvallabha, an expert in polity and prowess. From that king was born Mānakulāchala. His son was Mānābharana. The latter married the daughter of Ravi, the king of Kēraḷa (Kēraḷa-vams'a-kētu) and the issue of this union was Vira Pāṇḍya, born as Guha to Pārvaṭi (Śaila-sutā), wife of Śambhu (Siva). Sundara Pāṇḍya was the elder brother of Vira Pāṇḍya and was famous as 'the refuge of the learned' (Vibudhāśrayah). Vira Pāṇḍya was governing the earth with his powerful arms and the crowd of kings bowed at his feet. In the third year of his reign while he was residing at Virapāṇḍyapura, he appointed Pītāmbara to compose Sanskrit verses (ślokaś) for his charters and gave him a land grant. The donee is described as the grandson of Gōvindasvāmibhaṭṭa and son of Vāsudēva belonging to the Rathītara gōtra and Āśvalāyana sūtra. He had three brothers, Bhaṭṭa Gōvindasvāmi, Śrīdhara and Nārāyaṇa, and his mother was Āryā. The land given to him consisted of three *velis* measured by Puraṇānchilkōl inclusive of the hamlet known as Vāḷaikōdu in the village of Nalapura in Mēl-Vemba rāṣṭra along with ten *māsha* of land in the *mutunilam* (barren land) for his residential purposes. The area, compact in itself was separated (from the village), included under the jurisdiction of rāṣṭra, circumambulated by the female elephant and given away as a *brahmadēya* gift; it was renamed as Śāsanamaṅgalam, and the *kāraṇmai* and *mīyāṭchi* rights were bestowed on the donee, along with the libation of water. The *viññapti* (petitioner) was the brāhmaṇa Brahmāśrī Tuṅgarāja of the Gārgya line having the name of Ravi, while the *aiññapti* (executor) was the minister Teṇṇavan Uttara-mantri holding the post of *Sandivigraha*. The Officer (*adhikāri*) was the Dramiḷa-mahārāja. The circumambulation by the female elephant was conducted by Tiruchirāpaḷli, lord (*prabhu*) of Kula-grāma in the Muḷli-rāṣṭra who was the *aiññapti* (executor) under the supervision of the Superintendent of the elephant corps (*gajādhyaksha*) named Śrī Teṇṇavan anuttara-Pallavadyaraiya. Four persons, viz., Vilayāchchilai, Pulla, Paṭṭalaka, and Chāṇāṭu-kiḷavan, are named as the accountants (*Gaṇakāh*). Then follows the verse in the pattern similar to the ones found in other grants, wherein Vira Pāṇḍya begs of the future kings to protect the grant. The last verse mentions that the *prāśasti* was composed by the poet Vishṇu-

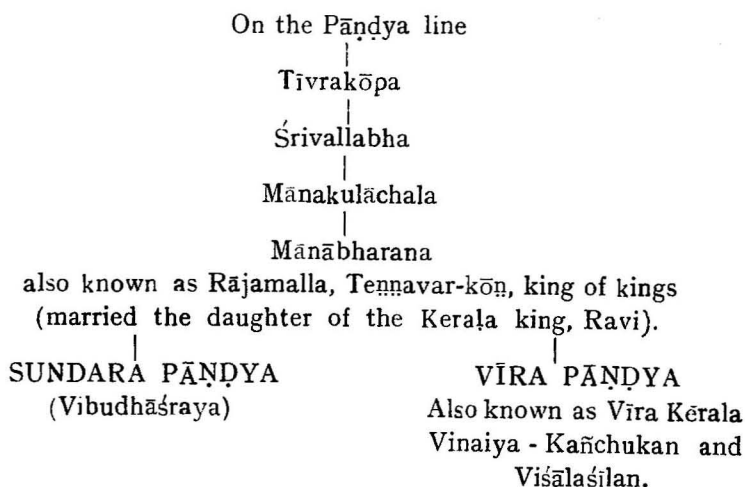
trāta, the son of Ūrukīrti and the grandson of Ravi. He had also the epithet Pārthiva-kēsari and was the *dharmmopadeshta-guru* of the king.

The Tamil portion which follows the above begins with the eulogy of the lineage (*paramparai*) of the Supreme kings of the Pāṇḍyas (Pāṇḍya-paramēśvaras) and alludes to some of the mythical episodes of the former kings. It is said that members of this family 1) descended from the moon (*chandra*); 2) ruled over the entire circle of the earth; 3) broke the bracelet on the crown of Indra in ancient times; 4) incised the emblem of the corps on the Himalayas; 5) gave away the gift of thousand elephants in alms; 6) (discussed and) settled the Tamil (language) with Agastya; 7) went as a messenger (*dūta*) to the celestials (i.e. mediated with them); 8) changed the course (*varavu*, literally incoming) of the great (great and black) sea; 9) churned the ocean thus receded; and 10) accomplished many such heroic acts. In this family was born the king of kings Rājamalla, also known as Mānābharāṇan (wearing) the jewelled crown, the Pāṇḍya king (Tēṇṇavar-kōṇ). His son, born to the beautiful daughter of the Chēra king (*Chēralaṇ*) to be worshipped by (the people of) the fertile-land (*śelunilam*) was Vīra Kēralan, also having the epithets Vīra Pāṇḍyan, Vinaya-kañchukan, and Viśāla-śīlaṇ. This prince was crowned in his city of Tamil-k-kūḍal, i.e. Madurai, so that his family might prosper (*kulam-viḷaṅga*). When he was enjoying the festivities he wanted that some poet should be appointed to draft the *ślōkas* in the Sanskrit portion of his orders (*śāsana*) and directed that Vāsudēva-Pītāmbara Bhaṭṭa belonging to the family of Gōvindasvāmi-bhaṭṭa-Sōmāyaji of the Rāthitara-gōtra and the Āśvalāyana-sūtra, a resident of Ten-vīra-dhara maṅgalam in Muḷli-nāḍu should be the person for the same. Having been pleased with the *anushtubh* verses composed by him, the king while residing at Vīrapāṇḍiyapuram *alias* Chellūr in Aṇḍa-nāḍu gave him in the year opposite to the second year of his reign as his fees (*dakṣiṇai*) three *vēlis* of double crop wet land measured by the rod *Pura-nāñchil* inclusive of the hamlet (or plot of land known as) Vāḷaikōḍu in the village Nalapurattukoppam, a *koppam* in the territorial division of Mēl-vemba-nāḍu, ten *mā* in the barren land (*mudu-nīlam*) for his residence, renaming the area as Śāsana-maṅgalam, in the form of *eka-bhōga*.

*brahmadēya*. The area thus gifted was circumambulated with the female elephant, removed from the control of the assembly of the Ūr (Ūr-āṇmai) and included in the administrative control of the assembly of the *nādu* (nāṭṭāṇmai). The charter (śāsana) and the order of proclamation (araiyōlai) bestowing the rights inclusive of *karāṇmai* (tenancy) and *miśāychi* (v. miyāṭchi or over-lordship) of the donee were prepared separately and issued to the brāhmaṇa with a request to spread his fame in the world. Then follow the list of officers and the part played by them in this transaction. The petitioner (viṇṇappam) was Tennavaṇ Brahmaśri ũṅga-rājaṇ *alias* Vaṇattaṇ of Raṇasiṅgamaṅgalam in Arumporkkūṇram; the executor (āṇatti) was Iyakkañ-śelvan entitled Tennavan Uttaramantri, who was the lord of Kaṇaiyarapaḷli and (holding the post of) *mandira-ōlai-nāyakaṇ*. Rājasimha *alias* Tamila-p-pēraraṇyan was the officer-in-charge (*adhikari*). Then two officials, Śaḍayaṇ-Kālī of Sēnnilakkuḍi in Ten - Paruttikkūḍi - nādu, who was the *anukkappillai* and Keśavaṇ-Gaṇapati of Vellappa-nādu are named as the supervisors (*kaṇkāṇi*) and four others, viz., 1) Araiyan Viraiyāchchilai of Naṇṇarāyckkūḍi in Purattaya-nādu; 2) Kāḍampaṭṭalakan of Śīru-Śēvūr in Tirukkānappēr-k-kūṇram, 3) Sōlaikilavan of Māṅgudi in Chāḷa-nādu and 4) Iḷavalam-Pullan of Kaṇṇanūr in Vikkirama-kāma-vaḷanaḍu as *puravu-vari*. Anuttara-p-pallava Araisu *alias* Maran Sōlai was the commander (*nāśakam* i. e. *nāyaka*) of the elephants and Araiyan Tiruchirāpaḷli of Kuḷattur in Mullinādu was the executive (*āṇai olukku*). The nāṭṭār of the Mēl-vembanādu, the owners of the Brahmadēyas, and the members of the assembly *ūr* of Nalapuram were also present when the land was measured, circumambulated by the female elephant, boundaries fixed and stones planted. The boundary is then described in detail. Parāṅkuśamaṅgalam, Karuṅguḍi, the river Taṇporun(da)m, the big channel (*peruṅkal*) of Neydalampaṇai nādu and that of Eḷiṇādu are some of the names figuring therein. It is also stated at the end that the tax thereon (*irai-k-kadaṇ*) was fixed at fourteen *īla-k-kalaṇju*. This is followed by two Sanskrit *ślokas* in the *anushtubh* metre. But these are not any of the usual imprecatory verses found at the end of such grants. In fact, no imprecatory verse is found in this grant. Both the verses have gaps. The first verse says that the grant was written by the officer whose name is lost, who had the epithet *mūvēṇdavvē(ḷān)*, and who was the

son of Tirumāl. The last verse is of the type of the *śloka* usually found on the royal seal attached to the copper-plate grants and also sometimes at the beginnings of lithic records. It is mentioned therein that the donor-king was 'the light of the Luni-solar family' (*Chandrārka vamsa dīpa*) and had the epithet Jaṭilavarman.

From the contents of both the Sanskrit and the Tamil portions, the following genealogical table may be prepared.



*Notes :*

1. It is not clear whether Sundara Pāṇḍya and Vira Pāṇḍya were full brothers or born of different mothers.
2. Pāṇḍyan princes having the name of Vira Kēraḷan are known to have existed even in later times. One such person is found mentioned in the *meykkīrtti* of Kulōttunga III as Miṇvāṇam Virakēraḷan.

The last three names of the above genealogy, Mānābharana, Vira Kēraḷan and Sundara Pāṇḍyan are found mentioned in the *meykkīrtti* of Rājadhiraḷa I. "Among the three kings of the Pāṇḍyas (Teṇṇavar) (he) cut off on a battle-field, the beautiful head of Mānābharana, (which was adorned with) large jewels (and) which was inseparable from the golden crown, seized in battle Vira Kēraḷan whose ankle-rings were wide and was pleased to get him trampled by the furious elephant Attivāraṇa; and

drove to the ancient Mullaiyūr, Sundara Pāṇḍyan of endless great fame, who lost in a hot battle the royal white parasol, the bunches (of hair) of the white yak, and the throne, and who ran away,—his crown dropping down, (his) hair dishevelled and (his) feet tired.”<sup>2</sup>

It will be rather tempting to identify the two sets of names as referring to the same persons and take the donor of the grant as a contemporary of Rājendra Chōla I in the middle of the eleventh century A.D. But there are many difficulties in the way of such an identification.<sup>3</sup>

The Grantha script used for writing the Sanskrit portion of the present grant is clearly earlier than that of the Tiruvālaṅgaḍu plates<sup>4</sup> of Rājendra Chōla I.

The genealogy given above is not mentioned in any other record and does not find a place in the Pāṇḍyan history so far known. But the last three names are found mentioned in some of the earlier inscriptions. An inscription from Tiruppuḍaimarudūr<sup>5</sup> in the Ambasamudram taluk of the Tirunelveli district, dated in the 2nd plus 18th year in the reign of Śaḍaiyan-Māraṇ, who has been identified with Rājasimha, the donor of the Larger S'innamanūr plates, mentions a servant of Vira Pāṇḍya who, in turn, has been identified with Śōlan-talai-koṇḍa Vira Pāṇḍya. Another much damaged inscription<sup>6</sup> from Ambasamudram

2. *S.I.I.*, Vol. III, p. 56. See also K. A. Nilakanta Sastri : *The Cola*, Vol. I (First Edn.) p. 269 where he has altered the translation of Hultzsch at some places, especially *Tenṇavar māvar* into 'the three allied kings of the South.'

3. As a matter of fact in the discussion that followed the introduction of the grant in the meeting of the Society, Prof. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri and Sri K. R. Srinivasan were rather inclined to accept this identification as they felt that the terms *Mūvendaveḷan* and the *puravu-vari* mentioned in the grant were not of such antiquity. But these are actually found in earlier inscriptions as will be shown in our forthcoming edition of this grant in the *Ep. Ind.*

4. (*S.I.I.* Vol. III Part III). The *Vaṭṭeḷuttu* script also points to an earlier date. As such palaeographically the grant cannot be assigned to such a late date.

5. *A.R.E.*, No. 122 of 1905. (*S.I.I.*, Vol. xiv., No. 68).

6. *Ibid.* No. 301 of 1916. (*Ibid.*, No. 77).

belonging to the time of Śaḍaiyan-Māraṇ, the date of which is lost, mentions Mānābharana as the surname of the donor therein. Another record<sup>7</sup> from the same place dated in the reign of Vīra Pāṇḍya 'who took the head of the Chōla' testifies to the existence of Pāṇḍya princes named Mānābharana, Vikrama Pāṇḍya and Sundara Pāṇḍya, as evidenced by names of certain officers figuring therein designated after those princes. A number of inscriptions<sup>8</sup> from Paḷlimaḍam in the Aruppukkōṭṭai taluk of the Rāmanāthapuram district dated in the reign of Vīra Pāṇḍya 'who took the head of the Chōla, register donations made to the temple of Sundara-Pāṇḍya-Īśvaram, built at the place as a memorial (*Paḷlipaḍai*) to Sundara Pāṇḍya. The tenor of those records would suggest that the temple should have come into existence recently, only a short time before. The earliest<sup>9</sup> of such records is dated in the 4th plus 3rd regnal year of the king. It may be surmised therefrom that Sundara Pāṇḍya should have died sometime in the earlier part of the reign of Vīra Pāṇḍya.

It is generally held that Vīra Pāṇḍya 'who took the head of Chōla,' was the immediate successor of Rājasimha, the son of Parāntaka-Vīranārāyaṇa and the donor of the Larger Śinnamanūr plates though the relation between the two was not clear. Of the three accountants (*Kaṇakkar*) whose names are recorded in the Larger Śinnamanūr plates, the first is described as Nakkan-kāḍan (i.e. Kāḍan, the son of Nakkan) of Śīruśēvvūr in Tirukkānappēr-k-kūrāram. In the Śivakāśi plates, now under discussion, we find the name of Kāḍam-Pa(t)tālakaṇ (i.e. Paṭṭālakan, the son of Kāḍan) of Śīru Sēvvūr of Tirukkānappēr-k-kūrāram mentioned as one of the four *puravu-vari* officers, referred to as *gaṇakāḥ* (or accountants) in the Sanskrit portion, where the officer is simply mentioned as Paṭṭālaka. It is very likely that this Paṭṭālaka was the son of Kāḍan of the Larger Śinnamanūr plates. Then Vīra Pāṇḍya, the donor of the present grant, could not have been far removed from Rājasimha of the Larger Śinnamanūr plates and was probably his successor. This supposition is supported by the fact that Vīra Pāṇḍya or atleast the reigning Pāṇḍya king is referred to as Jaṭilavarman in the present grant while we know

7. *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXV. P. 39.

8. *A.R.E.*, No. 420, 424, 426 etc. of 1914.

9. No. 420 of 1914. *S.I.I.*, Vol. XIV, No. 79).



that Rājasimha of the Larger Śinnamanūr plates was a Māravarman. Under the circumstances we may identify the donor of the present grant with Vira Pāṇḍya 'who took the head of the Chōḷa.'

Then it will become apparent that he did not belong to the main line of Rājasimha, but was a member of a junior branch. Then his elder brother Sundara Pāṇḍya and father Mānābharāṇa have to be identified with their namesakes mentioned in the records of the reign of Rājasimha. The circumstances under which a member of the junior branch succeeded Rājasimha of the main line would be an interesting study.

Mānābharāṇa, the father of the donor, is credited, according to the present grant, with kingly titles and it has to be presumed that he was also ruling as a monarch over some area now not clear. He had also the name of Rācamulla, which name, we know, had been borne by some kings of the Western Ganga family of Talakkad.

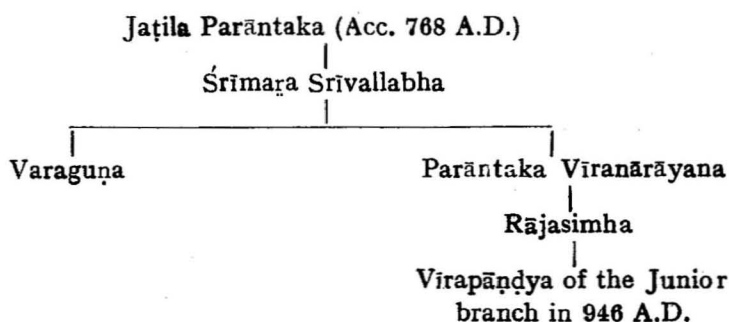
The date of accession<sup>10</sup> of Vira Pāṇḍya 'who took the head of Chōḷa' has been fixed as 946 A.D. on the presumption that he is identical with Vira Pāṇḍya whom, according to Chōḷa records, Āditya II Karikāla is said to have captured and killed. Prior to that date only two fixed dates are known in the history of the Pāṇḍyas. One is 768 A.D. as the date of the accession of Jaṭila Parāntaka according to the Ānaimalai<sup>11</sup> and Tirupparankuṇṇam<sup>12</sup> records and the other is 863 A.D. as the date of accession of Varaguṇa according to the Aivarmalai record.<sup>13</sup> Parāntaka and Varaguṇa of these records have been identified by scholars with the father and son respectively of Śrīmāraṇ Śrīvallaḥḥa. The genealogical and chronological position of the Pāṇḍyas at this period as now made out is as follows :—

10. *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXV., p. 37.

11. *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII., p. 317.

12. *I.A.*, Vol. XXII., p. 67. (*S.I.I.*, Vol. XIV., No. 3).

13. *A.R.E.*, No. 705 of 1905. (*Ibid.*, No. 22, where the village is named as Ayyampālaiyam).



We thus find four generations of kings ruling for 178 years giving an average of nearly 45 years for each reign.

From the Dalavāyppuram copper - plates of Parāntaka Viranārāyana, noticed above, it is seen that Varaguṇa and his brother Viranārāyana had a joint rule and had a reign of not less than 45 years. Their father Śrī Vallabha and grandfather Parāntaka had ruled for a total period of 95 years. Such long reigns, especially for four successive generations are very unusual. Similar long reigns are also assigned to the contemporary powers, the Pallavas of Kāñchi and the Western Gaṅgas of the Prithivīpati line, all of them in the Tamil country and inter-related politically. This will appear as rather unique. A close examination of the political events of the times would necessitate framing a revised chronology of the Pāṇḍyas in the period pushing back the date of accession of this Vira Pāṇḍya at least by about half a century. This is being examined in our forthcoming article in the *Epigraphia Indica*.

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# TEXT

## \*FIRST PLATE — SECOND SIDE

1. Svasti Śri [11\*] Lakshmīñ = chiram pushyatu vas = tridhāmā tan = nābhi - panma<sup>1</sup> - prabhava svayambhūḥ [1\*] śai -
2. lēndra dhanv = āpi sur - āpag - ō [r\*] mmi - vyāsaṃgi - sōm - āṃkuraḥ śekhara - śriḥ ll [1\*] Lay - āna -
3. bhijñō jagatām vilay = ēpi nidhi - śriyaḥ [1\*] yaśasā pāṇḍara - sthēyān - vaṃśaḥ Pā -
4. ṇḍya - mahī - bhujām ll [2\*] Ādi - patmā<sup>2</sup> = abbūt Brahmā tasmād = Atris = tataś = Śaśi [\*] Pāṇḍy - ōsmāt bhu -
5. vana - sthityai prasa - sāra tat = ōnvayaḥ ll [3\*] Hārasya ha [r\*] ttā Kulis' - āyudha -
6. sya tan - mauli - bandhē valayasya bhēttā [1\*] girv - vāṇa - dūtaḥ Kuru - sainya jē -
7. t - ēty - ēvam vidhā yat prabhavā narēndrāḥ ll [4\*] tatr - ānvavāy = ējani Tivra -<sup>3</sup>
8. kōpa [ḥ\*] Śrīvallabh - ōsmān - naya - s'auryya - śāli [1\*] tasmān - nṛipān - Mānakula -
9. chal - ōbhūt putr = ōsya Mānābharaṇō babhūva ll [5\*] Rājñō Ravēḥ Kēraḷa - vaṃśa - kē -
10. tō<sup>4</sup> rūḍhā sutā yā nṛi - varēṇa tēna [1\*] Śri Vira - Pāṇḍyan - tanayan - tat - ōsau lēbē Guha -

\* The numeral 1 is written on the margin to the left of the ring-hole.

1. Read *padma*.

2. Read *padmad*.

3. The letter *vra* looks very much like *pra*.

4. The *kombu* of the letter *to* is written at the end of the previous line.

11. m śaila - sutēva śambhōḥ || [ 6\* ] Yasya Sundara - Pāṇ -  
dy-ōbhūt pūrvvajō vibudh - āśrayaḥ [ 1\* ]
12. vikram - ākrānta - viśvasya śaurēr - iva purandaraḥ || [ 7\* ]  
Viśvaṃ guṇōghai = jjanatāḥ pra -

### \* SECOND PLATE — FIRST SIDE

13. mōdair - artthair = dvijendrān - ahitān - anartthaiḥ [ 1\* ]  
bandhūn sukhair - āsrayatōbhi [ lā ] -<sup>1</sup>
14. shair = yyaḥ pūrayaty = apratima prabhāvaḥ || [ 8\* ]  
Sambhrānta namr - āvanipāla - mauli - mā -
15. kā - rajo - rajjita<sup>2</sup> pāda - pīṭhaḥ [ 1\* ] [ dō ] [ r\* ] bhyām -  
mahī - maṇḍalam - āpayōdhē [ r\* ] - yyō lilay - ai -
16. v - āṃ gadavat bibha [ r\* ] tti || [ 9\* ] Gōvindasvāmi -  
nāmnas - tulita - śata - dhṛitēḥ pita - sōma -
17. sya putraḥ patyur - vvāchām - aśōsh - āgama - sarid -  
udadhēr - vVāsudēvasya pu -
18. traḥ [ 1\* ] prājñasya - vyāsa dhāmna śrūta vinaya -  
nidhē [ r\* ] Śrīdharasy - āgra - janmā tasya
19. prēm - aika - pātraṃ kavir = amala - matēr - asti  
Pitāmbarākhyāḥ || [ 10\* ] Dhīmān - a -
20. bhūn - nidhir = vvācham yasya Nārāyaṇ = ōnujaḥ [ 1\* ]  
agrajō bhaṭṭa Gōvinda -
21. svāmi - chūlāmaṇis - satām || [ 11\* ] Yōdhyaisht - ātulam  
= āśvalāyana - kṛitaṃ sūtraṃ sa -
22. tinām - parām - Ā [ r\* ] yyām - āhur - arundhatim - iva  
pāraṃ yasyān - aghām - mātaram [ 1\* ] p [ ā ] rāvāra -

\* The numeral 2 is written on the margin to the left of the ring-hole.

1. The plate is broken here; but still the letter can be traced.

2. Read *rañjita*.

23. chatuṣṭayaṅta sakala - kṣmā - śāsānē s'āsanē - lēkhyam  
slōkam - anindya dhīr = akuru -
24. ta Śrī Vīra - Pāṇḍyasya yaḥ || [ 12\* ] Tasmai - Rathītara-  
kul [ ā\* ] ndhajā - yāsau kalākaraḥ [ 1\* ] ṭṛiti -

## SECOND PLATE — SECOND SIDE

25. yē<sup>1</sup> rājya varshē svē Vīra - pāṇḍya - purē vasan || [ 13\* ]  
Mēl - vempa - rāshṭr = ālamkāra<sup>2</sup> -
26. t grāmān - Nalapur - āhvayāt [ 1\* ] puṇanāñchil<sup>3</sup> - kōl -  
itam vēli - trayam - mā [ tra ] m = akhaṇḍi -
27. tam<sup>4</sup> || [ 14\* ] Samēta Vālaikōṭṭ<sup>5</sup> = ākhyā - dēśam - mutunile  
tathā [ 1\* ] nivāsa kalpanārttha -
28. ñ = cha daśa - māsha - pramāṇakam || [ 15\* ] Kārāṇmai  
miyāṭchi - yutam karēṇu - bhramaṇānvita -
29. m [ 1\* ] pratha<sup>6</sup> kritya mahākhaṇḍam - āṇiya - brahma -  
dēyatām || [ 16\* ] Rāshṭra - lakshy - āgrahā
30. ratvan - tath - āp - ānya - viśām - patiḥ [ 1\* ] kṛit - āgra-  
hāran tam - iman - nāmna - Śāsana -
31. maṅgalam || [ 17\* ] Vāri - pūrvvan - [ d\* ] vijēndrāya  
Vīra - Pāṇḍyaḥ prasēdivān [ 1\* ]
32. Bhaṭṭa Pitāmbarāy - ādāt punar - ukta - svayambhuvē ||  
[ 18\* ] Brahmaśrī Tumga -
33. rāj - ōsmin - vijñapti dvija - puṁgavaḥ [ 1\* ] Gārgy -  
ānvayāya - tilakō - Ravi - nām - ābhavat kṛi -

- 
1. The *kombu* of *tē* is at the end of the last line of the preceding face.
  2. The symbol for the medial vowel *ā* is at the commencement of the next line.
  3. The letter *ra* is in the *Vaṭṭeḷuttu* script.
  4. The third foot of this verse has one syllable in excess,
  5. The letter *lai* is written in the *Vaṭṭeḷuttu* script.
  6. Read *prita*.

34. tī ll [ 19\* ] Ājñaptir = asmin = nṛipateḥ kurvāṇas -  
Sandhivigrahaṃ [ 1\* ] āsit - Tennavan - uttarā - ma
35. ntri - dhīmān - kul - ōnnataḥ ll [ 20\* ] Asy - ādhikāri  
Draṇiḥ - mahārājaḥ kalāpaṭuḥ [ 1\* ] achi -
36. karad - iha - śrīmaṇ - akhilās - sampadaḥ prabhūḥ ll [ 21\* ]  
Śri Tennavan - anuttara - pallavā [ dya ] ra <sup>1</sup> -

### THIRD PLATE — FIRST SIDE \*


37. yaḥ kṛitī [ 1\* ] nētā karēṇor - atr [ ā\* ] sit gaj - ādhyak -  
shō - mahīpatēḥ ll [ 22\* ] Ājñapti Muḷi -
38. rāshṭrastha Kula - grāma - bhavaḥ prabhūḥ [ 1\* ] Tiruch -  
chirāppallir - atra karēṇu - bhramaṇē bhavat
39. ll [ 23\* ] Vilayāchchilai saṃjñāś - cha Pullaḥ Paṭṭā -  
lakas <sup>2</sup> - tathā [ 1\* ] Chāṇāṭu - kilavaś <sup>3</sup> ch - ā -
40. smin gaṇakāḥ kṛitinō bhavat ll [ 24\* ] Saṃrakshōyaṃ  
sāvadhaṇāi [ r\* ] - bhavatbhi - d - dha [ r\* ] -
41. mmas - sarvvair - ity - asau bhāvinō - vaḥ [ 1\* ] kshōṇi -  
pālan - vandanīyō -
42. pi rājñān - dharmma - snēhād = yāchatē - Vīra - Pāṇḍyaḥ  
ll [ 25\* ] Pōtras - sat ka -
43. vit = āspadasya dhīshaṇa - prakhyasya yōyaṃ Ravēr -  
v - Vishṇu - trāta - samā -
44. hvaya - śruta - nidhir - y - yasy - orukīrttiḥ pitā [ 1\* ]  
Anta - grāma - samutbhav - ōsya
45. nṛipatēd - dharmmō - pad - ēshṭā - guru - śrāvyāṃ Pā [ r ]  
tthi - va - kēsari sa - kṛitavān - ēnām praśa -

1. The plate is broken here; the letter *dya* is clear and the top portion of *ra*, which can be read with certainty is also visible.

\* The numeral 3 is written on the margin to the left of the ring-hole.

2. Read *Bhaṭṭalaka* which stands for *Bhaṭṭāraka*.

3. The letter *ḷa* is written in the *Vatṭeḷuttu* script.

46. stiṃ kaviḥ || [ 26\* ]  Chandiraṇadu vaḷit - tōṇri  
it - tarāmonḍala - muḷd - āṇḍu
47. paṇḍ,<sup>1</sup> = indiraṇ muḍi vaḷai - y - uḍaiyttum - Imayattu -  
k - kayal - eḷudiyum, ā -
48. ṇai - y - āyiram - aiyyam - iṭṭum - Agattiyaṇoḍu Tamil -  
teriṇḷum, vānavar -
49. kku - t - tūdu seṅgu = māḷkaḍaliṇ varavu - māṇṇiyum, -  
iṇḍiya - v - ak - kaḍal - ka -

### THIRD PLATE — SECOND SIDE

50. ḍaindum - iṇṇaṇa pala tiṇal śeyda, Pāṇḍya - Paramēśvara -  
[ r\* ] gaḷ paramparaiyīn va -
51. ndu tōṇṇiṇaṇ, maṇṇavar - kōṇ Irāśamallaṇ maṇi - muḍi -  
Māṇābharāṇaṇ, reṇṇa -
52. varakōṇ [ l\* ] Maṇṇ - avaraṅku - ch - Chēralaṇ - ṇaṇ maḍa -  
p - pāvai, śīr - tigaḷu - maṇipayil - i -
53. ch - cheḷunilan - toḷa veḷipaṭṭa. Vīra Kēraḷaṇ Vīra  
Pāṇḍyan Vinaiya - kaṇchukan Vi -
54. śāla - śilan, - raṇṇudaiya kulam viḷaṅga - [ t ] taṇṇ -  
ṇudaiya<sup>2</sup> Tamil k - Kūḍalil, ma -
55. ṇṇiya maṇi - muḍi kavittu maṇābhishēka = magiḷnda -  
ṇālil, mē - tagu śāsa
56. na - ślōkam vidi - kiḍanta pā eheyya - valla, bhū - sara  
mada - tivaṇaṇ - adu taṇ
57. pūm porunam - puḍaivarkkuṇ, - śīr - tigaḷ<sup>3</sup> - taru Mulli -  
nāṭṭu - t - Teṇ

1. The end of each metrical line of the verse is indicated by the punctuation mark of *Comma* supplied by the editor.

2. Read *taṇṇ-ṇ-udaiya* (It is possible to read it as *taṇṇaṇ-udaiya* thus indicating that Kūḍal belonged to *taṇṇaṇ*, his kin)

3. Read *tigaḷ*;

58. Vīradhara - maṅgalatt, - ēr - tiḡalum perun - taṇmai  
Rāthitara<sup>1</sup> - gōtratti
59. l, - aḷapp - ariya pēr - oḷukkatt - Āśvalāyana sūtrattu,  
viḷakkam - ura vandu tōṇ -
60. ri viprarkk - ōr<sup>2</sup> viḷakk - āyiṇa, oru - taṇmal [ i ] ru -  
pirappil mu - ch - chen - ti nā -
61. l - vēdatt, - aru - marapil - aiy vēḷvi - y - ār - aṅgatt -  
antaṇāḷaṇ, Gōvinda - svā<sup>3</sup> -
62. mi - bhaṭṭa - ch - chōmśi - taṇ kula - varavil, Vāsudēva  
Pitāmbara - pa [ ṭ ]<sup>4</sup> taṇ - eṇṇa marai -
63. vāḷṇanai, maditt - aruḷi nīy śeyg - eṇṇa marṇ - avanu =  
maṇa - magiḷndu, viditt - amaitta
64. anusṭuppiṇ viḷu - p - pā nōkkḷ miga magundu,<sup>5</sup>  
taṇakk - iraṇḍām - āṇḍin - [ e ] dirām - ā
65. ṇḍil - Aṇḍa - nāṭṭu, miṇṇu - koḍi neḍu maḍa - vidi Vīra  
Pāṇḍiyapuram - āṇa, - Chellū -
66. ril - irund - aruḷi, ṇalan - tagaḷ Mēl - Vemba - nāṭṭu Nala -  
puaattu - k - Koppattil - k, -
67. kalanda Vāḷaikōḍ - uṭpaḍa - k - kāmaruk - kōl - puṇaṇāfi -  
chilāl, - iru pū - viḷaiv - adu nīr - ni -

#### FOURTH PLATE — FIRST SIDE\*

68. laṇ mū - vēliyuṇ - kuḍi - irukka, murugūr - poḷil - puḍai -  
śurriya mudu - nilatti -

1. The letter *ra* is in the Tamil script in the middle of the expression Rāthitara-gōtra in the Grantha.
2. The letter *kko* is written as a ligature;
3. The symbol for the medial vowel *a* long is written at the beginning of the next line.
4. The letter *ṭa* was originally written as *pa* and latter on converted as *ṭa*;
5. Read *magiḷndu*;

\* The numeral 4 is written on the margin to the left of the ring hole.



69. l pattu māvu [ m\* ], marr - adaṛku dakshinai - y - āga  
manṇu Śāsana - maṅalam - eṇa - v, - ērra pēr - udai
70. ēka - bhōga brahmadēyam - āy - p - piḍi śūlvittu, ūrāṇ -  
maiyil vē [ r - o ] nṛ - ākki na -
71. tṭāṇmaiyōd - uḍaṇ, kūṭṭi - k, - kārāṇmaiyum miśāychi -  
yum<sup>1</sup> - m - ulḷ - aḍaṅka - k - kalpp - amai -
72. ya, Śāsanamum - araiyōlai [ yu\* ] n - tani - t - taniyēy  
śamaippittu, bhū - suraṛku - k - kuḍuppi -
73. tt - i [ p\* ] - pū - talatt - eṇ pugaḷ nīru [ t\* ] t - eṇad = eḷil -  
- Arumpōrkkūratt - Iraṇaśiṅga - maṅala -
74. ttu, cheḷu - malar - t - Tennavaṇ Brahma Śrī Tuṅgarājaṇ -  
āyiṇa Vaṇattan, Vinnappam - ā
75. gavum, mandira - ōlai - [ nā\* ] yakaṇ - Kaṇaiyarapallī  
maṇṇin, Tennavaṇ utara
76. mantiri āyiṇa Iyakkaṇ - Śelvaṇ, āṇatti āgavum, ēr  
tigaḷu [ m\* ] ma -
77. dil - k - Kūḍal Rājasimhaṇ - eṇṇum - piyar - udai - ch, -  
chir - tigaḷ<sup>2</sup> - Tamila - p - pēra -
78. raiyaṇ tirund - adikāram - āgavum, aṇukkapillai Ten -  
Paruttikkuḍi nāṭṭu
79. ch - cheḷum - poḷil - śūḷ, Śeṇṇilakkuḍi - t - taṇ kulattil  
mēn - tōṇṇiya Śaḍai -
80. yaṇ - kāḷi [ y\* ] um, māś - aṇu śīr Vellappa - nāṭṭu vadi -  
neḍu - vēl, Kēsavaṇ - Gaṇapati -
81. yōd - uḍaṇ - keḷu - tagu kaṇkāṇi āgavum, pūm - poḷil  
Purattāya - nāṭṭu Narrarāycku -

1. Read *māyāṭchayum*

2. Read *tigaḷ*

82. di, mēm - paḍu - sīr araiyaṇ Viraiyachchilai [ y\* ] um,  
Tirukkāṇappēr - k - kūṟṟattu - ch - chi -
83. ru Sēvur - k - Kāḍam - Paṭālakaṇum, Chaḷanāṭṭu Mañ-  
guḍi - ch - Chōlai - Kiḷavaṇum, Vikki -
84. ramakāma vaḷanāṭṭu - [ k\* ] - Kaṇṇāṇūr Iḷavalam - Pul-  
laṇum, puravuvāri āgavum, Aṇuttara - p - Pa
85. lla [ va\* ] Araiś - enum piyar - iyaṇṇa, Mārañśōlai māi -  
kaḷiṟṟin nāsakām<sup>1</sup> - iṇid - iyaṇṇa.

#### FOURTH PLATE — SECOND SIDE \*

86. vu [ m\* ], Mulli - nāṭṭu Kuḷattūr Araiyaṇ Tiruchchirāp -  
paḷli āṇai - oḷukkavum, Mēl - ve -
87. mba nāṭṭu nāṭṭārum brahmadēya - k - kiḷavarum, Nala -  
purattu ūrarum uḍaṇiṇ
88. ru nilam aḷandu piḍi sūḷindu, kal - nāṭṭi ellai terichcha  
peru - nāṅg - ellai -
89. kku, - k - kīl ellai, Māyāṇa padakk - ennuś - śeyyiṇ vaḍa -  
talai - t - tulā - ch - cheykk - iṟai -
90. kkun, - tēyāna paṇṇaiyiṇiṇrun terku - nōkki - ch - che  
[ lu ] ṇ - kaḷaṇi Vāḷaikōṭṭ - idaṇu
91. kkēy pāynda vāykkal - ūḍēy pōndu sūl - puṇal - aṇi  
Kaṇṇiṟkāy paṇṇai - taṇ -
92. ṇai - t - tunṇa - vandu marr - ada - niṇru kaṇṇiṟkāy vaḍa -  
talai - t - tuḍavaikaḷukk - iṟaikka - [ p ] - pā
93. ygiṇṇa śīru - kāliṇ ūḍu - pōndu kaṇṇiṟkāy vaḍa - kīl - t -  
talai - t - tuḍavai -
94. gaḷiṇ teṇ - vara [ m\* ] bai<sup>2</sup> naṇṇa vandu kiḷakku nōkki  
nāṭṭu peruṇ - kālil ni -

1. Read *nāyatham*. The form *nāsakam* is found in many other inscriptions from the Pāṇḍya country.

2. The word may also be read as *Paravai* or *varavai* or *para(m)bai*

95. nru mē - tagu Parānikuśa - maṅgalattu mēl - ellaiyiṇ  
mēlarugēy tād - amar poḷi
96. l Vālaikōṭṭu - p - poḷi - y - ūḍēy taṇ - Porun [ da\* ] m  
eyda vandu tekku nō -
97. kki - p - pā [ y\* ] nd - adanukk - iyaṇṇa - mekkum śeyd -  
amaittu teṇ ellai taṇ - porunal viṇṇi -
98. ruḷaḷa vaḍakkum kuḍakk - ellai vaṇṇiyōḍu poḷiyi -  
niṇṇum ku [ nai ] yāmal vaḍakku nō -
99. kki - k - kaḷarukkēy puga - k - kaḷṇa vāykkālai ūḍ -  
aruṭtu vaḍakku nōkki aṅ - uṇa naṭṭa
100. naḍu - kaḷṇ mādū niṇṇu kiḷakku nōkki Vaṇkaṇatta  
maṅgalaṁ - uḍaiyāṇ vayakkiṇa
101. neḍuṇ - kaṇ [ n\* ] aḍuvaliṇ maddimamēy kiḷakku nōkki  
nayaḱka vandu Vālaikoṭṭiṇ
102. nāṇṇaṇ - kāl puga - p - pāy [ n\* ] da puṇa - k - kālai naṅga  
vandū Karuṇḡuḍi - p - poḷiyiṇiṇṇum
103. ka - kk [ ā ] ta - vēṇ Śāttan padakk - enṇuṇ - śey puga -  
p - pā [ y\* ] nda ālai eyda vand - ak - kāl - ūḍēy.

### FIFTH PLATE — FIRST SIDE\*

104. kiḷakku nōkki iṇidu pōndu Neydalampaṇai - nāṭṭu - p -  
peruṇ - kālil ni -
105. nṇu niṇparavai - k - kaḍa - naḍuvēy Śāttan - padakk -  
enṇuṇ - śey puga - t - taṇanda kāli
106. n śen - naḍuvēy vaḍakku nōkki vandū maṇṇ - idiṇiṇru  
tiṇḍiṇal - viḷaṇ
107. g - uḍaiyaṇ - iṭṭa maṇ - madi [ lō ] ragu pond - eḷi -  
nāṭṭu - p - peruṇ - kaḷ - taṇai o

\* The numeral 5 is written on the margin to the left of the ring hole.

108. tta vand - adaṇ kiḷakkum [ m ] ar - adaṇ - uttaram  
tiśai - ōṅ - ellai, nāṭtu - p - peruṅka
109. li - niṇṇuṇ - kiḷakku nōkki nalparavai<sup>1</sup> kada - kiṭṭam-  
paḍa - v - aṇaikkiṇṇa eḷil
110. viḷaṅku pēr - aṇai uṭpaḍa keḷakkila paṇaiyiṇṇuṇ -  
kiḷakku nōkkiṇa Vāḷai -
111. kōṭṭukkēy vandu Māyāna padak [ e ] k - ennum [ ñ ] śey  
vada - tulā - ch - cheyka -
112. ḷukk - iṇidi . . . nam eḷippanṇaiyiṇ - reṇ [ k ] kummar -  
ivai el -
113. lai - y - āga - t - ta - ni . . . kaḍaṇ<sup>2</sup> iḷa - k - kaḷaṇṇi  
ir - eḷu tān vaguttu unṇila -
114. n - oḷivi [ ṇ ] . . . [ śi ] keḷa vi [ ḷa ] ṅga - ch -  
cheydaṇaṇ - ṇ - ār - moymbil A -
115. vani - kāntane ll ॐ ॐ ॐ . . . t - akhy - olikhat prājñas -  
Tiru - māl - ānmajaḥ kṛiti [ 1\* ] idam
116. yaśasvi Mūvenda - [ vvē ] . . . . yyā nrip - ājñay [ ā ]  
ll Chandr - arkk - ānvaya dipasya viśva
117. rakshaṇa dakṣiṇam [ 1\* ] śa . . . . gati<sup>3</sup> jētur -  
jaitraṇ - Jaṭilavarmmaṇaḥ ll

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1. The word may also be read as Paravai or Varavai of Vara(m)bai.

2. This may be filled in as *taṇ-iṇai-k-kaḍan*

3. This may be filled in as *śāśanam jagah*.

# LOTHAL AND WEST ASIA\*

BY

S. R. RAO

The most striking feature of the Indus civilization is its uniformity in material equipment, which is also noticeable at Lothal, a port-town of the Harappans situated at the head of the Gulf of Cambay. That this civilization was essentially a product of local genius is evident from the pictographic writing, square stone seals, painted pottery, cubical stone weights, lithic and metal implements and jewellery which are quite distinct from their Sumerian and Egyptian counterparts. The planning in Harappan towns and cities and the sanitary arrangements thereof exhibit a better civic sense than the one shown by other contemporary civilizations. These important differences preclude any possibility of the colonization of the Indus valley and Gujarat by the Sumerians. Hence it can be safely assumed that the Harappa civilization was not influenced to any appreciable degree by foreign civilizations. However, the new coastal bias suggested by the south-ward extension of the Harappa civilization into the peninsulas of Kutch and Kathiawar imparts greater significance to objects of non-Harappan origin found at Lothal, Harappa and Mohenjodaro. Some of them clearly indicate close trade relations between the Makran coast, Indus valley and Saurashtra on the one hand and the Persian Gulf islands and Mesopotamia on the other, in the Akkadian and post-Akkadian periods. The most convincing proof of such trade relations is provided by a recently-found circular seal of steatite from Lothal assignable to the Sargonid period.<sup>1</sup> It bears close resemblance in workmanship and motifs to the Bahrain seals some of which bear Indus animal motifs or script or both.<sup>2</sup> In this connection it may be recalled that several Indus type seals were reported from Ur, Kish, Susa, Hama and Lagash,<sup>3</sup> but most of them originated from Bahrain

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\* Paper read before the Archaeological Society of South India on 26-2-63.

1. S. R. Rao : 'A Persian Gulf Seal from Lothal' *Antiquity* XXXVII, pp. 96-99, pls. IX-XI.
2. P. V. Glob and G. Bibby : *Scientific American*, Oct. 1960, Vol. 203, No. 4.
3. C. J. Gadd : *Proceedings of the British Academy*, XVIII (1932), p. 8, ff

islands and appear to have been issued by Indian merchants residing in the Persian Gulf ports. Besides the circular seal of Persian Gulf origin Lothal has yielded a terracotta sealing on which the impressions of a stamp seal with a swastika-like motif is visible.<sup>4</sup> An identical seal is reported from the Sargonid levels of Brak.

These seals and sealings suggest a two-way traffic between India and Mesopotamia via Bahrain. That a colony of Indian merchants existed in the Diyala valley is indicated from a pot on which a scene showing the performance of an Indian ritual is depicted.<sup>5</sup>

Other evidences from Lothal which suggest contact with West Asia are a copper bun-ingot comparable with those from Susa,<sup>6</sup> the Reserved Slip Ware of Mesopotamian origin (Brak and Ur),<sup>7</sup> a bronze amulet with a couchant bull figure<sup>8</sup> simulating amulets in stone, silver and copper from Ur and Susa and gold beads with axial tube comparable with those from the Royal Cemetery at Ur. The cubical chert weights from Kish, the ivory rod from Ugarit III (Ras Shamra), gold-bordered agate beads with lenticular section from Mycenaean tombs, thin disc-beads of gold from Hissar III-B<sup>9</sup> and the spacer gold beads from Ur are also comparable with similar objects from Lothal.

The evidences cited above are impressive enough to establish that Lothal had a flourishing trade with West Asia. Inlays of chank-shell and ivory,<sup>10</sup> beads of gem-stones<sup>11</sup> and cotton or cotton-goods were the main exports from Lothal, while the imports consisted of copper and perhaps other metals. It is

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4. S. R. Rao : *Antiquity op. cit* pl. X (a).

5. V. Gordon Childe : *New Light on the Ancient Near East* (1953), p. 69—171.

6. S. R. Rao : *Antiquity op. cit* pl. XI.

7. S. R. Rao : *Lalit Kalā*, No. 11, pl. XIX, fig. 65.

8. *Ibid.* fig. D-2.

9. *Ibid.* pl. XVI, fig. 53.

10. *Ibid.* No. 3, pl. XXXVIII, fig. 35.

11. *Ibid.* pl. XXXVII, fig. 28.

pertinent to mention in this connection the reference to Dilmun merchants in the clay tablets of Ur.<sup>12</sup> They have listed the goods brought by the Dilmun ships from Meluhha, Makkan and Telmun or Delmun. Prof. Kramer identifies the Indus valley and Gujarat with Dilmun,<sup>13</sup> while Dr. G. Bibby identifies it with Bahrain.<sup>14</sup> It is interesting to note that Dilmun is said to be a land of the rising sun where the cities were very clean. It exported beads of gemstones and objects of ivory. As far as cleanliness is concerned the reference must have been to the Indus cities including Lothal. Beads and ivory and shell objects exported by Lothal appear to have been referred to in the clay tablets. Further investigation may bring to light that there were many other parts on the Gujarat and Makran coast which traded with Mesopotamian cities during the period 2300 - 2000 B.C.

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12. A. L. Oppenheim : 'Seafaring Merchants of Ur' *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 74 (1954), pp. 6—17.
  13. S. N. Kramer : 'Dilmun: Quest for Paradise' *Antiquity*, Vol. XXXVII, pp. 113—115.
  14. P. V. Glob and G. Bibby : *op. cit.*







Fig. 1. Terracotta Figure with Sumerian Features  
Lothal - Period A



Fig. 2. Circular Steatite Seal of Persian Gulf Origin  
Lothal - (Obverse)

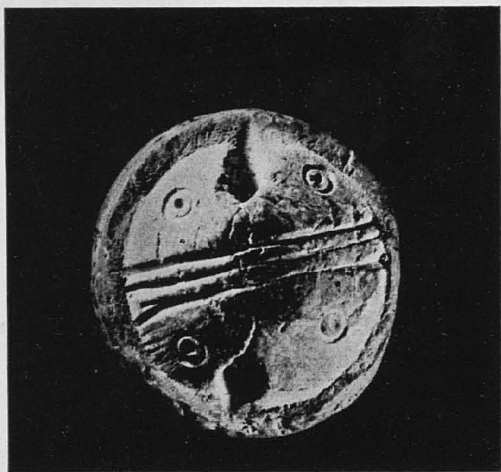


Fig. 3. Circular Steatite Seal of Persian Gulf Origin  
Lothal - (Reverse)

# EVOLUTION OF COINAGE IN ANCIENT INDIA\*

S. RAMAYYA,

Coinage, like alphabetic writing emerges rather late on the stage of history, about the 7th century B.C. The three original ancient civilizations of mankind, Sumer and Akkad, Egypt and Harappa did not have any coinage though they had a weight system. This is rather strange seeing that these civilizations had big urban centres with a good proportion of non-agricultural population and they successfully squeezed a surplus from the vast agrarian surrounding areas.

With growing population, trade and exchange, barter became very inconvenient. Various commodities like barley, cattle were tried originally as media of exchange. Their obvious disadvantages led to the choice of metals, especially the precious metals gold and silver for exchange purposes. To guarantee weight and purity, symbols and marks of the State or trading guilds gave a shape and size and coinage emerged first in Lydia of Gyges in the 7th century B.C. as electrum dumps with punch marks. The idea spread throughout the ancient world and by the 6th century B.C. coinage of some sort or other is found in all civilised communities.

In the Vedic ages in India we hear of gold ornaments like *Khadi*, *Rukma*, *Karnasobha* etc. We also come across words like *Nishka*, *Suvarna* and *Satamana* which in historical times were used for various coin types; but in the earlier ages they appear to indicate only lumps of gold or silver, given as *dakshina* to Brahmins or presents to warriors. In those small tribal communities with little exchange the need for coinage was not felt. Cows probably served the purpose.

From the 6th century B.C. coinage emerged in India and we come across the famous silver punch-marked coins everywhere.

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\* Paper read before the Archaeological Society of South India, on 20-3-63

The social milieu was ready for it. In North India the small old Aryan tribal settlements had increased in population and had brought large areas of forests under cultivation. The States had become bigger and we hear of 16 *Janapadas* constantly fighting each other. Later Magadha under the Nandas and after them the Mauryas, knocked out all the Northern States and established an Imperialism. Trade, internal and foreign, was increasing. In the South also, the primitive older societies were evolving into civilization and their contacts with West Asia and the North India very much quickened this process. The need for coinage and its emergence coincided.

The famous punch-marked silver coins of ancient India have been studied thoroughly and there is an enormous modern literature on it. It is found over wide areas from Afghanistan to East Bengal and from North U.P. to Tinnevely and Ceylon. Over 125 hoards have been discovered and they can be picked up in every ancient site on the surface. In North India it circulated from 600 B.C. to about 200 B.C. when it slowly disappeared with the coming of the inscribed coinage. In the East and South it circulated till 200 A.D. Even later, the punch-marked silver was being used with the newer types everywhere in the country.

There is much speculation about its origin and spread. We should however not forget two or three fundamental ideas. Most probably the idea originated in West Asia and it was brought into India by traders and it caught here. There is nothing wrong in such cultural diffusion of ideas. Traders might have brought some West Asian pieces and the local kings and guilds would have worked on the ideas. Secondly it need not be presumed that the punch-marked silver spread from the North to the South in Mauryan days. As P. L. Gupta has pointed out there are plenty of pre-Mauryan punch-marked coins in the South. The fact is any cultural trait from Middle East is capable of spreading simultaneously both in North India and South India. In North India it comes through land trade routes and through invasions; while in the South it spreads by sea-trade which is not only ancient but also important as the South had plenty to export like spices, cloth ivory etc. This appears to be the case with alphabetic writing also which seems to have spread simultaneously in the South and North.

Over centuries the evolution of these punch-marked series can be traced generally. The earliest specimens are the bent bars of Taxila. Fig. I shows a specimen from my collection. They are simple in design and weigh 100 *ratis* (175 grains), the *Satamana* weight. They can be dated to about 600 B.C. Next comes the thin Kosala variety, cup shaped with serpentine designs. A specimen from my collection can be seen in fig. II. They can be dated about 500 B.C. It appears in the earlier days each Janapada had its own type. With the Nanda Imperialism, from the 4th century B.C. there seems to have been a reform of this coinage. They are standardised throughout the North with 5 symbols with the well known sun and shadara chakras, fine thin silver and a weight of about 32 *ratis* (50 to 55 grains). In the Mauryan days the process is further consolidated but the silver is more adulterated and the coins are more dumpy. The Mauryan symbol is the well known crescent on hill. In post-Mauryan times the coinage gets thicker, the crescent on hill disappears slowly and this type fades out gradually in the early days of the Christian era. The Southern varieties especially of the Pandyan areas should be studied carefully and analysed. At its best this is a very interesting coinage and carries over 500 fine symbols, of animals, hills, taurine, caduceus etc. Their significance is not understood clearly and it is not certain whether all the coins issued from royal mints. It is evident that local guilds and other corporations issued a lot of these coins, some under permission and the others as forgeries. Its enormous numbers and wide circulation indicate a good deal of monetisation of early Indian economy. Very small varieties of this silver have also been found.

While silver dominates the scene we come across small numbers of copper punch-marked coins also. Some are silver coated. The significance of this series vis a vis the cast copper coins is not clear.

Literary evidence about these coins is confusing. Panini, Kautilya and Buddhist literature mention various terms like *Karshapana*, *Pana*, *Vimsati* etc. It is difficult to apply them to specific categories. We are on safer ground with Archaeological evidence in scientific excavations from Rupar, Hastinapura, Purana-Kila etc. They indicate from the stratification that

they definitely belong to the period from about 600 B.C. to 100 B.C.

Enormous quantities of cast copper coins of various shapes, weights and designs are found everywhere in North India especially in the Gangetic Valley. Similar coins are also found in the South. They present a number of problems awaiting solution. As usual literary evidence is most confusing though they speak of a '*Tamra Rupam*.' Whether this refers to copper punch-marked coins or cast coins is still disputed.

Archaeological evidence here also is helpful. Stratified evidence at Kosambi and Ahichattrā etc. indicates they start slightly later than the silver punch-marked coin, from about 400 B.C. They have a variety of designs some executed very artistically. The earlier ones are square and the later round with very complicated motifs. I have illustrated in fig. III a & b, an Eran Ujjain square type with fine animal figures. In fig. IV a & b, the famous Lanky Bull coin of Kosambi is shown. They can easily go to 200 B.C. if not earlier. They circulated freely with the punch-marked silver. We may probably attribute them as local issues for the ordinary people permitted even under Mauryan Imperialism. We find the usual crescent on hill, Mauryan symbols in thousands of such coins.

In the South also the Chandravalli excavations reveal lots of these un-inscribed coins issued by the Satavahanas or their feudatories in potin and lead going probably to 200 B.C. The evidence from the far South, Madura, has to be gone into systematically.

From about 200 B.C. or slightly earlier this old order changes and a new type of coinage, the inscribed varieties emerge. The Greek influence is largely seen here. Even otherwise, more literacy, and Greek and West Asian ideas, with new die cutting techniques are largely responsible for this change. In the North such series start with Mitra coinage of Kosambi and Ahichattrā, later the Punjab Republics, while in the South the Satavahanas introduce this reform.

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Fig. 1. Bent Bar, Taxila



Fig. 2. Kosala Variety

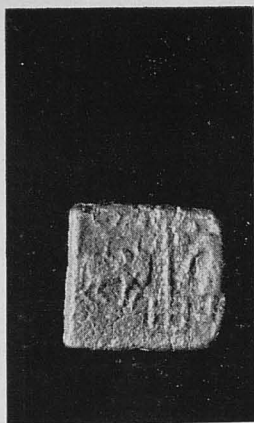


Fig. 3 (a)  
Eran Ujjain Type (Obverse)

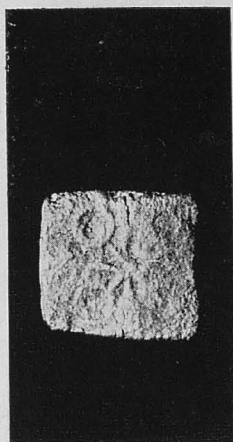


Fig. 3 (b)  
Eran Ujjain Type (Reverse)



Fig. 4 (a)  
Lanki Bull Coin of Kosambi  
(Obverse)



Fig. 4 (b)  
Lanki Bull Coin of Kosambi  
(Reverse)

(Photographs by the Author)



# PORT CITY OF THE CHOLAS

## Archaeological Excavations throw New Light\*

S. R. RAO

The excavations recently conducted by the Southern Circle of the Archaeological Survey of India at Kaveripattinam (Shiyali Taluk, Thanjavur District) the sea-engulfed ancient city of the Cholas, besides confirming the literary evidence contained in the ancient Tamil works, has thrown new light on the method of constructing wharfs in the Early Chola times. Following the clues provided by a preliminary survey conducted last year by the Survey, trial pits were sunk in three different localities on the coast and also in the interior.

*Wharf:* At Kilaiyur, about half a mile west of the sea, an impressive I-Shaped brick-platform was discovered. It appears to have been a landing pier or jetty projecting into the back-waters of the sea, built with a view to providing berthing facilities for boats. The bricks used for the building are of unusually large size—24" × 16" × 3". A remarkable feature of this structure is the central channel flanked by two rows of massive wooden posts, which probably acted as piers of small wooden bridge over which cargo could be carried to and from the boats. Samples of wood are being put to Carbon-14 tests to ascertain the date. On the basis of stratigraphy, the building can be dated to 1st–2nd centuries A.D. *Pattinappalai*, a Tamil work of the Sangam period mentions that boats laden with grain secured in exchange for white salt were tied in rows to the wooden pegs in the back-waters.

*Early Coins:* The outstanding finds from Vanagiri, a suburb of Kaveripattinam, are the Punch-marked coins, Square coins (copper) bearing the emblem of standing tiger on one side and

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\* (The above is a summary of the lecture delivered by Shri S. R. Rao, Superintendent, Archaeological Survey of India, Southern Circle, Madras under the auspices of the Archaeological Society of South India, on 31st August, 1963.)

elephant on the other. The latter might well have belonged to the Early Chola kings who had tiger as their royal crest.

*Roman Contact:* The occurrence of typical Roman pottery—the Rouletted ware—confirms the literary references to the contact with the Yavanas (Greko-Romans). Hundreds of beads of semi-precious stones found here suggest that there was perhaps a bead-making industry here.

*Medieval Habitation site:* Excavation at Melaiyur, about two miles away from the sea, has brought the light three phases of structural activity in the early medieval period. Some copper coins of Rajarajachola the Great and a few terracotta figures were recovered from the site.

The excavations have proved that though the sea-erosion at this place was considerable, a few portions of the ancient city have escaped the ravages of the seas.

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# THE PANCHA-VIRAS\*

BY

T. G. ARAVAMUTHAN

## I

Most of those who worship the Lord in his shrine in the famous temple at Tiruv - Allik - Keni<sup>1</sup> in Madras city,— known generally as that of Partha - Sarathi, see and yet see not, hear and yet hear not. Devotees who, having entered the temple through the towering gateway, crossed the open outer - yard with its Flag - Staff of plated gold, and entered the dim fore - hall and the inner - hall of the Lord's temple, station themselves devoutly at the threshold to the semi-dark sanctum-sanctorum fail to see anything in it till their eyes, learning to see by the sparse light of the mild lamps, come to discern a stone image of Krishna, standing about ten feet high and dressed in rich vesture and decked with richer ornaments. As the officiant chants a long, sonorous and meaningful roll of names by which Krishna is invoked, described and lauded, the devotee grows greatly into a realization of the sanctity of the Presence. At the conclusion of the chant, the officiant lights up a flame of camphor and moves it up and down and athwart— a flame that is an illuminant strong enough to spotlight fractions of the grandeur of the enshrined Icon, but not bright enough to light up the majesty of the entire manifestation. A spell holds devotees in its grip: the senses are numb to, and the minds are oblivious of, everything that is not Krishna. Still, the grandeur of the conception of the Lord which, in the ringing voice of the officiant, had been entering the devotees through their ears, starts entering them now through their eyes revealed in flashes of fractions.

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\* Paper read before the Archaeological Society of South India on 28-8-63.

1. This is the form of the name from at least the 8th century A.D. Whether the name had the same significance as is now assumed has to be examined, for a nearby village, about 8 miles off, has a name Nagal-Keni that has a similar ending, and that too requires explanation.

The mystery of the Presence, penetrating, through ear and eye, every fibre of their being, suffuses them with as much of the glow of the divine as it is given to men to receive and enjoy. The Infinite reveals itself in this shrine as Krishna, and devotees come to this fane of set purpose to enjoy and to realise the Infinite as Krishna. To them the Infinite is truly Krishna in this temple.

The officiant, having revealed Krishna in the great Icon in the middle of the shrine, carries around the illumination of the camphor - flame around and reveals five other stone figures which, though not so tall nor so richly bedecked nor or bedressed, are, yet, of commanding presence. He announces them, five in number and ranged on either side of Krishna,—as five of the notable kin of that Lord,—Rukmini a consort, Sankarshana (Balarama) brother, Pradyumna a son, Aniruddha, a grandson by that son, and Satyaki a kinsman,—names great in tradition. The figures strike the eye, and the names catch the ear, but little it is that penetrates the consciousness of devotees and reaches their understanding. Devotees are aware of a Consort stationing herself by the Lord in the shrines of temples and of a Rshi, or two, shown, also in the shrine, as receiving boons from the Lord of the shrine, but, for four others to station themselves beside the Lord and claim virtually to be participants in the Lord's unquestioned eminence passes much beyond their comprehension. Questions rise in their minds, but they are quelled and silenced by the witchery of the Presence in the middle of the group and by the magic of its Name. Devotees wend their way back, attributing the mystery of the additional figures to the greater mystery that is the Infinite enstationed in the temple.

It is possible to suggest that the surrender of devotees' to the spell of Krishna in the group might not be so unquestioning nor so absolute, if the other figures stood in stronger light, or if they were decked out as grandly as the Lord in the middle, or if the ritual were more attentive to them too in the group, or if the additional figures were pointed to in the Chant of the Garland of Names, (bringing in their names if they were not in it), or if the shrine went popularly by a name that suggested the presence of a group beside Krishna. The suggestion is, however, of little worth, for other circumstances point to this

shrine being none of the ordinary. All the figures in the shrine are two-armed, not even the principal figure, that of Krishna, displaying the four arms which are among the symbols of divinity. The Krishna of this fane does not sport the Discus that is his inseparable mark as Vishnu. He has only one Consort, in personification of one aspect of his grace, and where, in other temples, a second Consort has her station in affirmation of another aspect of the Lord's qualities, stands Satyaki here, stalwart, stiff and aggressively masculine. Even the sole Consort gets lost in the group of figures. She does not receive much greater attention here than the four other personages beside her, while, in other temples, the attention paid to Consorts, in decoration and in ritual, is not much less than what is paid to the Lord himself. The other four figures have taken stations in this shrine clustering to right and to left of the deity of the fane. They are beside and about him; they are in numbers, while in other shrines none but the Consort of the Lord would stand behind him. Their places are definitely marked off from the stations to which are usually relegated the Seers and the Saints,—not more than two or three ordinarily,—those to whom the Lord of the shrine has been pleased, in that shrine, to grant Epiphany and Release, or the Eternity of a dwelling at his Feet. The four are not announced as pertaining to the category of those to whom Release has been vouchsafed. Instead, they are passed over most frequently in silence,—not the silence of being ignored but, the great and significant silence which is necessitated by their being thought of as inseparable and indissoluble fractions of the main figure in the group,—that of Krishna himself. The stations of the five beside the great Lord in the middle are those of compeers. Rukmini represents the Lord's Grace and is, in that aspect, an *alter ego* of the Lord: the others appear to rank alike. The group with which the Lord has here chosen to surround himself is composed of members of his family, and the Lord has chosen to gather his Kinsmen round him as higher than men, and, yet, men, with the spark,—rather, the flame,—of divinity in them. We do not know of any other shrine in which a family, looking all too human, takes its stand as of right in the *sanctum sanctorum* and presents itself as the One in Many, the symbol of the Great One.

## II

The official chronicle of the Tiruv-Allik-Kēṇi temple,—its *Sthalapurana*,—to the date of which we have no clue, though it may not be more than five or six centuries old, has not a hint of the uniqueness of the group in the main shrine. While making mention of the five icons of Vishnu in the temple and of Vishnu's manifesting himself therein, it speaks of Krishna being in the company of Samkarshana (Balarama) and Satyaki and of the three being worshipped by the other three, Rukmini, Pradyumne and Aniruddha. Here is a conception of the group in the temple for which neither foundation nor authority is traceable. The Five Heroes in the temple present themselves as almost equals in divinity. As if conscious of this aspect of the matter, the *Sthalapurana* seeks, silently, to equate the five forms of Vishnu to five image-groups in the temple itself,—to this very group of Five, as surrounding Krishna, who is included in the Five, and also to those of Varadaraja, Narasimha, Rama and Ranganatha. Perhaps, the suggestion of this parallelism came from a Tamil hymn of Tiru-Mangai-Alvar,—a sage-saint of the very beginning of the 9th century A.D.—in which he offers praise to Krishna, 'as Partha-Sarathi,' and to Rama, Narasimha and Varadaraja. A further suggestion, offered by the great commentator Periya-Āchchān-Pillai, for the occurrence of the five forms in this temple, is that here are brought together the Lords of five other sacred fanes,—the Lords of Venkata, Tiru-vellūr, Ayodhya, Kanchi and Ahobilam,—in the several manifestations of Venkata as Venkata-Krishna, Ranganatha, Rama, Varadaraja and Narasimha. No explanation, however, is forthcoming for how, or why, these five were chosen for representation, though hymnists were at a loss to seek in a temple more manifestations of the Lord other than the one exemplified by the installed icon and why Mohini Avatara mentioned in the hymn should have got omitted. Nor does this seek to offer even an excuse for Narasimha alone of the five, having been chosen for independent status, as spoken to by an independent temple raised to him back of the temple to the five and for the separate Flag-Staff installed in front of him too. Who knows that these images were not brought together much later than that of the group of Krishna and the Five Kinsmen to

represent the additional deities whom Tiru-Mangai-Alvar, had chosen to sing in his hymn on this temple, and that they do not make one inclusive group made up of five independent groups of images of five each that were set up, all at one time, for worship in the temple? What is more, we are concerned with elucidating the mystery of the group of five or six figures in the main shrine,—that of Krishna,—and not of accounting for other shrines, whatever their number or their status, in this temple. Should we not limit ourselves to this endeavour? We should also ask how it is that the shrine of Narasimha should have been granted the independence of status attested to by the separate Flag-Staff raised in his presence while the others should have been denied the right to acquire that dignity.

Atleast in 1564 A.D., a Tamil inscription in the temple tells of the installation of images of Krishna, Rukmini (spelt Yugmani), Bala(deva), Madana (Pradyumna) and Satyaki (spelt Sattaki, and also called Alvar in it.) Apparently, it was a re-installation, for the practice seems then to have been to refer to re-installation or re-consecration of images already existent as installation and consecration.

The images themselves are not easily dateable, the sculptural features and characteristics not being open to close study, through ritual prohibitions. At any rate, the image of Krishna might very well be earlier than 1564 A.D., it being likely to be a piece of atleast Pallava-Chola work and of, say, the 8th century A.D., to judge by what we could assume to be the style of the sculptured piece,—a guess confirmed,—not inspired,—by the evidence we have of Pallava connection with the temple.

### III

In the Tamil country is another temple wherein much the same group is installed in the *sanctum sanctorum*. Tiru-Naraiyur or Nachchiyar-Koyil, about six miles south-east of Kumbakonam, has in it a temple believed to have been raised by Ko-Sem-Kan, King Red-Eyes, who is believed to belong to the 'group' of kings of the Sangam Age,—a 'group' which had for its purpose the fostering of Tamil literature,—appearing to have flourished somewhat prior to the 4th century A.D. Though the temple as it now

stands, has no pretensions to that age, there can be no objection to accepting a 1st or 2nd century A.D. for, a temple could be much earlier than its now visible structure. Vishnu, the Lord, enshrined in it, goes now by the names of Sri-Nivasa, or Venkatesa, —those of the Lord of the famous temple on the Venkata Hills, 'the Seven Hills', now just outside the Tamil country. The station of the Lord in the Tiru-Naraiyur shrine, is on a slight eminence, reached by about ten steps,— perhaps in rough parallelism to the Lord of the Seven Hills having his shrine which, being on a hill in the midst of a group of hills, could be reached only by surmounting miles of steps surmounting seven hills. The Lord of Nachchiyar-Koyil is of much significance in the Vaishnavism of the Tamil country, having been lauded by a Saint in a hundred hymns that have gone into the Holy Canon of Tamil Vaishnavism,— a distinction that is not very common. The temple, however, goes by the popular name Nachchiyar-Koyil, 'the Fane of the Lady', the enshrined Consort of Venkatesa-Sri-Nivasa. But, images of Sri-Nivasa and Nachchiyar are not the only ones set up in the *sanctum sanctorum* of the temple. Four more images are enshrined—one each to Balarama, Pradyumna, Aniruddha and Samba. The group here is different from the one at Tiruv-Allik-Keni in that there is a substitution of Samba, another son of Krishna, for Satyaki, a cousin.

Attention may be drawn to a circumstance that is in this temple unique in temple complexes. The Flag-Staff, in temples, indicates the temporal jurisdiction of the Lord to whom the temple is principally dedicated and it stands right in front of that Lord but some distance away. In this temple, however, the Flag-Staff seems to be located at a spot which is on a line that runs at a right angle from the middle of a line joining the centre points of the seats of the Lord and the Lady : the Flag-Staff is located mid-way between the lines of *vikshana* (vision) of the enshrined Lord and of the Lady.<sup>1</sup> Apparently, the Flag-Staff is common to both Lord and Lady,— the Lady being raised to an importance equal to that of the Lord himself,— perhaps in an effort to raise her to the status of Śakti. To this effort we have to impute the popular name of the temple going by the title of the Lady.

1. This piece of information was given to me by the principal priest of the temple, a very learned scholar.



## IV

In north India we have had at least one temple, an ancient one, which was in one close accord with those at Tiruv-Allik-Keni and Nachchiyar-Koyil. And, it was earlier in time than the date to which we may with confidence assign the two south Indian temples.

In the wall of a temple of which a few traces alone have been discovered at Mora, a village about seven miles to the west of Mathura (Muttra), on the way to Govardhana,—the heart of the region closely associated with Krishna,—was found incised a damaged inscription, in characters of the first half of the 1st century A.D. The fragment has been rendered thus : ‘Of the son of Mahakshatrapa Rajuvula, svamin.....the images of the holy Pancha-Viras of the Vṛshnis,— the stone shrine...who the magnificent matchless stone house of Tosha.....the five objects of adoration made of stone radiant, as it were with highest beauty.....’ What appears to emerge is that there had been a stone temple in which had been adored five objects, in stone,— five images,— of the holy Pancha-Viras,— Heroes who had belonged to the race of the Vṛshnis.

This attribution of the Pancha-Viras of this shrine to the Vṛshni race draws attention to a passage in the *Vāyupurāṇa* which says : ‘Know the deities of human stuff now lauded by me, the five famed as a Dynasty of Heroes,— Samkarshana, Vāsudeva, Pradyumna, Samba and Aniruddha.’ The passage is explicit in mentioning the five Heroes of worship, not in enumeration of examples of Heroism but, as a closely knit group. In fact, all the five of this group belong to the family of the Vṛshnis famed in the *Mahabharata*. And they were great Heroes too. This puts it beyond doubt that the Mora temple accommodated images of a group fundamentally identical with the group mentioned by the *Vāyupurāṇa*. That these Heroes were of ‘human stuff’ is all too clear from the *Purana*. The fifth member of the group in this shrine might have been Samba, in accordance with the enumeration in the *Purana*, or he might have been Satyaki, who it is that presents himself at Tiruv-Allik-Keni, or perhaps, some other member of the Vṛshni race. The difference, however, is immaterial to an understanding of the conception of the

Pancha-Vira group, for, what mattered might have been, not who the fifth Vira was but, that there should be a fifth to make a group of five and that the fifth should be an eminent and heroic Vṛshni. Satyaki was a Hero even whom Arujna was only too ready to rate above Krishna himself. And the Vṛshni race, we know, was not poor in Heroes. Clearly, therefore, the group mentioned in the *Vāyupurāṇa*, the group installed at Mora in the 1st century A.D. and the group now found in the Holy of Holies at Tiruv-Allik-Keni and Nachchiyar-Koyil, fall, all of them into one category.

A difference, however, there is,—that while in the Tiruv-Allik-Keni and the Nachchiyar-Koyil temples we find that Rukmini, or Jambavati, a Consort of Krishna, has her station beside him, there is nothing in the Mora inscription, or in the passage in the *Vāyupurāṇa*, to suggest that a Consort was included in the conception of the Pancha - Viras.

The Pancha-Vira group finds no mention in the *Mahabharata* or the *Ramayana* or in the important Agama called the *Pancharatra*. Mention, however, is to be found in the *Vāyupurāṇa* and in some of the Agamas of one other school of the Vaishnava, the Vaikhanasa. But, even from these works nothing is deducible of how or why the group come to be formed and worshipped.

## V

The presence of Pancha-Viras in this temple has however been indisputable from at least 1564 A.D. Considering that the Nachiyar-Koil temple is an ancient one sung by an Alvar and is definitely to the Pancha-Vira group it is hard to see why the same group should not have appeared at Tiruv-Allik-keni too. And, let it be remembered that Nachiyar-Koil is a very significant Vaishnavite temple. What is more, the temple is governed by the Vaikhanasa Agama. Are we however to take it that when the Alvar spoke of the Krishna in this temple the other four who are his companions were not there or that the other four were deliberately ignored? That the Alvars did not stick to laudation of only the images in the temples they sing of needs no pointing out. Or is it right

to conclude that in blinking out the Pancha-Viras in the temple there was a deliberate attempt to interpret a Vaikhanasa temple in terms of the Pancharatra? The most probable interpretation of all the relevant facts would seem to be that the Agama concerning a temple did not matter to the Alvars and that the Tiruv-Allik-Keni temple did include the Pancha-Vira group from early times.

A Jaina work, the *Antagada-dasao*, referring to Krishna Vāsudeva's subjects at Dvaravati, includes Baladeva and the rest of the five great heroes, mentioning Pajjunna and Sambe separately.

The Pancha-Vira concept of Vaishnavism had near parallels in other religions,— the Pancha-Brahmas of Saivism, the Pancha-Buddhas of Buddhism, the Pancha-Tirthamkaras of Jainism and and the Pancha-Viras of Yakshism. But we know too little of them to say how they are linked with the principles of the several religious systems.

At Nagari, a few miles from Udayapur, in Uttara Pradesh state, was built, by Sarvatrata of the 2nd Century B.C., who had performed an Asvamedha sacrifice, an "enclosing wall around the stone (object) of worship called Narayana-Vāṭika (Compound) for the divinities Samkarshana and Vāsudeva.

At Nanaghat is an inscription of Vēdi-Sri that relates to the invocation of Indra, Samkarshana and Vāsudeva, at a sacrifice.

Krishna, Sankarshana his brother, and Subhadra his sister (otherwise known as Ekanamsa, Durga), appear as the primary group of images in the *sanctum sanctorum* of the famous temple at Jagannath. Here is the inclusion of a lady in a group of two, just as Rukmini finds place in the collocation of the Pancha-Vira group at Tiruv-Allik-Keni and Nachchiyar-Koyil, but the included lady is a sister, not a Consort.

Traces of a group of representations of an ancient cluster of shrines at Besnagar, in Central India, of about the second century B.C., have been discovered. A Flag-Staff, the Garuda Stambha, bearing a much quoted inscription, tells of its having been erected by a Greek votary of Krishna who, styling himself a Bhagavata, had come as Ambassador from the Hellenic king of

**Takshasila.** Near by this Flag-Staff, lay the capital of another which was in the form of the spreading tuft of a Fan-Palm. Some distance farther lay another capital which had been carved into the form of a Makara. Yet further off lay still another capital, carved into the form of a Kalpa-Vṛksha, Wish-Fulfilling Tree. Once we recollect that these cognizances are the ensigns, respectively, of Vishnu. Saṃkarshana, Pradyumna and Sri, we accept immediately the presence of temples at Besnagar to Krishna, Balarama, Pradyumna and Rukmini. Though there are no clear indications of the Flag-Staffs and the corresponding shrines having been fashioned and constructed at about the same time, nor of the temples having come, at least in course of time, to present, within one city,—though perhaps not within the ambit of one temple,—a complex of a group of shrines raised to personalities falling undoubtedly within one group. If another capital, bearing a Rshya, Antelope, on top had been found, there would have been a shrine to Aniruddha and the shrine complex would have been raised to the Vyuhās of Vishnu. If yet another capital bearing the cognizance of another hero, again a Vṛshni one,—say, Samba or Satyaki,—had been found in the vicinity, the group of shrines would have turned into one raised in honour of the Pancha-Viras of the Vṛshnis. Neither the Vyuhās nor the Pancha-Viras appear, however, to have been enshrined at Besnagar.

## VI

The occurrence of the Lord by himself in a Hindu temple is exceedingly rare: the Lord accompanied by his Consort is most common. A temple loses its human purpose if it is only for the worship of the supremacy and the eminence of the Lord: it derives its justification from its offering the devotee a place where he could seek and sue for the Lord's Grace and persuade himself that it will not only be granted to him but also that the Grace he sues for is represented in the Mother, the Consort, who is the personification of the Lord's Grace. So imperative is the need of the devotee for the Lord's Grace that he gives due prominence to Grace by personifying and symbolising the grant of it in separate form as Lady-Mother and thinks of her as inseparable, even unimaginable apart, from the Supreme Lord. Worship in a Hindu temple is, in theory, to the Supreme Deity embodied in one form,

but, in fact, it is to a duality incorporating the Supreme Lord and His Lady, Grace. Even the simplest worship to God in a temple is, thus, to the image of the Lord as set up in a group of at least two images,—that of the Supreme Being as Lord and that of his Grace as Lady-Mother.

This duality of embodied forms enlarges into a multiplicity of forms where other facets too of God-head need to be emphasised and brought to the fore,—not to confuse or to extinguish the conception of the unity of God but, — to emphasise and to further the realisation of the multiplicity—the illimitability.—of his powers and manifestations.

To see only one or two out of a group of five, or six, images, all set up together, is imputable neither to unfamiliarity with clusters of images in temples nor to an inability to see a number of images in a group and to realise their significance: the devotee's need of the moment is what disposes him, at any moment, to appreciate one or other of the aspects of God and, therefore, to feel attracted, intensely, at the moment, to one or other of the Gods appearing in the group. Indeed, it must be, elementary knowledge that it is really a group that is the object of worship of the man of the world in a Hindu temple, though all the subsidiary figures lose their meaning and their significance to the metaphysician. Even the image of the Supreme Lord loses its purpose when the devotee feels that in offering worship to that image he is worshipping, not that image but, Formless Brahman. Indeed, the temple itself loses its *raison d'être*: Formless Brahman requires no temple to house it.

In a Vishnu temple the Lord appears almost invariably with his Consort,—One in Two, or Two in One. In a normal temple to Siva, a single figure, the Linga, may seem to occupy the *sanctum*, but, in truth, we have in the Linga itself the complex conception of the putting together of Male and Female into an indivisible union. The Linga is, at any rate reproduced in the *utsava-bhera* of two, anthropomorphs, Uma-Sahita. In many a temple, they instal Ardha-Nari,—Man, Woman,—which, again, is in attestation of a group of two being implicit in the Linga. But the two concepts of the Linga import a third, the Productive Pair putting forth a third personality,—

son, Skanda. Thus arises the idea of three, Sa-Uma-Skanda, incorporating Siva-Uma-Skanda, that is, Father-Mother-Son. The Linga was thus expounded in temples as Three-in-One when, for instance, Pallava sculptors carved in many of the temples they built, the Sa-Uma-Sahita group on the inner faces of the walls of the Holy of Holies behind the Linga, by way of elucidation.

The rule appears to apply even to icons set up elsewhere than in the *sanctum*. In shrines opening south into the mandapas of Vishnu temples, Rama stands in the company of Sita, Lakshmana and Hanuman, just as in similarly opening sabhas in the mandapas of Siva temples, Nataraja keeps dancing ceaselessly, in activity and joy, in the presence of his Consort who stands beside him. The dance-lover might admire Nataraja by himself as Dancer, but the devotee does not worship Nataraja without worshipping his Consort standing attentively by. The adept in symbolism, while standing, hands clasped in adoration and beholding the marvel of the Cosmic Dance, thinks at the same time of the Cosmic Energy and the Lord's Grace, represented and of set purpose, in the Devi of Nataraja.

Shrines of the Devakula type mentioned in Bhasa's *Pratimanataka* are exemplified in sculptured groups now fairly well-known, three figures representing an unbroken succession of male descendants in the direct line who are all dead. Though Devakulas are apparently to men, they are in fact to men turned, though by death, into Gods. In the Pancha-Vira group, however, we have one woman and five men, of whom two, occasionally three, are descendants.

Vishnu is often presented in a group of four known as the Vyuha, consisting of Krishna, Samkarshana (Balarama), Pradyumna and Aniruddha, but excluding the Samba or the Satyaki of the Pancha-Viras. Quartettes spoken of in such a work as the *Pāñcharātra* and attested to by groups set up in some temples are of twenty-four varieties, each being but a combination of four out of twenty-four forms of Vishnu.

The Pañchayatana mode of worship, especially for domestic devotions, is to a group of five of whom one is opted for pride of

place and for special attention. But, the Gods of the group are not, as in that of the Pancha-Viras men turning into Gods.

Perhaps, attention may also be drawn to yet another temple of the Tamil country,—that at Tirut-Tangal,—just two miles from Sivaganga, in the Ramanathapuram District of Tamil Nad. On a hillock are three shrines, roughly one above the other, and the one at the top is the main temple, being dedicated to Vishnu as Lord Vira-Narayana. It was rebuilt in a later century; so it is much earlier, the Lord in it having been sung by saints of about the 9th century A.D.: indeed, it may be even earlier, for the reconstruction might itself have been [a rebuilding for the  $n$ -th time. The shrine to Vira-Narayana is densely populated by as many as eleven images,—a quite unusual number. The pride of place is assigned to Vira-Narayana himself: to right of him are two of his Consorts and to his left are a third Consort and also Jambavati, a wife of Krishna. The line of images breaks, then, to right and to left: in the line to right are Pradyumna and after him Garuda and Markandeya; the line to left holds Usha, Aniruddha and Bhrgu. Noteworthy, is the presence, here, of Pradyumna and Aniruddha along with Vira-Narayana one of whose consorts is Jambavati. That it is Jambavati who in this temple has been chosen for special Consort of Krishna, instead of Rukmini as in Tiruv-Allik-Keni, is clear from her being installed as Tāyār, Mother, in the intermediate of the three temples here. Vira-Narayana being but a manifestation of Krishna in a higher status have in worship in this temple a group of Krishna, Pradyumna, Aniruddha and Jambavati.

It is needless to proceed further. A group may be of even eleven as at Tirut-Tangal. Indeed, the groups may be endless in numbers. In theory, the gods of the group may be varied, representing, as they must, the divine factors which the devotee sets store by and emphasising what he most desires for and eagerly aspires to, in the intensity of his religious feeling, but all the Gods are only variations that spring from the Unity, or the Near-Unity, of the Lord.

## VII

The collocation of images of Krishna with those of one or more of his kin is varied. The simplest group is that of Krishna and his brother Samkarshana. Then, his son Pradyumna is added to form a group of three. Another son, Samba, or a cousin, Satyaki, gets further added to make a group of four. A grandson, Aniruddha, by son Pradyumna, swells the company to five. The presence of Krishna's Consort, Rukmini or Sri in the group, is an enlargement of the group to six, but, apparently, this addition, though significant, is not treated as a real enlargement to six, the Consort being deemed to be invariably present where the Lord is, she being his Grace. The limitations to the additions are that they should be confined to the Vṛṣṇis and that, together, they must be five in essence. The group so enlarged to five gentlemen gets to be that of the Paucha-Viras of the Vṛṣṇis; the Lady is not taken count of.

That these five are Heroes goes without question; they were the greatest of the Vṛṣṇi Heroes who took part in the Mahabharata War. What, however, is it that gave them, together with Krishna, the appearance of the earthly representatives of a five-fractioned but a unified, God-head?

Krishna, throughout the *Mahabharata*, is undoubtedly a Hero and he is treated as Avatar; his descent from God being assured, his ascent to God-head is equally assured. Samkarshana, Pradyumna and Aniruddha are Near-Gods in the Epic. Satyaki, as great warrior, deserved, if any mortal did, to be ranked a God. That Krishna and these four were all heroes of the highest renown and achievement is indisputable. How, however, did these Heroes partake of God hood and how did they become eligible to be merged in God-head?

That the Heroes set up in the *sanctum* of temples bear names that are Epic need not deter us from looking for their prototypes in Vedic, for we know how closely knit Epic tradition is to the Vedic. It is possible to imagine the *Mahabharata* to be the great tale of the Pandava leader Yudhisthira, as sacrificer, reaping the fruits of a sacrifice, the Mahabharata War itself, in which the Pandavas had to offer their opponents, the Kurus, as sacrificial offering, and to have had five great Vṛṣṇis for their priests at



the sacrifice,— the heroes Vāsudeva, Samkarshana, Pradyumna, Aniruddha and Samba or Satyaki. Occasions there are in the *R̥g-Veda* when the principal Vedic priests are said to be five; they are called ‘the five terrestrial priests.’ The presence of a Lady, Rukmini, with the five Purohita may be explained on foot of her being the representation of the Grace of the Lord, which comes to the sacrificer as fruit of the sacrifice,— an idea present in the *R̥g-Veda*,— and her being invariably associated with the Lord of epic times,— Krishna-Vasudeva. *Ilā*, Goddess of the *R̥g-Veda*, has for her place the *Uttara-Vedi* where the sacrificial fire is kindled and she pours *ghṛta* into the fire which, in the person of *Agni*, is of one accord with her; he is even her son. *Ilā* is made teacher over the sons of the race at the sacrifice. And she brings energy, wealth and delight to the sacrificer. None the less, it is not the consort of the chief priest at the Vedic sacrifice that keeps him company when he officiates as such; it is the wife of the *Yajamana*,— *Yudhishtira*, the *Pandava* chief, in this sacrifice,— that has to be present. Even more decisive is another circumstance,— that *Samkarshana*, one of the *Pancha-Viras*, was not present at all at any time during the War, having been an absentee of set purpose. The suggestion therefore fails.

A few of the early instances of, or references to, the inclusion of Krishna’s relations in religious worship, or what amounts to it, may now be added.

Three ancient Tamil anthologies, all attributable to the age of the *Sangam*,— taken to be earlier than the 4th century A.D.,— make mention of the members of this group. The *Kalittōhai* tells of *Samkarshana*, *Pradyumna*, *Samba* and *Siva* in a stanza, and speaks of *Pradyumna* and *Samba* in another. The *Purananuru* tells of *Krishna* and *Balarama* in one of the stanzas and speaks of *Krishna*, *Balarama*, *Siva* and *Subrahmanya* in another. In the *Paripadal*, we find *Krishna* and *Balarama* spoken of as standing together in a famous temple near *Madurai*, of the south then and for centuries later, the capital of the *Pandyas*.

The *Agamas* are mostly silent on the principles on which worship is framed. Indeed, this is true of many of the

Hindu 'sciences.' Apparently, the rationale of the science having been put into certain works and the rules and the prescriptions having been put into certain others, the former were lost in course of time in the decay of the culture and the latter alone survived to serve for rules of thumb to the mechanical practitioners of the 'sciences.' The principles are not traceable to give meaning to the rules. The principles of the 'sciences' appear to have been lost even as early as the 3rd century B.C. This is why, even though we learn of the Pancha-Viras having been eligible for, and having, in fact, received, worship at a few places,—they must have been more numerous in the hey-day of the culture.—it is yet difficult to look not only for the principles which had dictated why Heroism was exalted and how the Heroes were to be picked for worship but also regulated the worship that was to be paid to them.

We are not able to get a closer approximation to why and how the Pancha-Viras came to deserve worship in one group as one God. Yet we may perhaps find a clue. Indra, a substantial fraction of God in the *Rg-Veda* is called Maha-Vira, Great Hero, in that work, implying that Heroism must have been among the more important of the qualities of God. As early as the 6th century B.C. *Vira* ceased to denote valorous might but as in name *Maha-Vira* (the restorer of the jaina doctrine and a contemporary of the Buddha) it came to mean the ascetic hero, the man perfectly shock proof, impressive amidst the self-inflicted tortures of ascetic austerity and amidst temptations and allurements, even threats of death from without. So too, among the followers of Śiva, the 'perfected ascetic, conqueror of the forces of nature, overcoming cattle-nature, in perfection of, asceticism equal even to Śiva himself' is Vira 'become the perfect Yogi, a true spiritual super-man, a Man-Hero.' And it has been also added that the "man of Truth having had, in India, a prestige higher than that of the man of battle, it is the Yogi, not the warrior, that was a Vira, 'hero'. Among the Sakteyas, the Vira is midmost in three degrees of aspirants, next below those of the divya-bhāva. the highest stage when the Vira grown victorious, meets the divinity face to face and attains the supreme spirituality. Clearly therefore, the Vira remains a man though he has Qualified himself highly, and he has not been yet called to share

in the divine, to become part of Divinity he One. The Pancha-Viras, according to the *Vayupurāṇa* are still deities— on the way to God-head but yet,— of human-stuff. Repeated statements are found in the *Ṛg-Veda*, that man is pervaded and suffused by God, obviously with a view to bringing him closer and closer to himself in his nature. Apparently, a stage could be reached when, through the incessant pervasion and the thorough suffusion, man could pass into God, himself.

The pervasion and transmutation starting not when men are still callow and unripe but, when men have been subjected to the process till in amenability to the working of the process the number of men has reduced to five, and one of them Krishna has attained the rank of Avatara and the other four have reached the status of Viras, The five responding to continued pervasion and transmutation may be expected, at a fairly early stage, to get wrapped up by God and integrated in himself.

Perhaps the views on Avataras and Viras were markedly different between the protagonists of the *Pāñcharātra* and the *Vaikhanasa*. Perhaps the adherents of the *Pāñcharātra* who were inclined to hold that an Avatara-purusha was Near-God, if not God himself, did not require any further pervasion and transmutation to transform the Avatara into God. This may be the reason why Peria-Āchan-Pillai, relying on the *Pāñcharātra* line of thinking sought to find a different five in Tiruv-Allik-Keni temple than that of the Pāñcha-Viras.

Souls not graduated into Near-God nor yet ripened into Godhead were yet recognised in Hindu thought to be worthy of public worship as souls that have journeyed long and are on the way to Godhead.

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# THE NARAYANA - NATARAJA COMPLEX AT CHIDAMBARAM\*

T. G. ARAVAMUTHAN.

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## I

Chidambaram, in south India, has been well-known for its importance in the history of Indian religion. In the past two thousand years and more, India has mainly divided itself, in allegiance in religion, between Viṣṇu and Śiva. Chidambaram has, now and again, taken a leading part in emphasizing the differences. Curiously, however, the shrines to Viṣṇu and to Śiva, in this place, have stood, and do stand, within a few yards of each other within the same temple complex,—indeed, within the same enclosure,—without even the semblance of a wall to serve for partial screen between them. That Chidambaram had grown by about the 7th century A.D. into a great centre of Śaivism and that, as a centre of Vaiṣṇavism, it was only a little less important, even so early, cannot be ignored. That there were periods in which the town and all the country around were torn by the differences between these two creeds, which forgot that they are but schools of one religion, is well-known. That there were periods of quiet and peace in the town and all around when those who belonged to either creed mingled together in great cordiality is also to the credit of the people of the land. Seasons of madness descend on men, who, before and after, are all too sane. Chidambaram has not been free from periods of unbridled insanity, though it has had its days of great sobriety. Indeed, it is the aim here to show that, in its origin as a great religious centre, it was marked by the conviction of the Oneness of God-head. Chidambaram was, in fact, a place where the Unity of God-head is averred and is sustained.

Sanity, stupidity, sobriety and madness in religion are all spoken to by archaeological evidence in the town. Hence,

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the interest of Archaeology is in the placidity and in the rage of Religion.

A hymnist of about 780 A.D., Sundara, great devotee of Śiva, tells of the three daily offerings to Śiva-Natarāja in his shrine at Chidambaram being made by a group of religious officiants known as the Three Thousand. A hymnist, Kulaśekara, great devotee of Viṣṇu of about 775 A.D. had already sung of the same group, whom he calls the Three Thousand Brahmanas, making their obeisance to Viṣṇu in due form at Chidambaram. To this day, there are Brahmanas, reduced to about four hundred in number in Chidambaram, calling themselves the Three Thousand, whose sole avocation is that of officiating as 'priests' in the Śiva-Natarāja shrine at Chidambaram. This community has, for centuries, been famous as special to Chidambaram: in fact, it is as old as the knowledge we have, in writing, of the temples to Śiva-Natarāja and to Viṣṇu at Chidambaram. The Three Thousand have a special claim for consideration in that the ritual or worship offered by them to Śiva-Natarāja is not Agamic, as is usual in temples, but is Vedic. There cannot be the least doubt about this community being the Three Thousand who, in the 8th century A.D., is claimed to officiate before the Śiva-Natarāja of Chidambaram by Sundara and to officiate before Viṣṇu, who is installed just a few yards off, about 775 A.D., by Kulaśekhara. Apparently, in the 8th century A.D., the Three Thousand were officiants in the temples of both deities at Chidambaram. But, Manikya-vāchaka raises Śiva-Natarāja above Viṣṇu, and Kulaśekhara exalts Viṣṇu above Śiva-Natarāja. And, none of the hymnists of the age is willing, except perhaps very occasionally, to grant even parity of eminence to the two Gods. There is not even mention, in the hymns on Chidambaram of that age, of Viṣṇu and of Śiva being found installed in images that, in fact, have been, all these centuries, within a few yards of each other. The Śaivite hymnist speaks of Śiva-Natarāja and the Vaiṣṇava hymnist sings of Viṣṇu as if each was Supreme Lord. None the less, both Gods are installed in the immediate and unabashed presence of each other. They could almost clasp hands if the mood came on them. The only permissible conclusion is that for centuries before the 8th century A.D. the division of the two cults had been of considerable standing and that Vedic

Brāhmanas, officiating before the one or the other of the Gods, could, none-the-less, remain members of one compact group within a community, irrespective of their carrying on the ritual worship of different Gods.

Society could, and did, adapt itself variously at different times to different influences in India. At least in certain centuries, the Three Thousand could have held members of differing religious proclivities within its fold. We are not, however, on that point now: we shall be content, for the present, to accept the two statements of Sundara and Kula-śekhara to mean that it was possible, then, for some members of one community to officiate before Śiva and for some others before Viṣṇu, whatever their own personal preferences might be.

How it happens that, notwithstanding the sectarian prejudices that ranged Viṣṇu and Śiva against each other, images of the two could still be placed in one temple, though in two shrines, and be allowed to be offered worship to, on behalf of a general public that cared not for the distinction between the two deities, by a body of officiants who, though, perhaps divided among themselves by sectarian differences, did yet form part of one undivided social community, is what calls for explanation. Could it be that, notwithstanding the apparent differences between Viṣṇu and Śiva, they were but facets of an One that could split into Two and could, again, be discerned as One?

To study the Temple-Complex at Chidambaram, in general, to study the Viṣṇu-Śiva complex to isolate the special features of the complex and, then, to account for them, must help us to an answer.

## II

God, sole and supreme, is the focus of all that is relevant to worship in a temple,—not God as God-hood, an abstraction beyond thought and, so, beyond comprehension and meditation but, God in the epiphany of a concretization, in something such as an icon, in context terrestrial. God-hood has many a manifestation in many a condition and in many a potency. These are the Gods and their qualities and powers, in many a gradation. The

supremacy and the grace of God-hood being equated, in terms earthly, to the supremacy and the grace of Kingship, God is transmuted into King.

Kingship, in an attempt to imitate God-hood, takes on many a mutation, attempts many a transformation and effects many a devolution of faculties and powers: these, in their many forms, are King and his entourage, as Queen, Princes and potentates, and even officers. God's manifestations are appropriately transformed and personalized when Temple gets patterned after Palace. The Palace varies in size and in grandeur and in elaboration with the greatness of the King. The Temple follows suit. So too, formalities in royal courts vary, and rituals in temples keep step. A temple may be a simple unit, parallel to the palace of a petty king, but it may also be an elaboration, in many gradations, growing into an aggregation of a number of units of varying importance. An imperial Palace, for instance in which the Emperor abides, is clustered round by palaces, large and small, for kings great and low. So too, ceremonials in a temple vary directly with its importance. The features of a palace and the practices therein being understood, a temple stands understood, in features and ceremonials. No feature in a temple and no factor in worship in the temple baffles understanding, or appears strange, when the parallelisms of King-God and Palace-Temple are kept steadily in view.

The icon in an one-unit temple to God-King as Viṣṇu is an anthropomorph figured as King. God-King as Śiva, is symbolised in the Linga, which, though not even approximating to King in form, is, by a fiction, treated to be such. This primary image—anthropomorph or symbol,—is *mūla-vigraha*, primal icon. The shrine is *mūla-sthāna*, primal station, or *garbha-gṛha*, womb-house: it is the *sanctum* of the temple. This icon of God-King, usually of carved stone, installed immoveably in the cell-like shrine, is parallel to the well-guarded strong-hold in which King stays in safety. The Cell-Shrine may be small or great, but it bears a resemblance to the womb in that it is well protected and that its walls are unpierced save by one entrance, a door-way.

Before the immoveable icon of Viṣṇu is set a moveable icon, *utsava-vigraha*, a festival, portable, icon, of sculptured bronze,



shaped into an anthropomorph,—though differing in characteristics from the primal icon,—and capable of being carried along from place to place for worship by the populace of the surrounding town. Śiva, as Linga, is the only figure placed in his sanctum, the Mūla-Sthāna, which we shall speak of presently. The Linga's *utsava-vidyā* is an anthropomorphic group, Sa-Umā-Skanda usually, but is not however, found anywhere in the mūla-sthāna.

Round this womb-shrine is an Inner Circumambulatory, open, or closed, in which devotees may perform their circumambulations in service of the Lord in the shrine.

Attached to the primal shrine and its Inner Circumambulatory and stretching to east, is an open Audience-Hall wherein devotees may gather and make obeisance to, and seek favours of, the enshrined God.

Into the northern side of this Hall opens a Cell-Shrine,—facing south,—dedicated to another manifestation of the Deity in the primal shrine. Rāma the Avatara, both in the stationed and in the portable, that is, in itinerant, forms is, herein Viṣṇu temples. Nata-rāja, Dance-Lord,—normally, in only the portable, itinerant, form,—appears in this Cell-Shrine in a Śiva temple. Devotees who gather in the Audience-Hall in their numbers and in their gradations are, thus, enabled to offer adoration and to supplicate prayers, simultaneously, to both primal and accessory manifestations,—to Viṣṇu and to Rāma, or to Śiva and to Nata-rāja.

Some distance to the east of the Audience-Hall and in the line of vision of the primal Deity looking straight ahead,—the *vikṣana* line,—rises a Flag-Staff from which floats the flag of the primal Deity-King. It serves at least two purposes. It blazons forth the manifestation of the Deity to whom the primal shrine is dedicated. It marks the limits,—imagined as a rectangle,—described round the shrine, with it as the mid-point of that line of the rectangle which, to the east of the shrine, runs south to north,—within which, for practical purposes, is ritually circumscribed the sovereignty of the Deity-King in his entempled limitations. In theory, God's jurisdiction is over all the universe: entempled, however,

the temple represents the universe. God's jurisdiction covers the universe as limited in the temple. Into this rectangle no one may enter who lacks the purity needed to come into close proximity to Deity-King. Within this rectangle may be located subsidiary shrines to personages such as the Divine Consort and the Holy Preceptor. Nothing, however, may come in the line of vision between Deity in shrine and Flag-Staff, for nothing can be allowed to obstruct the reach of the glance of Deity-King which, in its mercy, redeems the devotees from offence and sin, and, in its grace, grants then the Freedom of the City of Heaven.

Along the outer margins of the jurisdictional rectangle in the temple, runs a circumvallation cutting off the universe,—that is the temple,—from the universe that is the every day world. Along it runs an ambulatory sufficiently wide to permit devotees in their numbers circumbulating Womb-House, Audience-Hall, subsidiary shrines and Flag-Staff: this is the Outer Circumbulatory. The circumvallation marking this ambulatory is raised high enough to serve to cut the devotee off from sight of the world outside, lest his concentration on his devoirs to the Deity-King and his entourage be affected. In the temple,—as universe,—the devotee forgets the world around and is God-enthralled.

The boon of the Deity's glance has, however, in practice, to overstep the limits of the inclosing circumvallation and to reach all mankind beyond and in all directions. It is impossible, however, so to shape the Deity's eyes as to make it appear that his line of vision ranges and veers and varies in all directions, including the rearward view,—for, then, the enclosing walls would have to be pierced every few feet to permit of the icon's vision travelling beyond to the actual world outside. So, the line of *vikṣana* is supposed to divide the world into quarters: it is run backward and forward to pierce, right in the middle, the western and the eastern walls of the enclosure: it is also made to take a north-south line to pierce, similarly in the middle, the southern and the northern walls. These four openings serve also for entrances into the temple: towers (*gopuras*) are raised over them. Corresponding to the four openings in the circuit-walls of the mple-unit

and to the *gopuras* over them, there are openings in, and *gopuras* over, the walls of each concentric circuit.

Such is a Hindu temple in its unitary form, though this unit itself is found to be more than a simple shrine.

In the more complex temples, however, this complex is not only a unit but also a nucleus which, expanding concentrically and in circuit after circuit, grows to contain not only the shrines to the subsidiary deities associated with the primal Deity-King but also the appurtenances appropriate to the institution conceived of as Palace. Thus does Temple grow into Great Temple.

Though the shrines that get enclosed in these complexes may be many, it is only the manifestation of God-hood enshrined in the primal shrine that is sovereign. It is that God-hood's glance that may range round in utmost beneficence. Sovereignty is one and indivisible, even more in religion than in politics, and still more so in Hinduism than in other religions. The Great Temple in its entirety is sacred to that God-hood.

It follows that even in the Great Temple no more than one flag may fly. Occasionally, two primal deities may be found installed side by side in two primal shrines, raised cheek by jowl, with two flag-staffs set up side by side, one, for each deity, with interspace between each deity to permit the devotee to circumambulate the deity of his choice. Or, the shrines are set back to back and with intervening space, for each Deity may, then, have a jurisdictional rectangle of his own. Dependant on whether the two shrines are set so close, side by side, as almost to touch each other, or are set apart, but not adequately so, the ambulatory path around them may merge into one, in full or in part, resulting in a full, or a partial, blurring of sovereignties. This is to be deemed permissible on foot of an implicit concordat between the two sovereignties.

### III

The temple at Chidambaram is a great one. It falls into two major divisions, a northern and a southern. The latter it is that contains the two shrines that come within the scope

of our study. So, our attention henceforth will be confined to it.<sup>1</sup>

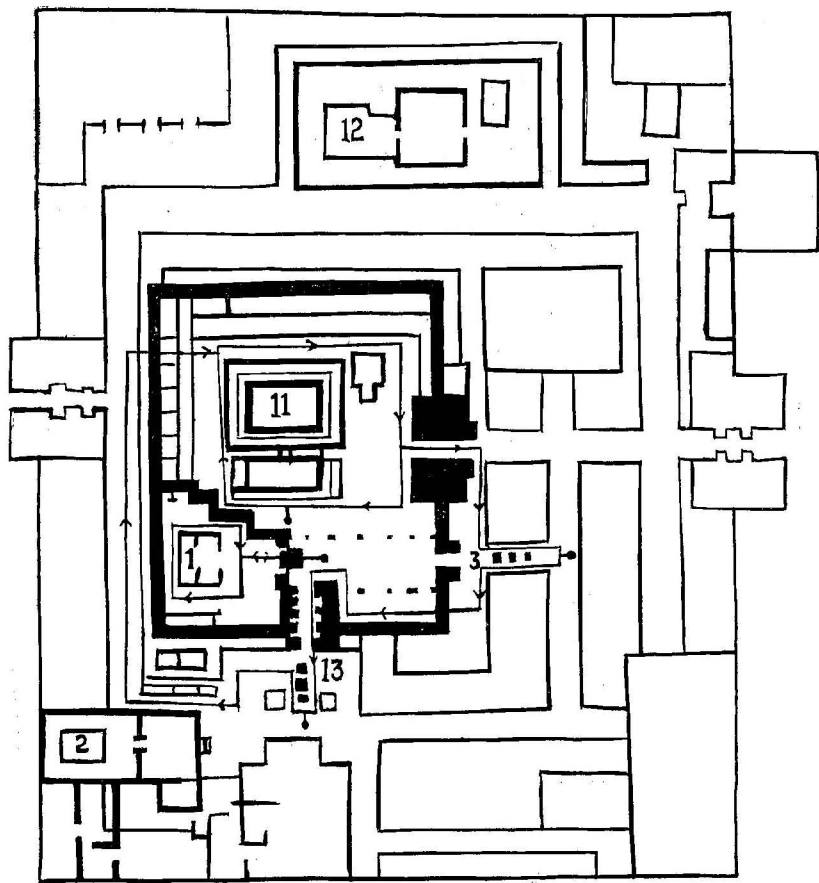
The principal shrine in a normal temple complex is what faces east; here, it is Viṣṇu's. This sanctum enshrines an immoveably established image of Viṣṇu, as Raṅga-nātha or Nārāyaṇa, recumbent, with head at south and legs stretched to north. A portable image,— the epiphany bearing the name Govinda-rāja,— also finds place in this cell. Round this sanctum runs an Inner Circumbulatory. Attached to this shrine, in the east, is an Audience Hall; perhaps, till some time back, it was only an open platform. Beyond this Hall, rises Viṣṇu's Flag-Staff, with his flag on top. Round this shrine (with its Circumambulatory, the Inner) and round this Audience Hall runs a second, an open, Circumambulatory, the Outer, with Viṣṇu's flag-staff in it. Its course has been, apparently, somewhat confounded by building in the eleventh century A.D. and onwards. Perhaps, a little wall was raised some-where to prevent the Outer Circumbulatory being continuous. All this makes what we may call the Viṣṇu Unit. The ancillary shrine, to the north-east of Nārāyaṇa's, is conspicuous by its absence.

We shall now turn to another group of structures the axial line of which intersects, at right angles, the axial line running from Nārāyaṇa's shrine—what is popularly known as Govinda-rāja's—to his Flag-Staff.

To the north-east of the Womb-shrine of recumbent Viṣṇu and distinct structurally from it and from its Audience Hall,— but not more than a few yards off,— stands a structure, facing south, in which stands,— dances,— the famous Nata-rāja of Chidambaram. This structure is really composed of two small Halls, the Chit Sabha and the Kanaka Sabha, integrally united, opening into each other as they do. Together, they face, virtually, the western end of Nārāyaṇa's Audience Hall. In fact, the Sabhas occur just where Rama's shrine occurs in the normal Viṣṇu temple. The Sabhas are small: each is just a few yards either way.

The Chit Sabha,— the northern of the two,— is closed with walls on three sides, while the fourth,— what adjoins the Kanaka Sabha to the south,— is open. The Kanaka Sabha is, in effect,

# THE NARAYANA - NATARAJA COMPLEX AT CHIDAMBARAM



## NARAYANA (Govindaraja) TEMPLE :

1. Narayana ( Govinda - raja ) Recumbent.
2. Narayana's Consort.
3. Narayana ( Govinda - raja ) : Flag - Staff.

## NATARAJA TEMPLE :

11. Nata - raja. Dancing.
12. Mula - Sthana - Isvara.
13. Nata - raja : Flag - Staff.

### *Red Lines Indicate :*

The two Inner Pra - dakshinas round Narayana (Govinda - raja ) and Nata - raja, when the worshipper does not include the Flag - Staff also in his Pra - dakshinas and

the Outer Pra - dakshina round both Narayana (Govinda - raja ) and Nata - raja together, the Flag - Staff also being included by the worshipper in the Pra - dakshinas,—this being alternative to the one mentioned in the text of the article.

The arrows show the direction of the worshipper's pra - dakshina.

open on all four sides (except for a door-way in the south), Neither of the Sabhas is crowned with the huge domes, or cupolas, appropriate in the geographical region in which the great temple is situated. Each Sabha is covered with a low gabled roof, formed of small metal tiles, celebrated for having been gilt, more than once, for splendour and pomp.

The northern Hall, the Chit-Sabha, is a trifle bigger than the other. In the middle of this Hall, Śiva, Dancer Nata-rāja, in his manifestation as a superb, but not too easily portable, image in bronze, dances an eternal dance. No enstated image of stone, *mūla-vigraha*, is found installed. Slightly to north-west of Nata-rāja, in what serves for a western-wall in this Sabha, a small garland of leaves of gold hangs, somewhat like a crescent, curving downward from nails let into the wall. A thin veil of silk screens the garland from view. The veil is drawn aside when a devotee is given a glimpse of what is veiled in,— the Chidambara-Rahasya, the Mystery of Chidambaram. No icon, no symbol, is set up for the Mystery; a chanted Mantra, Formula, unfigured in anything visible, is what is said to be 'located' here. At best, the garland is a device to indicate where the Mystery is supposed to have its position. To south of the station of this Mystery is a small golden Mukha-Linga, a Linga in which an anthropomorphic face is to be discerned; this is called Sada-Śiva or Chandra-Maulī.

The southern Hall, the Kanaka-Sabha, contains no images; it is only an annexure to the Chit-Sabha. Here it is that the Vedic rituals are performed. To the door posts are annexed two carved figures representing two sages, Patañjali and Vyāgra-pāda.

Close round these two small Sabhas is the Inner Circum-ambulatory of Nata-rāja; it is not walled in nor is it roofed over.

This duality of temples, comprising one unitary temple to Nārāyaṇa-Govinda-rāja and one unitary temple to Śiva-Nata-rāja, is attempted to be enclosed into a greater unity by maṇḍapas, narrow and open at sides, which turn and turn and enclose the composite. Round this runs a great ambulatory path.

To the south of Nata-rāja's Sabha, beyond Govinda-rāja's Audience Hall, in fact, in the Outer Circumambulatory of Nata-rāja, stands his Flag-Staff. Skirting Nata-rāja's outer ambulatory path, and opening into it, stands the Nṛtta-Sabha, the Dance Hall, where the image of Nata-rāja, brought from the Chit-Sabha, performs Dance once in a while.

To the north-east of the Chit and the Kanaka Sabhas and in Natarāja's Outer Circumambulatory stands a shrine to Śiva, who bears here the special name of Mūla-Nātha, Primal Lord, or Mūla-Sthāna-Nātha, Lord of Primal Station. The enstationed image is a stone Linga. No peripatetic image in bronze, whether to Sa-Umā-Skanda or to Nata-rāja, is to be seen. The shrine has an Audience-Hall for prefix. Into it opens south a cell, with this Lord's consort placed here in bronze. Ordinarily it is Nata-rāja that should have stood in this cell but he does not. Linga in main cell, Consort in subsidiary cell, an Audience Hall and an Inner Ambulatory are all noticeable, but no Nata-rāja nor the usual Flag-Staff in front of the Linga are present. This is accepted by all as the temple to which the Nata-rāja of the Chit-Sabha should, by rights, belong.

North of this Outer Circumambulatory runs a great wall marking off all this multiplicity of structures,— the shrines to Govinda-rāja, to Nata-rāja and to Mūla-Sthāna-Nātha and also the two Flag-Staffs and the Nṛtta-Sabha. This great wall runs west to east. Turning to the south at the east end, it proceeds south. Reaching its southern end and turning to west, it runs west, including the Nṛtta Sabha within its ambit. Then, at the western end the wall turns and runs north, till, joining the western end of the north wall, it completes the Circumvallation.

Thus is this extremely significant complex made to enclose within its ambit a shrine to Nārāyaṇa-Govindarāja with a Flag-Staff and another to Śiva-Natarāja with a Flag-Staff all its own.

#### IV

The temple complex at Chidambaram turns out to be unusual in at least one important feature.

The east-facing shrine,— that of Viṣṇu,— is normal in that it has an Audience Hall, an Inner Circumambulatory

and an Outer one and a Flag-Staff, and all of them are in the normal positions. To the north-east it lacks an auxiliary shrine opening into the Audience Hall and containing, usually, the Rāma-Sīta-Lakṣmaṇa-Hanumān group, and here it falls short of being normal. Where, however, this auxiliary shrine should occur there stands a shrine and a prefixed Hall, the Chit and the Kanaka Sabhas. Being, however, quite detached from the Assembly Hall of Viṣṇu, without even a shadow of a link, the two Sabhas look independent of Viṣṇu's temple and, all the more so, as the denizen of the Chit Sabha, the Kanaka Sabha being only a annexe,—is Śiva as Nata-rāja, and he is deity who is not subordinate to Viṣṇu. But, it is quite unusual for an independent God to take his station where another God's auxiliary has his stand and yet not admit that one's superiority.

The Chit Sabha has, in the Kanaka Sabha, a mere annexe for the performance of worship in. If, however, it had an Audience Hall in front and, so, in front of Nata-rāja, it will run south and, cutting through Viṣṇu's Audience Hall, will project a little further south. But such an Audience Hall never existed. Nata-rāja, however, has a Flag-Staff and it stands further south than the possible terminus of an Audience Hall for his shrine: the Flag-Staff rises in the Outer Circumambulatory. A Flag-Staff being the symbol of the independance of the God before whom it is raised, we have to assume, that Viṣṇu and Nata-rāja are independant of each other, notwithstanding, however, that, appearing to the north-east of Viṣṇu,—in the position of the Rama group,—Natarāja appears to play an auxiliary role to Viṣṇu.

But, this again appears to be an unjustified conclusion, for, we know of no temple-complex wherein two Flag-Staffs could occupy the positions they do here. The line of *vīkṣana* from Viṣṇu to his Flag-Staff cuts the line of *vīkṣana* from Nata-rāja to his Flag-Staff. The two lines intersect each other at right angles. Such an intersection of the lines of vision seems to be unknown elsewhere. A shrine to Viṣṇu and another to Śiva standing side by side could each have a Flag-Staff of its own, for the circumambulatory of the one shrine may be different in every part from that of the other shrine. A



shrine to one aspect of one God may stand just back of another shrine to another aspect of the same God and the two manifestations may have each a separate shrine, a separate ambulatory and a separate Flag-Staff. The ambulatory passages of the Gods of each pair do not, then, overlap at any stage of the circuits. At Chidambaram, however, atleast the outer ambulatory circuit of Viṣṇu and that of Nata-rāja cut each other, this being necessitated by the placing of the two Flag-Staffs on lines that run at right angles to each other.

Should a devotee of Nata-rāja seek, in his devotion to perambulate the circuit of this God, he would have to start south of the Kanaka Sabha, from the presence of Nata-rāja. Going west, he will turn right,— that is to north,— and then to east. He will turn right again,— that is, to south,— and go straight south. He will pass through Govindarāja's Audience-Hall, reach and go round Nata-rāja's Flag-Staff, then go north, passing once more through Govinda-rāja's Audience Hall, and then reach the point he started from. This however, is not permissible to a strict Śaivite,— devotee of Nata-rāja, for, when he enters and re-enters Govinda-rāja's Audience Hall, he comes into the jurisdiction of, and has to do obeisance to, Govinda-rāja, who is Viṣṇu.

So too, a devotee of Viṣṇu (Govinda-raja), seeking to go along the circuit of this Lord, will start east of Govinda-raja's sanctum, enter the Inner Circumambulatory, make a circuit of it, emerge from the sanctum, turn east, proceed along Govinda-raja's Audience Hall, then pass on east of Govinda-raja's Flag-Staff, turn round, and, walking up west along his Audience Hall, then turn south, go past, Nata-rāja's Flag-Staff, turn north, then turn west, and, then, north and go on and, then, seek entrance east through a passage now blocked, to reach again the starting point. This too is not permissible to the strict worshipper of Viṣṇu, for, he passes in front of Nata-raja, both very near the start and at the end.

Neither the strict Vaiṣṇava nor the strict Śaiva is, thus, able to avoid paying obeisance to the God of the other sect in the course of his circumambulation of the Lord of his choice. The positions of the Flag-Staffs, however, rule out

bigotry, in that they compel the devotee of either God to pay due obeisance to the other. Sharp differences between the devotees of the two Gods have been, however, found strikingly expressed in the hymns of the great Alvars of the Vaiṣṇavas and the Nāyanmar of the Saivas and it is imposible to believe that the two sects had not split irrevocably by at least the begining of the 7th Century A.D.

An explanation, however, must be possible for the partial overlapping of the ambulatory circuits at Chidambaram. If Viṣṇu and Śiva were identical, in at least their essential natures, neither of them need proclaim his individuality as one that conflicts with that of the other. Each may even be the other. There can, then, be no possibility of differences or conflicts between them : their jurisdictions need not be separate.

It may be that a devotee starts from the presence of Nata-rāja and circumambulates him. Going *pradakshina*—wise he would go west, then north and then east of the Chit-Kanaka Sabhas, emerge into the outer *prākāra* through the great eastern gate, go south, past Govinda-rāja's Flag-Staff, then turn west and past Nata-rāja's Flag-Staff, then go north for some distance and, then, turning east come back to where he started from before Nata-rāja.

In thus circnmambulating Nata-rāja he circumambulates Govinda-rāja as well. He goes round *both* Govinda-rāja and Nata-rāja: he at the same time, goes, round *both* Viṣṇu and Śiva. All sectarianism is left behind. Similar will be the course taken by a devotee of Govinda-rāja should he seek to circumambulate him with his Flag-Staff.

We have, thus, to consider how Viṣṇu and Śiva-Natarāja stand related to each other in earlier days.

## V

In the beginning, before Creation, all this, according to the *Rg-Veda*, was fluid indeterminate.<sup>1</sup> Uttāna-pad, in the *Rg-Veda*, means one stretched out, lying on his back, supine, face upwards, and also one with legs stretched out, or extended, The *Rg-Veda* tells of this Uttāna-pad, who is once called Varuṇa,

lying on the waters.<sup>2</sup> The three Heavens and the three Earths are in him but resting in the navel of the Unborn<sup>3</sup>, giving birth to the Regions, when from Non-Existence was born Existence in the primordial æon of the Gods. From the Recumbent was born the Earth, and from the Earth were born the Regions: Pure Act's daughter, the Infinite, was born: as the Gods stood firm in the Flood, there, as it were from the feet of Dancers, rose pungent dust<sup>4</sup>. Will arose and that was the first: who knows it aright and who can set it forth? Neither death nor immortality was there<sup>5</sup>. So goes part of the story.

Here is much of Creation explained, in brief and unrelated patches. It may be condensed in essentials. From Non-Existence came forth Existence. There was Flood, or Waters, that is Chaos. The Waters, the Flood, is all too appropriate a symbol of Chaos, for, the Waters, having no specific form of their own, take whatever the shape of the vessel into which for the time they are poured. It is from Chaos,—or, varying the metaphor, from the dust that has no form of its own and obscures all form,—that Order, the Create through Creation, has to be evoked. Once Order is brought forth, Creation is achieved. On Chaos lay the Recumbent: from the Recumbent were born both the Infinite and the Earth as part of the Finite: from the Earth were born the Regions: and dust arose as if from the feet of Dancers. The Recumbent, in later Vedic literature, is known as Nārāyana and is Creator. The Recumbent, thus, emerges as Creator Complete.

The *Rg-Veda*, followed by the works depending on it, expresses this in many ways. All this universe appeared in only one form, Water<sup>6</sup>. Water, Chaos, was itself engendered by the Maker of the Senses<sup>7</sup>: Waters hold creative power<sup>8</sup>: they retained the Embryo in which all Gods, single, contemplated each other, each linked with the other, standing in the Flood.<sup>9</sup> Prajāpati created Earth from the Waters,<sup>10</sup> and he turned into a Tortoise to produce creatures.<sup>11</sup> Uttāna-pad, as a female, produces Prajapati as Creator and Vac as Creatrix. As a male, however, Prajapati is the Embryo in the Waters;<sup>12</sup> he rests in the navel of the Unborn<sup>13</sup>. Waters are this Universe in the beginning and from them rises Brahma and from him the

Gods,<sup>14</sup> and he becomes the Nārāyaṇa, the Viṣṇu, of later Vedic literature. Nārāyaṇa rests on the perennial Waters,<sup>15</sup> as his first resting place. A Great One in whom are placed the Gods, as branches around a tree-trunk, is on the back of the Ocean<sup>17</sup>. Nārāyaṇa, is recumbent on a Serpant in the primeval Waters;<sup>18</sup> he is in the form of a child in a couch that hangs in the Ocean from a tree-branch and contains the universe in his belly<sup>19</sup>. A Lotus rises from his navel and bears Brahma<sup>20</sup>, who is Creator.<sup>21</sup> He sleeps on and then awakes and creates again<sup>21a</sup>

Even the sages guard the seat of Holy Order. The plan is not open to us for study.<sup>22</sup> Only He may know whence creation came or whether it formed itself.<sup>24</sup> Man may not, indeed, find him who created all this, a something else having come between Create and Creator<sup>25</sup>.

So, Uttāna-pad the Creator becomes Nārāyaṇa, the Recumbent, the Outstretched, who lays himself at ease on the Waters and on the Serpent and holds the Universe in his belly. He is none other than Viṣṇu and the Tortoise.

## VI

There is another course that Creation takes in Rg-Vedic literature,— a course that is equally important for our study.

The Flood, the Waters, is but a symbol: it typifies what is a great heap, an undifferentiated host, of what is not differentiated. In fact, the heap or the host does not come within the powers of mental apprehension of man, being all Chaos lying as it does in a jumble. Man passes it by: it makes and can make no impression on him. In so far as he is concerned it might not even meaningfully exist at all.

The Transcendent must be broken up into bits, fractions, which could come within man's limited powers of perception. To bring it within the scope of his knowledge, it has to be divided, particularised, separated and individuated. This division and individuation are effected by a Dancing on Chaos, by a separation of Chaos, by Dance, into its several parts and fractions, and thus bringing it within the scope of

his powers of mental perception. What he cannot perceive mentally or physically can, in fact, have no effect on him: it might as well be *non est*. Only when broken down, individuated, by being Danced over, does it come within the ambit of his perceptions; and only then does he, recognizing its contour or shape, give it a Rupa, Form, and recognising it by being alled by a Name, a noun, give it a Nāma. Out of utter Chaos, things are rescued, for man's recognition, by being individuated and given Names and Forms. Creation, thus, is effected by Dancing over what is Chaos and by dividing, separating and individuating, in due order, the components of Chaos, so that each component could be recognised by either being seen as a recognizable Rūpa (Form) or by being identified by means of a Nāma (Name).

Dancing is frequently mentioned in the *Rg-Veda*. As the Gods stood firm in the Flood, Chaos, each enlinked with the other, rose pungent dust as from the feet of Dancers.<sup>26</sup> The Gods themselves are Dancers. Dawn dances to men here on earth every morn. The Maruts are Dancers<sup>27</sup> and the Asvins are heroes who dance.<sup>28</sup> But, Indra is the greatest of Dancers. His garments he sports as a Dancer.<sup>29</sup> His heroic exploits he dances forth.<sup>30</sup> To an 'anuṣṭubh' is his dance set.<sup>31</sup> His first exploit, told in heavens, is to free the Floods as Dancer and send down life.<sup>32</sup> As Dancer he is great. He is greatly invoked as Dancer by his devotees.<sup>34</sup> As his praise was sung of old, he is Dancing Lord of men.

Freeing the Floods and sending down life the Dancer is undoubtedly Creator.

The Great Dancer of the *Rg-Veda*, Indra, gets identified with, and concretized in, Rudra in later times. So, Indra-Rudra as Śiva, becomes embodied in the Dancer *par excellence*, Nata-rāja.

The needed individuation being effected by Dance the individuated objects are perceived by their Nāma or their by Rūpa.

Shape, Rūpa, is given to things by Tvaṣṭṛ who is, therefore, a Creator: every creature got its form from him.<sup>37</sup>

Viśvakarman, Father of the Eye, or Maker of Senses, is Creator, as he enables forms to be realized.<sup>88</sup> Sōma, even when giver of only twilight, but day after day, is Creator.<sup>89</sup> Earth and Heaven, being disclosed in their inwardness by Sōma, are Creators.<sup>40</sup> Even more so is Sūrya, the donor of full light.<sup>41</sup> Dhātṛ who gives sight to discern and survey this world is necessarily a Creator.<sup>42</sup> Agni who, on being born, dispels darkness and makes the world manifest, cannot but be another.<sup>45</sup> He knows the warp and the woof that Day and Night weave into Creation.<sup>44</sup>

Viśvakarman, who has been found to be Rūpa-Maker is *ipso facto* a Name-Giver too.<sup>45</sup> Vāc's first utterances were Names of objects, applied to them by Bṛhaspati.<sup>46</sup> She is the spirit's aim and object<sup>47</sup> for, it is through her that the spirit can make herself known. Nāma, Name, being spoken, is given also the name Vāc. She utters the Word that Gods and men alike welcome.<sup>48</sup> All that is excellent stands disclosed by Vāc,<sup>49</sup> that is, created. Rṣis bring Vāc forth and, in hymns, as Nāma, make her tones resound.<sup>50</sup> Bṛhaspati gives Names to objects, the Names being the first and earliest utterances of Vāc, and everything stands disclosed, or created.<sup>51</sup>

Nāma, Name, and Rūpa, Form, become, thus, two important modes of making objects come within man's comprehension. Unless objects are divided, given Rūpas, and given names, Nāmas, they cannot be comprehended by man. And man being the centre of the universe a creation that does not come within his knowledge is no Creation at all.

Nāma is Name, an emanation of Sound, and so is symbolized in that fine maker of sound, the Sankha, the Conch, and in that of the clearest of sound-givers, the Damaru, the Drum. Rūpa is Form, an evocation of Light, and so is symbolised in the Sun, Sūrya (Sun), or Agni (Fire), unique giver of Form. One set of Nāma-Rūpa symbols, the Sankha, and Sūrya, (as Chakra, Wheel), gets into the hands of Viṣṇu. Another set, the Damaru and the Flame of Agni, gets into those of Śiva, that is, Nata-rāja. Sūrya (Wheel) and Sankha, Flame (Agni) and Damaru, make Creators of Viṣṇu and Indra-Rudra-Śiva, both.

## VII

Viṣṇu, in the *Rg-Veda*, was known especially for his being 'Vikrama,' his taking three strides, and his being 'Uru-Krama,' wide-striding, and 'Uru-Gaya', wide-going. He takes three steps and all beings dwell within these three steps<sup>1</sup>. He traverses the earth 'for bestowing it as a dwelling on man<sup>2</sup> for wide-stepping existence,<sup>3</sup> man being in distress<sup>4</sup>. These are closely related modes of Creation,— what remains un-created as Chaos<sup>5</sup> being reduced to order, to measure, to limits, by being stridden out, by being measured out,— a mode of individuation,— and being brought within the limits of comprehension. It is true that Soma measured out the six regions<sup>6</sup> and Varuṇa did it with the sun,<sup>6</sup> but in course of time, they receded into the background as Creators. It is with Viṣṇu that Creation came to be firmly associated.

Rudra, who became Śiva, has no place in the *Rg-Veda* as Creator. Once, in the *Rg-Veda*, he is the father of the Universe,<sup>7</sup> but why or how is not known. In later literature he becomes Destroyer. However, the *Rg-Vedic* temperament permitted him, too, in course of time, to become Creator. Perhaps, he was referred to in the literature to which the *Rg-Veda* pertained, but not in that work itself, in variations of his being Father of the Universe, which would have established him too as a Creator: if so, this must have been in hymns that have not gone into that collection. The *Rg-Veda* appears to be no more than an anthology and there is no reason whatever to assume that the hymnual literature of the Vedic people of the *Rg-Vedic* period was not much more copious than what got collected in that *Veda*. Or, it may be that, in later times, when Rudra's devotees would have him play Creator too, he was invested with that role.

To this Unity expanded into Duality, or, to a Duality condensed into a Unity is the Chidambaram temple raised in truth. Either way, Chidambaram establishes all too clearly that Rudra as Śiva-Nata-rajā did play Creator. Perhaps it was from even *Rg-Vedic* times, but certainly so in later days.

Viṣṇu and Rudra-Śiva had to be functionally identified in so far as at least they were both Creators. But the tendency of the *Rg-Veda* which, while, on the one hand, made it divide God-head into fractions, made it also unite the fractions into God-head,—into the indisputable and undisputed One,—kept throwing Viṣṇu and Rudra-Śiva into a unity and raising them in later times, to the status of the One in two composite forms, Hari-Hara and Sankara-Narāyaṇa.

And the devotee could worship the One in the concrete by stationing himself at Chidambaram at the point of intersection of the two lines of *vikṣana*: he could have a vision of both Viṣṇu and Śiva-Natarāja at the same time. If he could so worship Duality, he could not only see and worship, but also sense, the One in the Duality, and feel it enter his bones.

This was, in all probability due to his having integrated Indra the Dancer in Rudra-Śiva in part. Dancing over an object was a mode of disintegrating the object, dividing it into pieces of recognizable shape and, therefore, capable of bearing a Name. Shape and Name are modes of Creation. Dancing, thus, should have become a mode of creation and the Dancer must have become a Creator.

This emphasis on the Unity that resides in Duality and in Multiplicity is what characterises the bringing together of Viṣṇu and Śiva as Creators in the Chidambaram temple.

## VIII

A temple designed to present Unity in Duality or Multiplicity could have been raised at any time that a Rg-Vedically minded devotee felt that he should pay his homage to the conception of the Unity of God-head. He had only to exhibit Nārāyaṇa in the season of Dormancy between the Yugas and Nata-rāja in the season of Activity in Creation during the Yugas, to serve his purpose.

That even in the times of Tiru-Jñāna-Sambandha and Tiru-Nāvukku-Arasu the images of Nārāyaṇa and Nata-rāja were both well-established in the temple is made clear by the



Viṣṇu too in the temple having been [sung of not only by a Vaiṣṇava Saint of, perhaps, the next generation to both the Śaiva saints but also by Mānikya-Vāchaka, famous Śaiva Saint of the generation next after, having spoken slightly of the position of Viṣṇu at Chidambaram *vis-a-vis* Nata-rāja. Sectarianism blinded all of them.

Were the temple of Śiva-Nata-rāja the earlier to be raised at Chidambaram there could have been no excuse for his having been made to face south, and away from Mūla-Sthāna, and still less for a shrine to Nārāyaṇa being allowed to be added later, facing east and turning Śiva-Natarāja from an independantly established deity into one that has the look of being subsidiary to Viṣṇu. There can, therefore, be little doubt but that Viṣṇu and Śiva were established together at Chidambaram in the respective positions occupied by them not only today but also in the days of Manikya-Vachaka. The available evidence for the two positions comes from Mānikya-Vāchaka but the complex must have been much older than Tiru-Jñāna-Sambandha and Tiru-Nāvukku-Arasu and Kula-Śekhara. No one would have started a temple to Nata-rāja in his peripatetic form in bronze in the first instance, making him face south and play ancillary to a Govinda-rāja and yet allow him the right of hoisting his Flag-Staff. What is more, the proper station of the absent Linga, the sanctum of Viṣṇu, should have been allowed to be usurped by a trespassing Viṣṇu who, to add to the injury, laid himself comfortably down as Uttāna-pad, leaving Nata-rāja to toil and sweat before him as Dancer.

The Three Thousand of Chidambaram had, apparently, started as a body of priests bound to the service of both Nārāyaṇa and Natarāja,— Creation in its season of Rest and Creation in its season of Activity, but had split into two groups, one tied to the service of Nārāyaṇa and the other to that of Natarāja, when sactarianism came to divide a complex that had split into two. It is most likely that the Vedic ritual, which is said even now to govern the worship of Nata-rāja, was, in those days, what regulated the worship of Nārāyaṇa too, and that it is only in later times that the Agamas were hitched on to the worship of

Nārāyaṇa,— the code of worship in this ~~shrine~~ fo being Agamic.

At Chidambaram, Nārāyaṇa-Viṣṇu and Natarāja-Śiva were presented as both Creators, long before Tiru-Jñāna-Sambandha and Tiru-Nāvukku-Arasu, notwithstanding that the two saw only Nata-rāja-Śiva and declined to understand the temple as the home of two Creators unified into One as God.

The period could be that of the famous, though legendary, Sangam,— prior to the third century A.D. It could even be earlier, for it is only in the earlier days that the religious atmosphere in the country was congenial to the raising of a temple to One God exhibiting himself in facets of what may be called his personality. Even much earlier than the first century B.C. we have evidence to the growth of sectarianism of a bitter kind.

## IX

Here is a view of the nature of the Chidambaram complex which, in the tumult of sectarian feelings, neither the devotee of Viṣṇu nor that of Śiva is likely to accept, in even these days of easy thinking. The points that could be brought up against the view presented here may be anticipated and met.

One objection would be that the buildings worth noticing in the context in Chidambaram date practically from the 11th century A.D. and, so, cannot speak to the state of things much earlier. This is really to support the contention here; Manikya-vachaka speaks to the present position of the two shrines having dated back atleast to his times and he is at the very beginning of the 9th century A.D. Another objection would be that the temple-complex now shows no signs of an outer circum-ambulatory round Govinda-rāja and that, therefore, the outer circum-ambulatory that has been assumed here could not have been in evidence in the earlier centuries. But, the alterations in the temple from the 11th century, when the temple building was greatly altered, might have obliterated an outer circuit by building across it and, so, negated it. A third argument might be that the Nata-rāja in the Chit-Sabha is only an image in bronze and that it could have been set up in only the 11th century. It should not, however, be forgotten that it has not been

the practice in any temple to set up a *mūla-vidraha* of Nata-rāja, in his anthropomorphic condition. He has been always an *Utsava-vidraha*. Yet another argument might be that the position of the Rahasya in the northern wall of the Chit-Sabha might really be where a *mūla-vidraha* to Nata-rāja must have been set up. But, when we speak of temples and images in them we have to be governed in our speculations by the Agamas and that they know of no images in the form of points or other in-commensurables. A last objection might be that there is no evidence now available for affirming that shrines had existed in early temples for accommodating Rāma or Nata-rāja to the north-east of the primal image. We know, however, that our notions are now determined by the survivals of temple-complexes that have come down to us. They are by no means adequate, however, to judge of what temples must have been like before the times of which we are now speaking. Why, then, not assume that the Nata-rāja shrine at Chidambaram is itself proof of the existence, in even much earlier times, of an ancillary shrine in each temple which, standing to the north-east of the main shrine, houses a different manifestation of the One Being in that shrine?

## X

The Chidambaram Temple, with both Nārāyaṇa and Nata-rāja coalesced into One God, though shown separated as two, is fine proof of the continuance to these days of the spirit of integration of Gods into a Tad Ekam, 'That One', which is the distinguishing mark of the *Rg-Veda*. Man's desires kept him appealing to this God or that, and kept him making offerings as it pleased him for the moment. None-the-less, deep in him, lay, and lies, the conviction that all the Gods appealed to are but facets of one God-hood. And, as we find at Chidambaram, the devotee was ever taught to exhibit his abiding belief in that Unity.

Even in the very earliest days to which we could take what are really the survivals of Indian culture,— the *Rg-Veda*,— we have Gods differentiated from each other, though it is quite clear that they are presented merely as facts of One God-head. This multiplicity of Gods keeps dogging us notwithstanding noble efforts to present the multiplicity as but

the result of attempts to appreciate God in one or other or more of his multifarious manifestation. The devotees, in course of time, break up into two groups, one around Viṣṇu and the other round Śiva, and yet they do not forget that Viṣṇu and Śiva are both facets of the One. It is to this stage that the Chidambaram complex belongs. The last stage, in which Viṣṇu and Śiva are set up the one against the other, in the minds of devotees, post-dates the idea of the Chidambaram temple and led to the development of the mentality now common among Indians.

Is this the last step in the evolution of Indian religious ideas? No Hindu, however, sectarian, is above recognising that it is nobler to recognise that while the fragmentation of God-head is needed for practical worship it is inevitable to accept, and abide by, the Unity of God-head.

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At the end of the lecture, members present took part in the discussion. Sri S. T. Srinivasagopalachari, then exhibited four paintings representing Tanjore School.

#### Section Foot note

- I 1. *Puraṇ kiḍandan aḍi kānbāṇ puvi viṇḍu pukku ariyā  
kiran kiḍandāi eṇṇu irappat tana ir aḍikku en iṇḍu  
karaṇ kiḍandan oṇṇu kāṭṭa marṇu angu adun kāṭṭiḍu eṇṇu  
varaṇ kiḍandan thillai ambalam mūṇṇil am māyavane*
- III 1. The reader will kindly refer to the accompanying Sketch of the southern portion of the temple, which has been adapted from B. V. Narayanaswami Nayudu, P. Srinivasulu Naidu, and O. V. Rāṅgayya Pantulu, *Tandava Lakshanam*, (1936)

## Section Foot note

- |     |      |                          |     |  |
|-----|------|--------------------------|-----|--|
| V   | 1.   | R. V. 10.129.3           | 28. | R. V. 6.63.5                                     |
|     | 2.   | R. V. 10.72. 3-6         | 29. | R. V. 6.29.3                                     |
|     | 3.   | R. V. 10.82.6            | 30. | R. V. 5.33.6                                     |
|     | 5.   | R. V. 10.129.3           | 31. | R. V. 10.124.9                                   |
|     | 6.   | R. V. 10.72.6            | 32. | R. V. 2.22.4                                     |
|     | 7.   | R. V. 10.72-1            | 33. | R. V. 130 7.8 24.12 ;<br>8.68(57)-7 ; 8.92(81).3 |
|     | 8.   | R. V. 10.121.8           | 34. | R. V. 8 21.9                                     |
|     | 9.   | R. V. 10.82.5.6          | 36. | R. V. 10.10.5                                    |
|     | 10.  | S. B. 7.5.1.1,5          | 37. | R. V. 8-102.8                                    |
|     | 11.  | S. B. 7.5.1.5            | 38. | R. V. 10.82.1                                    |
|     | 12.  | R. V. 10.82.5.6          | 39. | R. V. 9.41.5                                     |
|     | 13.  | R. V. 10 82.6            | 40. | R. V. 9.97.38                                    |
|     | 14.  | M. B. 3.189.3            | 41. | R. V. 6.44 23                                    |
|     | 17.  | M.B. 12.182. 16-7, 38-39 | 42. | R. V. 10-158.3                                   |
|     | 18.  | V. P. 1.2                | 43. | R. V. 10.88.2                                    |
|     | 19.  | B. P. 3.20,16-17         | 44. | R. V. 6.9.2,3                                    |
|     | 20.  | M. B. 3.271.43-4         | 45. | R. V. 10.82.3                                    |
|     | 21.  | A. V. 10.7 38            | 46. | R. V. 10.71.1                                    |
|     | 21.a | M. B. 12.341.94          | 47. | R. V. 10.114.9                                   |
|     | 23.  | R. V. 10.12.8            | 48. | R. V. 10.125.5                                   |
|     | 24.  | R. V. 10-129.7           | 49. | R. V. 10.71.1                                    |
|     | 25.  | R. V. 10.82.7            | 50. | R. V. 10.71.3                                    |
| VI  | 26.  | R. V. 10.72.6            | 51. | R. V. 10.71.1                                    |
|     | 27.  | R. V. 8.20 2             |     |  |
| VII | 1.   | R. V. 154.2              | 5.  | R. V. 6.47.3.4                                   |
|     | 2.   | R. V. 7.100.4            | 6.  | R. V. 5.85.5                                     |
|     | 3.   | R. V. 1.155.4            | 7.  | R. V. 6.49.10                                    |
|     | 4.   | R. V. 6.49.13            |     |  |

# MURUGAN\*

K. A. NILAKANTA SASTRI

Some preliminary observations are called for to obviate misunderstanding.

**First**, this is an essay in history and archaeology; it does not concern itself with the validity of current religious faith or practices, and whatever I say here should not be interpreted as having any bearing or involving any criticism of orthodox devotees of Skanda or Muruga, one of the most popular deities of South India for long centuries. I shall illustrate my meaning by an analogy. An orthodox Hindu believes that the Veda is eternal and uncreated (*apauruṣēya*); all of it is the breath of God which guides Creator, Creation and Life (*yasya niśśvasitam Vedāḥ, Yō Brahmānam vidadhāti pūrvam* etc.). But this has not precluded the critical study of the Vedic literature and discussion of its authorship of the different strata in it and their relative chronology and historical significance. My attempt here is to apply similar methods to the history of the Murugan Cult.

**Secondly**, this is not an exhaustive study or even a comprehensive one of the various aspects of the cult, but a critique based on a representative selection from the sources calculated to help the understanding of one single but fundamental question viz. whether Murugan is a deity peculiar to the Tamils or immemorial antiquity and their special contribution to Indian Culture as is sometimes stated, or he is also like many other gods the final result of a syncretism between Aryan and pre-Aryan beliefs and modes, and whether, on the second alternative, it is possible to identify the different elements that have entered into the complex final result.

A **third** thing I would say is that I do not claim to have reached any final or certain conclusions on the subject, but take the opportunity I have been given of addressing this learned society to do some thinking aloud and profit by the observations

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\* Paper read before the Archaeological Society of South India on 22-9-'64.

of my listeners. I have lived long enough to realize that final certitude on complex questions is generally hard to reach, and that there is no room for dogmatism in such matters.

I shall start with the southern particularly Tamil evidence. A useful collection of this evidence has been made by Mr. K. R. Srinivasan in his Sankara Parvati Endowment Lectures (Madras University) for 1959-60.<sup>1</sup> He opens his account with the statement: 'The cult of Murugan was very old in the Tamil country and in the numerous references to him in the earliest strata of literature we get a glimpse of *his original form and worship*' (italics mine). The words most often associated with the diety in early Tamil literature are Murugu, Murugan and Velan, and turning to the Tamil lexicon of the Madras University we find the following meanings for these words.

**Murugu** : (a) tenderness (b) Skanda (c) fragrance (d) beauty (e) god (f) dancing while under possession by Skanda.

**Murugan** : (1) youth (2) the god (3) one possessed by Skanda, veriyattatan (4) Chief of the desert tract (Palai).

**Velan** : (1) Spearman (2) Skanda (3) priest worshipping Skanda.

In what seem to be some of the earliest poems accessible there are references to Velan, his Veriyāṭṭam and his 'divination' with the aid of Kaḷangu (Molucca bean) of the troubles of love-lorn maidens as due to Muruga; there is also reference to the worship of Murugan with *tinai* and the blood of tender sheep. I give below a few representative citations.<sup>2</sup>

1. Journal of the Madras University. A humanities July 1960, pp. 169-177
2. (a) *murugayarndu vanda muduvāy velā* [Kuru-362]  
 (b) *ūr mudu Velan 'Kaḷangu meypaḍuttu Kkannandukki'*  
*murugena moḷiyum āyin* [Aingurunuru-245]  
 (c) *Murugu punarudu iyaṅṅa valli pōla* [Naṅṅinai-82]  
 (d) *men. muri siru kulagu arundu, tāy mutai pera a!*  
*mari kolaippaduttai vendi, veri puri! edil velan*  
*kōdai tuyal varat! tūngum a yin* [Aham-292]  
 (e) *marik kuḷal aṟuttu, tinaippirappu iri i! sel aṟṟukkavalaip-*  
*paliyam karangu, toṟṟam alladu noyakku marundu aga!*  
*verṟu pperundeyvam pera udan valiti* [Kurun-263]  
 (f) *Murugan kottam* [Pur-299]

We see from these references that Murugu or Murugan was a deity who had a wife (Valli) and a temple to himself, was worshipped with offerings of *tinai* and the blood of tender sheep, and was often given to possessing the priest who worshipped him with a spear in hand (Velan) and caused him to dance in a frenzied manner and capable also of possessing young maidens, at least as the divining velans found and announced to the parents of the maidens involved. These are data gathered from stray and casual allusions to Murugan and Velan. There are, however, longer, full dress descriptions of Muruga, particularly in the *Paripadal* and the *Tirumurugārruppadai*, the first poem in the *Pallupṭattu* collection. But before we take these up, we may note some other facts from the casual sources.

In a well known *sūtra* at the beginning of *Porul Adigaram* the *Tolkappiyam* states that *sevvel* or *seyon* was the lord of 'mai varai ulagam' mountain country designated as Kuriñji, and accordingly we find many shrines of this deity located on hill tops mentioned in early Tamil literature. But somehow in later times the god seems to have been transferred to Pālai, desert land, and it is curious to find the Tamil Lexicon describing Murugan as lord of Pālai as we have seen in the extract given above, but under the term Kuṛiñjikkilavan also we find Murugan mentioned; Pālai is not mentioned in the *Tolkappiyam* which records only four *tinai*s (*nānilam*). We find the phrase *Murugamar māmalai Auiguru* (308) (wrongly cited as *murugar ma malai* by K. R. Srinivasan, p.169), but Sendil or Tiruccendur on the sea coast also attained importance very early. We find in *Puranānūru*: 'Ven talai ppunari alaikkum sendil: neḍuvē!' (55, ll.18-19), and we shall see that this place was the scene of the most celebrated achievement of Murugan in the South, at least according to relatively late Puranas. In the prologue to the *Kuṇḍogai* (*Kaḍavul vāḷttu*) (ll.3-5) which may be later than the main collection we find reference to Murugan's little red tambourine, long spear and cock banner; as well as to his piercing the mountain with his spear:<sup>3</sup>

3. *kuni eykkun uḍukkai, kuṇṇin*  
*neñji paka eṇinda am suḍar neḍuvē!*  
*śēval am koḍiyōn*



Another banner, the peacock, finds mention in relatively early poems like *Aham* 149 (ll. 14-16), and *Puram* 56 (ll. 7-8); the latter mentions also the elephant *pinimukam* as the Vehicle (*urdi*) of Murugan. Both the banners are mentioned together in some rather late poems like *Tirumurugarruppadai* (ll. 38-392 and 12). Among his achievements the most notable was the destruction of Asuras to ensure the safety and joy of the gods, and the most important Asura thus destroyed was Sura or often only *sur* who took refuge in the midst of the sea and changed his shape into a giant mango tree. This we find in *Aham* 59 (ll. 10-12)<sup>4</sup>: in *Perumban* (ll. 457-9)<sup>5</sup> (which refers to the destruction of Sur in the sea and the birth of Muruga from the goddess); and from *Kalittogai* (104.113-114).<sup>6</sup>

At this point, I should say something on the relative chronology of the poems in the Sangam anthologies. Some years back the late Vaiyapuri Pillai and I worked long at the synchronisms of poets and kings mentioned in the anthologies and reached tentative conclusions regarding their relative priorities and the period covered by the poems as a whole, and I used the results in the chapters on Sangam Age I contributed to the *Mauryas and Satavahanas* (Comprehensive History, Vol. II) in much detail, and more briefly in other books, like my *History of South India*, and *History and Culture of Tamils*. We thought that the poems covered a period, at the most, of five or six generations, say 150 years or so, 200 at the most, and that *Paripadal* and *Kalittogai* were relatively late, while the *Tirumurugarruppadai* was very much later.

But the reference to Anduvan's poem on the Parangunam in *Aham* 52 (cited above) which may well be

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4. *Šūr marungu aruttu suḍar ilai neḍu vēl,*  
*śinam migu murugan tan parangurattu,*  
*Anduvan padiya sanda keḷu neḍu varai,*

5. *Ven tirai pparappin kaḍunjūr koṇṇa*  
*paimpūṇ sevy payandu ma moṭṭu*  
*tunangai am selvi,*

6. *mā kaḍal kalakkura ma koṇṇa maḍangap por*  
*vēl vallān.*

(See also *Perumban*, ll 457-9.)

to Anđuvan's songs in the Paripāḍal No. 8 for instance, casts a doubt on the validity of current notions of relative chronology and forces us to stop and consider whether the differences in metres and style among the different poems may not after all be the result of difference in the subject matter and contexts of the poems. But this is by the way, and I cannot stop to consider the implication of this in any great detail now.

Almost all the myths relating to the birth and growth of Murugan (or Skanda) find their place in the fifty Paripāḍal including the role of Śiva, Agni, Indra and Pārvati, the wives of the sages, the Krittikas and the Śaravaṇa, the wars he fought on his elephant Piṇimukam, the gifts of his attributes and weapons by the gods including the cock and the peacock, and we are thus in the full flood of the cycle of Murugan legends. In Paripāḍal 8 Murugan is featured as the supreme god and his hill Parangunṇu is said to excell the Himālaya; his worship is undertaken for gaining all the ends of human existence in love, war, prosperity and so on (ll. 102-110). In the nineteenth Paripāḍal we get a full dress description of the God, red in all aspects.<sup>7</sup>

In the ninth Paripāḍal (ll. 8-11) there is a quaint reference to Indra's daughter, Deva-Yana wedded to Muruga, shedding tears that formed a lake like the one on Tirupparankunṇam, on the day Muruga took Valli as his second wife.

The Tirumurugāṟuppadai, a long poem of well over three hundred lines, and its appendix of ten venbas form the fullest account of Muruga, his abodes, achievements etc. That they represent the final result of a long process of syncretism can be seen from the following lines in the poem which make him the son of Śiva and Parvati who is also identified with Koravai and Paḷaiyol.<sup>8</sup>

7. *Uḍaiyum Oliyalum\* seyyai marrange*  
*Paḍaiyum pavalakkōḍi niraṅgollum*  
*uruvum uruvattiyoṭṭi muganum*  
*virikadir muṟṟ virisudar oṭṭi* (97-100)

\* Kadamba garland.

8. *al Keḷu Kaḍavuḷ pudalva! māḷ varai*  
*malai magal magane! maṟṟor kūṟṟe!*  
*veṟṟi vēḷ porḷ koravai siraṇva!*  
*kulaḷ aṇi sirappin paḷaiyol kuḷavi!* (256-59)

It is not necessary for our purposes to go in detail into later references to Murugan which are numerous in works like the Tevaram, Kandapurānam and so on, or into the mystic *bhakti* represented in the superb *Tiruppugal* of Arunagirinatha (fifteenth century). But it is worth while noting that the earliest Tamil lexicon accessible to us, the *Divakaram* of the seventh early eight century A.D. contains all the titles of the deity which leave no room for any doubt, about the currency in the Tamil country of the entire gamut of the Murugan cycle of legends in all its aspects. The name *Sēyōn*, occurs early, it is usually taken to mean the Red one, but may well be the equivalent of *Kumāra* (Sey). Before passing to the Sanskrit sources we must note that the earliest Tamil evidence is from the Sangam works none of which can be, according to modern critical opinion, earlier than the first century A.D.

## II

When we turn to the Sanskrit texts bearing on our subject we realise its many-sided complexity. It is well known that the epics and the Puranas are attempts to resume the threads of a broken tradition, and that there is great difficulty in collating and reconciling Vedic data with Puranic data, though the latter especially in the region of mythology, are quite obviously distant and often magnified and distorted echoes of things incipient in the Veda. Some have even suspected a deliberate attempt to conceal true events and origins behind allegories and metaphors. But lapse of time and memory, and changes due to fresh contacts among people and cultures are perhaps quite enough to account for the present confusion without the postulate of deliberate purpose.

The true beginnings are hidden, and we start somewhere in the middle. In the first Anuvāka of the tenth Prapathaka of the Taittirīya Āraṇyaka are given the *gāyatri* mantras of several deities viz. Rudra, Nandi, Danti, Śaṇmukha, Garuḍa, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Narasimha, Agni, Durgā and Āditya. The *gāyatri* of Śaṇmukha reads.<sup>9</sup>

9. *tat puruṣāya vidmahe mahā senāya dhīmahi  
tannah śaṇmukhaḥ pracodayāt.*

In the Chhândōgya Upanisad Chapter VII which contains Sanatkumāra's teaching to Narada, the former is identified with Skanda as we read at the end of the chapter.<sup>10</sup>

Both these texts are surely pre-Buddhist in date. Then, in the Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra, we find the daily libations of a householder described in detail and among them we find libations to Vinayaka and his associates (*pārṣadas*) and Skanda and his *pārṣadas*, and this text must give pause to those who affirm a late origin of the Ganapati cult, though the mentions of planets in the order of week days in the chapter may raise a question about the genuine nets and early date of the entire passage. However, it is interesting to note that the identification of Sanatkumāra with the Skanda is followed up in this *mantra* also.<sup>11</sup>

This evidence from later Vedic literature may well bear the stamp of pre-Āryan influences because it dates from a time when contacts between the Āryan invaders and the indigenous people of India had long been established; but it is difficult to claim these as specifically Tamil influences, unless we assume that all India was at one time prior to the Āryan incoming exclusively inhabited by Dravidian (Tamils) – a view which was held by Risby early in the present century but has since been heavily discounted. We shall see moreover when we study the evidence of the Mahābhārata that there are clearly traceable strong influences of Vedic origin shaped the moulding of the cycle of Skanda-Muruga legends.

We may first deal with the shorter account in the *Ramāyaṇa* (I, 37). The date of this part of the poem is relatively late, but may well be in the early centuries A.D. It says that the gods and ṛṣis in search of a *senāpati* in their war against the ASURAS, approached Brahmā for advice and were told that Agni would produce with Gangā the *senāpati* they wanted; then they went to Mount Kailasa and engaged Agni to produce a son

10. *tasmai mṛditakāśayaya tamasaḥ param darsayati  
bhagavān Sanatkumārāḥ ! tam skanda ityācakṣate.*

11. *Om Sanatkumāram tarpayāmi ! Skandam tarpayāmi ! Indram tarpayāmi !  
Ṣaṣṭhīm tarpayāmi ! Ṣaṇmukham tarpayāmi ! Viśākhā tarpayāmi !  
Jayantam tarpayāmi ! Mahāsenam tarpayāmi ! Skandapārṣadams-  
tarpayāmi ! Skandapārṣadis'ca tarpayāmi !*

on Gangā, the daughter of the Mountain ; when Agni approached Gangā, she assumed a glorious divine form at the sight of which Agni spilled his sperm all over her and she said she was unable to bear it all, and Agni advised her to place it at the foot of the Himalayas, where it took the form of different metals—gold, copper, iron and lead after its contact with the earth. But at the moment of the discharge, the whole mountain became golden in hue – hence the name of gold *Jaṭarūpa* – and a son (*Kumāra*) took shape, and the gods engaged the *Krittikas* to nurse him ; they claimed him as their son and he became *Karttikeya*. He was also *Skanda*, as there was a spurt at his birth ; he developed six faces for being nursed by the *Krittikas* and thus became *Ṣaḍānana*. He conquered the *daitya* (*asura*) groups by his strength and was crowned the commander of the divine forces (*Surasenapati*). Such is the '*Kumarasambhava*' which *Viśvāmitra* narrated to *Rāma* and *Lakṣmana* on their way to *Mithilā*.

To turn now to the longer, more complex and many sided account in the *Mahābhārata*. It occurs in the *Vanaparva* in chapters 223–232, in the Gita Press edition V.S. 2013 (1956 A.D.) ; the text is more or the less the same as in the better known but now out of print *Kumbakonam* edition, as I have found by comparing it with the Tamil translation of *Sri M. V. Ramanujachariar* which was made from that edition ; but the division of chapters (*adhyāyas*) differs.

**Chapter 223 :** *Indra* was distressed at the constant defeats his army (*Devasenā*) sustained at the hands of *dānavas* (*asuras*) and wished for a hero who would protect it ; with this thought in his mind, he went to the *Mandara Mountain* and there heard the voice of a woman crying for rescue. The terms of the cry are notable.<sup>12</sup>

*Indra* offered her protection and then saw the huge *asura* *Keśi* holding a maiden by the hand, and in the battle that ensued *Keśi* was compelled to abandon the maiden and go back his way.

**Chapter 224 :** *Devasena* declares to *Indra* that she is the daughter of *Prajāpati*, that she has a sister *Eaityasena* who was

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12. *abhidhavadu mām kascit puruṣastrātu caiva ha !  
jātīm ca me pradiśotu svayam vā patirastu me !*

carried off by Keśi earlier ; Daityasena loves Keśi, but she herself does not and is grateful for her release by Indra whom she asks for an unconquerable lord (husband) :

tvayā devendra nirdiṣṭam patim icchāmi durjayam

Indra claims her as his cousin as Dākṣāyani is his mother ; and a conversation ensues, which plunges Indra in deep thought as she wants a husband who will overpower all created beings. Then he saw the moon entering the sun and sunrise at a fierce *muhūrta* on the *amāvāsyā* day, and other portents indicating a great and blood war.<sup>18</sup>

At the same time Indra thought<sup>14</sup> that the son produced by the moon, at this unique conjunction of moon, Sun & Agni would be a fitting husband for Devasena. So thinking he went to Brahma and spoke<sup>15</sup> words which are notable for their describing the future Skanda as Sādhuśūra, a good hero, in view of the name of the chief enemy of Skanda being given as Sūra (*anasura*) in Tamil (southern) sources. Brahma grants Indra's wishes, and then Indra and the gods (along with the girls) go to the abode of the seven ṛṣis to drink their share of the *Soma* in the sacrifice performed by them ; Agni who issued from the Suryamaṇḍala performed his usual function of carrying the oblations made in the Āhavanīya fire to the gods, but as he came out of the sacrificial hall his eyes fell on this resplendent wives of the sages seated in their respective places and he became deeply agitated by his love for them ; realising that his love was not reciprocated, he made up his mind to enter the *garhapatya* fire to be constantly near them in their homes and touch them with the tongues of his flames. Finally making up his mind to commit suicide as he failed to obtain the love of the Brahmin ladies, he entered the

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13. *athapaśyat sa udaye bhāskaram bhāskaradyutiḥ !  
Sōmam caiva mahābhāgam viṣamanam divākaram !  
amāvāśyam pracrttayam muhūrte raudra eva tu !  
devāsūram ca saṅgrāmam sopāśyad udaye girau !*

14. *Sōmasya vahniśūryābhyam adbhutāyam samāgamah  
janayed yam sutam sōmah sōsya devyāḥ patirbhavēt*

15. *Kvaca caasya devyāstram sādhuśūram patim diṣa,*

forest (*vana*, *Vana* means also water). But Svāhā, the daughter of Dakṣa, loved Agni deeply and made up her mind to assume in turn the forms of the ladies he loved and sport with him.

**Chapter 225:** First she took the form of Śivā, wife of Angiras, and completely deceived Agni, proclaiming to him that all the wives of the sages loved him, that she had been sent to him first by them for copulation (*maithunava*), and that they were awaiting her return to take their turns. The lady caught the semen of Agni in her hand, and to avoid being recognized by others changed herself into a *garudi* (female hawk) or *suparni*, and flying out in that form she saw the *śvetaparvata* surrounded by a Śara (reed, arrow) forest, *śaravana*, and protected by seven-headed poison-eyed snakes, *rakṣasas*, *rakṣasis*, *gaṇas*, *piśācas*, etc., and deposited the semen on the inaccessible summit of the mountain in the golden pond (*kāncane kuṇḍe*). She repeated the performance five more times in the form of the wives of all the other sages, except that of Arundhati (Vasiṣṭha's wife) whose *tapas* and marital devotion made it impossible for Svāhā to personate her. The spurts (*skannam*) of semen Svāhā collected on all the six occasions and put into the Kuṇḍa took the shape of a child, with six faces, twelve ears, eyes and arms, but one neck and one belly.<sup>16</sup>

He became explicit (*abhivyaktah*) on the second day, and a baby (*śiśu*) on the third, he became *guha* on the fourth day with limb and adjuncts (*angapratyangasambhitah*) wrapped in a red cloud with lightning and shining like a newly risen sun. For the destruction of *asuras* he caught hold of the big bow with which the three cities had been destroyed (by Śiva) and roared aloud; hearing the noise the two great Nāgas, Citra and Airāvata came out rushing and were caught by the child in his hands; he caught hold of the *śakti* with another hand, and a cock with yet another.<sup>17</sup>

16. *rṣibhiḥ pūjitam skannam ānayat skandatām tataḥ !*  
*Ṣaṭśira dviguṇa-śrōtrō dvādaśākṣi-bhujakramah !*  
*ekagrivaiḥa-jatḥarah kumarah samapadyata !*

17. *mahākāyam upaśliṣṭam kukkuṭa balinam varam*  
*grīva vyānadat bhīman cikriḍa ca mahābhujah.*

He took up a noble Sankha (conch) with two other hands and sent out a pinging peal. All the world trembled at his noises and sports and sought his protection and became his *parśadas*. The boy calmed the refugees, and shot arrows into the white mountain and pierced the Mount Krauncha, son of Himavat; the swans and eagles fled from there to mount Meru, and the mountain fell down uttering a deep cry which was echoed by the other mountains. Guha roared again and threw his Śakti on the mountain and split its top. The mountains and the earth made their obeisance to the boy and thereafter he came to be worshipped as Skanda on the fifth day of the bright half of the month.

**Chapter 226:** There were portents at the birth of the child; people the of Caitraratha (the heavenly city and garden) blamed Agni and the Gāruḍi for their trouble, and the Gāruḍi, claimed the new child as her own.<sup>18</sup>

Six of the seven sages, hearing of the birth of the child abandoned their wives as the people said they gave birth to the child, though Svāhā repeatedly claimed him as her child.<sup>19</sup>

But Viśvāmitra, who, after the sacrifice, of the Rṣis, had followed Agni incognito knew the exact truth, sought Kumāra's protection and performed the thirteen *samskāras* of childhood and became the favourite of the god Kumāra; he also told the rṣis that their wives were not at fault, but even then they did not relent.

Hearing of Skanda's inordinate strength, the gods urged Indra to destroy this new rival of his. When Indra expressed his unwillingness to kill a child, they taunted him saying he had no strength. Then they set the mothers of the world to do the job, but they too were foiled and submitted to Skanda whom they adopted as their son and nursed, and Skanda fulfilled their desires. Then he saw his father Agni coming; worshipped by

18. *upagamyā Śanaiḥ Skandam ahamāham janani tava.*

19. *Ṣaḍbhireva tādā jatān—ākustadrānavāsinaḥ  
saptarṣināḥ ca Syāma mama putroyam ityuta  
aham janī naitadevam iti rājan punaḥ punaḥ*



Skanda, he became the 'protector of Skanda together with the Mothers, prominent among them being Krodhasamudbhava (born of anger) who guarded Skanda like her own son with the Śūla in her hand, she was the daughter of Red Sea (Lōhita) and blood (lōhita) was her food; she embraced Mahāsena and protected him as if he were her son. Agni became Naidameya, Chhāgavaktra and Bahuprajā (all young boys) who sported with and pleased Skanda like toys pleasing a child.

**Chapter 227:** The fight between well protected Skanda and Indra is described. Indra is said to have pleased Devasena (the army, his daughter) by engaging in this war intended to kill Agni's son.<sup>20</sup>

Indra's army fell unconscious when Skanda roared aloud.<sup>21</sup> Skanda also burnt Indra's forces by the fire he emitted from his mouth, and then they submitted to Skanda, and thus deserted Indra. Then Indra threw his Vajra on Skanda; it hurt the right side of Skanda whence issued a golden coloured youth bearing the Śakti and bright Kuṇḍalas, called Viśākha as he was born of the entry of the Vajra on Skanda's side.<sup>22</sup>

Seeing this Indra also submitted and Skanda took him under his protection and the gods were delighted.

**Chapter 228:** Description of the fierce *parśadas* of Skanda including (a) Kumarakas who carry off babes just born and even unborn, and (b) strong girls—all of whom acknowledged Viśākha as father and Skanda also became known as Kumārapitā; and all who want children in the world worship him and his parents.<sup>23</sup>

And the girls became the mothers, good and bad (Skanda Mātṛgaṇas); they gave birth to a fierce red eyed son named Śiśu, also called Navaka on account of his goat face.<sup>24</sup>

20. *Samharṣayan Devasenām jighāmsuh pāvakātmajam*

21. *babhrāma tatra tatraiva devasainyam acētanam*

22. *Yadvajra viśanājjato viśakhastena sobhavat*

23. *Rudram Agnim Umām Svāhām pradesusu mahābalaṃ  
Yajanti putrakāmasca putrināśca sadā janah*

24. *ityetad vividhakaram vṛttam suklasya pancamin  
tatra yuddham mahāghoram vṛttam sasthyam janādhipa*

**Chapter 229 :** Description : Skanda all golden and red in his accoutrement, and called also Sura ; (tatastam varadam surau yuvanam mṛṣṭakundalam) ; whom Śrī worshipped embodied in the lotus : (abhajat padmarūpā śrīh svayam eva śarīrini). Then the Ṛṣis praise him for his birth during six nights (tvaya ṣadrātrajā-tēna) and suggest that he should become Indra for the protection of the worlds. At Skanda's request they describe Indra's rule and ask Skanda again to be Indra who also joined them in making the suggestion. Skanda declines, asks Indra to continue his rule and promises to be his loyal servant as commander of his forces.<sup>25</sup>

Skanda was crowned commander-in-chief and all gods including Śiva honoured him as such, and here we get the statement<sup>26</sup> a mixture or confusion of many streams of legend, emphasized also further.<sup>27</sup>

This is followed by a full account of the inborn qualities of body and mind of Skanda, his armour, and his Śakti which every assured his victory in war, and of his worshippers and retinue at the time of his installation.<sup>28</sup>

Indra then thought of that Devasena whom he liberated from Kesi's grip and had her brought and told Skanda<sup>29</sup> about her.

He had their marriage performed duly by Bṛhaspati, and Devasena became Skanda's queen ; she also got the name

25. *dānavanām vināśāya devānām arthasiddhaye  
gobrāhmaṇa hitārthāya saina patye bhiṣikṣa mīm*
26. *rudramagnim dvijah prāhu rudrasūnustatastu sah  
rudrena śukramutrṣṭam tacchvetah parvato bhavat  
pāvakasyendriyam svete kṛtikābhīh kṛtam nage*
27. *anupraviṣya rudreṇa vahnim jātocyayam śiśuḥ  
tatra jāta statas Skando rudrasūnutatobhavat  
Rudrasya vāheḥ svayassannam strinam ca bharta  
jatah Skandah surasreṣṭho rudrasūnutatobhavat  
araje vasasi rakte vasanaḥ pāvakatmajah  
bhat diptavapuh sṛiman raktabhṛabhayamivā—mṣuman  
Kukkutascāgnina dattah tasya keturalankṛtah  
rathe samuvchrito bhāti kalāgniriva lōhitah*
28. *athainān abhyāyuh sarva devasenah sahasrasah  
asmākam tvaṇ patirīti bruvaṇah sarvato diṣah*
29. *iyam kanyā surotama ajate tvayi nirdiṣṭā tava patnī  
svayambhuvā*

Śaṣṭhi or Lakṣmi the giver of happiness, Sīnivali, Kuhu, Śaḍvritti and Aparājita. Lakṣmi also bodily ('svayam Lakṣmih śarīrinī') went over to Skanda when Devasena got him for her eternal (śāśvatah patih) husband.<sup>30</sup>

**Chapter 230:** The wives of the Ṛṣis complain to Skanda that for no reason they had been set aside by their noble husbands and seek his protection and a high place in heaven besides expressing their desire to have him as son. Skanda grants all their wishes.<sup>31</sup>

Then comes Indra's narration of an astronomical myth of Abhijit dropping out of the sky, and the *kṛttikās* which had Agni as *devata* taking place there at the command of Skanda and the restoration of an even calendar. Then Vinata claimed Skanda as her son (piṇḍadah sutah) bound to offer *piṇḍa* to her and wanted to live by his side permanently; her wish was also granted. Then all the mothers together with Vinata wanted to become respected mothers of all the world, besides being his mothers and they wanted to displace the old 'mothers' Brāhmi, Mahesvari, etc. from the place of worship they held, because they turned the minds of our husbands against us and deprived us of progeny; Skanda in the end made them protectors of all children (*prajāh*) and conferred the privilege of even possessing his Śakti and assuming all fierce forms for teasing all youngsters in the world till they attain sixteen years of age. Then a cruel spirit Skandapasmara, the enemy of children, issued out of Skanda's body and Vinata became Sakunigraha etc. Most notable among this gruesome crowd of *grahas* (Skandagrahas) was Aryamata.<sup>32</sup>

These have to be propiated to minimise the evils due to them, if not altogether to abate them; but when pleased all

30. *srijustah pancamim skandah tasmācchripāneami smṛta  
sasthyam kṛtārthobhut yasmāt tasmāt sasthi mahatithih*

31. *matarohi bhavatyō me suto voham aninditah  
yadvapicchata tat sarvam sambhaviṣyati vastatha*

32. *lohitasyōdadheh Kanyā shatri Skandasya sa smṛtā  
lohitāyani rityevam Kadambe sa hi puṣyate  
puruṣeṣu yathā rudrastathārya pramadāsvapi  
arya mātā kumārasya prthak kāmārtham iṣyate*

of them give good boons to their worshippers. We may omit the other *grahas* governing human lives after 16, but note that none of them can prevail against the devotees of Mahesvara.

(*na sprśanti grahā bhaktam naram devam Maheśvaram*).

Note particularly the reference to the Kadamba tree in the worship of Skanda's Mother—a feature of Skanda himself in the Tamil country.

**Chapter 231:** Svāhā claims Skanda as her own son and seeks his help to secure for herself the constant company of Agni whom she loved passionately though Agni did not know it; Skanda granted her wish and prescribed Svāhā to be uttered when any offering is made in fire, *havya*, or *kavya*. Svāhā was pleased and along with Agni worshipped Skanda.

Then Brahmā repeated to Mahāsena the story of his birth from Rudra and Uma.<sup>33</sup>

Note here the identification of Rudra with Agni, and Svāhā with Umā.<sup>34</sup>

Accordingly Skanda worshipped his father Maheśvara. There follows an account of the methods and purposes of worship offered to the numerous evil groups—(*piśācānam asamkheya gaṇah*). Then comes the story of the origin of the bell (*ghaṇṭā*) and flag (*patākā*) of Skanda. The two bells of Airāvata were given one to Viśākha and the other to Skanda. The flag of Kārttikeya and Viśākha are red. Long account of Skanda and his gaṇa on the Svetapārvata witnessed by the whole world with Indra.

33. *Rudrenāgnim samāviśya svāhamāviśya co mayā hitartham sarvalokanām kṛtastvam aparājitaḥ*

34. *Uma yonyām ca rudreṇa śukram siktam mahātmanā asmin girau nipatitam minjikāminjikam yatā Sambhūtam lohite tu śukraeṣam avapatat suryaraśmiṣu ca pyanyad anyaccā vapatāt bhuvī aśaktam anyad vrkṣeṣu tadevam pañcadhapatat tatra te vividhakara gaṇa jneya manīṣibhiḥ*

Thus five kinds of gaṇas came into existence.

The coronation ceremony over, Rudra along with Pārvati left for Bhadravata and there is a long description of the array of the gods and others in the procession. Skanda followed his father some way and there was a leave-taking in which the father asked the son to protect the seven Maruts vigilantly and the son undertakes the duty solemnly and Rudra and his retinue depart.

But soon portents appear again, *asuras* attack the divine array in force and a fierce war ensues; for a time the gods hold, their own but in the end when Mahiṣa appears and lays his hand even on Rudra's *ratha*, the great god did not kill Mahiṣa, but thought of his son who appeared in red robes to take up the fight.<sup>35</sup> At his sight the *daityasena* melted away, and Mahiṣa was disposed off by the use of the Śakti: The gods regained their freedom from fear, Indra congratulated Skanda.<sup>36</sup>

He then departed with the other gods after Śiva gave him leave, and Rudra went off to Bhadravata after asking the gods to look upon Skanda like himself (Skandam paśyata māmiva). Skanda completed the conquest of the three worlds in a day--(ekahnaivā jayat sarvam trailokyam Vahninandanah.) The last *śloka* in the chapter is the *phalaśruti*.<sup>37</sup>

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This is the proper end of the story of Skanda's birth and early achievements. But we get another chapter in which Mārkaṇḍeya, the narrator of the story given above, is made to utter the praises of Skanda, and this *Chapter 232* introduces new elements and is obviously later than the preceding chapters. Notable among the new epithets of Skanda are: Mayūra<sup>38</sup>ketu (not a word about MAYURA in the preceding narrative), Kāmajit, Kutamohanah, Revatisutah, Bālakridanakapriya, brahmacāri, sūrah, vāsudeva priya,

35. *ajagāma mahāsenah krodhāt sūrya iva jvalan  
lohitaṁbara samvita lohitasragvibhūṣaṇah  
lohitaśyo mahābāhuh hiraṇyakavacah prabhuh*

36. *etat tē prathamam deva khyātam karma bhaviṣyati*

37. *Skandasya ya idam viprah pathejjanma samāhitah  
sa puṣṭim iha samprāpya skandasa lokyam āpmuṣāt*

brahmanya, brahmaja, brahmavit (with many variants) Ṣaḍarcih, sahasravaktra, sahasrabāhu, anantarūpa, sahasrapāt, particularly :

In another *phalaśruti*,<sup>38</sup> we have clear evidence that the cycle was still growing and the fifth veda was considered incomplete without this further addition on the growing cult.

It may be noted that other version of the Skanda legend in the *Mahabharata* has not been dealt with here, as they only variegate the myth in detail and character.

### III

The Puranic evidence is even more voluminous, and in popular parlance *Kanda purāṇam* has become a by-word for tall lies. The *Skandapurāṇa* is found in two versions, both extensive works. It is not necessary for our purposes to deal with their contents at any length. The northern version is said to be the thirteenth of the eighteen *Mahapurāṇa* and in it the birth of Kumāra from Śiva and Pārvatī is described at length and the chief enemy of gods for whose destruction Skanda is procreated is the *asura* by name Tāraka, and the *Purāṇa* seems to know nothing of Sūra, who becomes the chief foe in the southern version which is said to be the third of the *upa-purāṇas*. Here Sūra or Sūrapadma has Tāraka and Simhamūkha for his younger brothers, but Sūra is the chief foe, though fight are narrated with many others. Sūra was capable of assuming many shapes and the camp from which Sūra was finally disposed of is said to have been Tiruchendur in the Tirunelveli district. When Skanda's Śakti cut Sūra's body into two, there issued a cock from one part of it and a peacock from the other and they began to oppose Muruga; but by Muruga's grace they gain better sence consent to be the flag and the vehicle in his service. We are also told somewhat inconsequently that the gods who had turned themselves to cock and peacock to aid Muruga

38. *Gaṅga sutastvam svamatena deva  
svamahi kṛttikanam tathāiva  
tvam kṛidase sanmukha Kukkuṭeṇa  
yatheṣṭananāvidha kāmārūpi etc.*

in the fight resumed their natural forms after the fight. The stray references in the other Purāṇas are not of much interest.

Before proceeding to notice other evidence, we may briefly review the position as it has so far presented itself from the Sanskrit sources we have touched. (1) Kumāra's name and antiquity go back to the *upaniṣads* and the *sūtras* and are obviously pre-Buddhistic and originated in the Ganges Valley. But already Aryan and pre-Aryan cultures had got mixed up, and we should remember that the general opinion among is that the upanisadic lore was one of the chief results of that mixture. But who the pre-Aryans were in the Ganges Valley is a moot question, and in any case there is no ground for thinking that there were exclusively Tamils as we know them, (2) Devasena, the putative daughter of Indra and Kumāra's wife, is also Indra's army of which Kumāra-Skanda is the leader (*pati*, husband); she has her counterpart in her sister Daityasena beloved of the *asura*—significant metaphor of the conflict *devas* and *asuras* rooted in the *veda* and often held to be the representation of nature myth of the Indo-Aryans. (3) (a) The time of Skanda's birth is *amāvāsyā* when the moon (*soma*) enters the sun (*sūrya*) a form of Agni); Somāskanda initially is perhaps equal to Skanda the son of Soma; but compare the Somāskanda images of the Pallava times and the latter explanation of the name as a Uma+Skanda; (b) Soma also means the sacrificial drink equaled, with *amṛta* at times and connected with Garuda in the Suparna myth; and Svāhā, Agni's wife, becomes a garudi to escape unnoticed with Agni's seed, (4) There are spirits Skandagrahas which possess and vex juveniles of less than sixteen; *graha* is again a dubious word meaning planet, evil spirit, and a sacrificial vessel for holding *soma* juice. This links up with Velan's diagnosis of the ailments of youth as already mentioned as due to possession by Murugan.

#### IV

Patañjali commenting on Pāṇini V.3.99 says this: *āpanya ityacyate tatredam na siddhata: Sivah Skando Viśākha iti*;

Kim Kāranam: Mauryair hiranyārthibhih arcāh prakalpitaḥ: bhavet tāsū na syāt: yastvetah samprati pujārthās-tāsū bhaviṣyati. This shows that Skanda and Viṣākha were separate deities in the second century B.C., and the Mahābhārata account of Viṣākha as coming out of the right side of Skanda when it was entered (Vis) by Indra's Vajra is taken by Bhandarkar as a stage in the progressive identification of the two. (*Vaisnavism, Saivism etc.* p. 151).

There is abundant evidence of the prevalence of Skanda or Kumāra worship in the early coins of North India many of which reach back to a much earlier time than the earliest Tamil literature known and cited above. These numismatic data have been collected and discussed by J. N. Banerjea in his *Hindu Iconography*; I may refer to the most salient among these. Certain early Ujjain coins of the third or second century B.C. bear the legends Brahmanya and Kumāra. Coins of the Kushana King Huvishka feature Skanda and Mahāsena holding standards surmounted by cock or peacock with which we may compare the later prescription in the *Bṛhatsamhita* (57.4): "Skandah Kumārarupo Śakti dharo barhiketusca". On another coin we find Skanda-Kumara and Viṣākha similarly dressed and standing face to face, the former holding in his right hand a standard surmounted by a bird, while the latter or both of them hold a long Spear; Viṣākha is shown clasping the right hand of Skanda-Kumāra who touches the former with his hand. Lastly we find a shrine comprising an ornamental double platform with a linear representation of a superstructure having inside it three figures on the pedestal described by Gardner thus: 'Niche on basis, within which Skanda and Viṣākha standing as above; between them Mahāsena facing, nimbate, clad in chlamys, sword at waist.'

The republican clan of Yaudheyas were, however, the most inveterate devotees of the war leader and their coins generally show him accompanied by a peacock. They show on the obverse a six headed but two armed Kārttikeya S'adānana holding a long spear (Śakti) in right hand, the left resting on the hip; the reverse has Lakṣmi with an aureole round the head this recall Mahābhārata reference to



Śrī noted above. The legend on a silver coin<sup>39</sup> and that on copper<sup>40</sup> refer to Bhagavat Swami Brahmanyadeva and Kumāra.

Of course Bhagavato is better than Bhāgavato. The coins were perhaps issued in the name of the deity because he was regarded as the spiritual and temporal ruler; the idea of V. Smith that there was a chieftain named Svami Brahmanya Yaudheyha has little to commend it. The Yaudheyas, we must note, were also known as Mattamayuras and as ayudhajivisangha. Their home was in Rohtak much favoured of Kārttikeya as we learn from the *Mahābhārata* II 32. 5-6 describing Nakula's *digvijaya*.<sup>41</sup>

It is here that the late Dr. Birbal Sahni discovered a number of coin moulds of the Yaudheyas. Doubtless Kārttikeya was the tutelary god of the region and the tribe inhabiting it: There is however much evidence of the prevalence of the Kārttikeya cult else-where in the early centuries A.D. in Northern India. Marshall found at Bhita an oval seal bearing a peacock standing to left with uplifted tail and the legend Śrī Skandasūrasya—recalling the *Mahābhārata* identification of Śūra with Skanda. A seal discovered by Spooner at Basarh bears a fan tail peacock facing—the emblem peculiar to the eastern mintage of Gupta silver coins of Kumāra Gupta I and his successors, together with the name of the hanker to whom it belonged viz. Vyāghrabala, several impressions of the seal also being found at the same time and place. An ivory seal matrix found at Rajghat shows a fan tail peacock with legend Sūragupta in Gupta script. There are others still. The Gupta emperor Kumāragupta I, true to his name (and Kālidāsa is supposed to have written the *Kumārasambhava* partly to celebrate his birth), issued a 'peacock type' of coins which show Kumāra riding a peacock, and some mediaeval sculptures show him holding a cock in his hand.

The excavations at Nagarjunakonda have revealed the existence of Kārttikeya temples in the Ikṣvāku period in the lower Krishna valley and in an interesting paper recently contributed

39. *Yaudheya bhagavata svaminō brahmanyasa (sya)*

40. *Bhagavatasvaminō brahmanyadevasa Kumārasya*

41. *tato bahudhanam ramyam gavadhyaṃ dhanadhanyavat!  
Kārtikeyasya dayitām Rohitakamupadravat!!  
tata yuddham mahaccāsi surair mattamayūrakaih!*

to the Journal of the Oriental Institute Baroda (Vol. XI No. 1. Sept. 1961 pp. 21-5 ; Early Temple origins in Lower Deccan with special reference to Nagarjunakonda) Sri K. V. Soundara Rajan has argued that this cult may have come over to Nagarjunakonda from the Western Ksatrapas with whom the Ikṣvākus had matrimonial relations ; in any case it is worth noting that the writer has drawn our attention 'to the occurrence of exactly identical Kārttikeya figures (as found at Nagarjunakonda with the cock tucked about the waist of Kumāra, the Śaktidhara) in the Baroda Museum and belonging to the Ksatrapa times' (pp. 23-4). Readers will recall the Mahābhārata account of Skanda holding a cock at his waist, together with two big snakes in two of his twelve hands, very soon after his birth.

In this paper I have started from the later Vedic literature and have not made attempt to investigate earlier strata. But there seems to be a case for doing so with a view to finding out if the Kumāra Cult or at least some of the ideas belonging to it may be traced to an earlier time. I am tempted to make the suggestion because I find listed in Fallon's 'A New Hindustani-English Dictionary', Halle 1879, an old persian word *Murg*, a masculine noun meaning a fowl, a bird, and *muruga* a cock-together with the allied Zend word *meregha*, *murveh*, *muruk* (p. 1089). Also Arabic, *margub* adj. desired, also with the meanings lovely, beautiful, amiable ; desirable, agreeable, eligible (p. 1090) I will also mention here the Pali Prakrt forms *Mora*, *Moraka* meaning peacock. Such words suggest the possibility of the Muruga Cult being ultimately of Indo-Iranian origin or possibly at least derive some of its elements from very early folk practices and beliefs spread over a wide area. But these possibilities will need much more careful investigation before they can be treated as even plausible.

For our purpose we have only to note that there is no recognizable trait of the Muruga Cult as we have known it through the ages that can be regarded as of exclusively Tamil origin. Muruga is another Indo-Aryan god Tamilized among others by his marriage with Valli who is regarded as a Kurava girl in the Tamil country and as a Vedda girl in Ceylon where Kataragama (Kadeikamam) is a celebrated

Muruga shrine. We may compare Siva having Pārvati for his wife in the north and Minākshi in the South, or Krishna having Rukmini in the North and Nappinnai in the South.

After this lecture, there was a discussion on the topic, of which the following participants' comments are included for the fullness of the discussion.

DR. J. T. CORNELIUS

Professor Sastri has given an accurate, descriptive account of the Murugan Cult based on Sanskrit and Puranic literature. For a correct interpretation of the facts, I feel we have to go outside India, as we realise these beliefs have only a symbolic significance, and not to be taken literally.

Without anticipating my paper on 'Evidence for Dravidian Origin' which I hope to read shortly before this Society, I should like to make a few comments.

1. Prof. Sastri's paper poses the question whether Murugan is a specifically Tamil deity or not and by implication, that it is not.

2. There is considerable evidence to prove that *Murugan is the Tribal God of the Tamils*.

3. The Cock, the emblem of Murugan or Skanda symbolises the Spirit of war or aggressiveness which later was replaced by the Tiger, the emblem of the Cholas.

4. Lahovary's linguistic evidence points to Iberia as their ancient home-land and Tamils are Andalusians.

5. Andalusia in Ancient Spain was one of the Southern Provinces in what is named 'Iberia', and was famous for a breed of Poultry which was introduced into England from Spain.

6. Cock was an emblem of a Lord of War, Skanda, and typified the martial spirit. A town is named Seville செவில 'Cock' in Andalusia. (ஆண்டலேப்புல்) = Andalusian fowl.

7. The term Maran (மாறன்) for Pandya means a warrior.

8. According to Prof. Sastri himself, there is early numismatic evidence to show Kushans, Sakas and other foreign tribes cherished Kumāra Skanda, as war Lord.

9. Finally I would like to state names Sanat-Kumāra and Soma-Skanda, are the results of syncratisation with some Asia minor deities of two other tribes named Sandan of Cilicia and Teos (Agni) of Phoenecia.

### K. V. SOUNDARA RAJAN

It is necessary in such matters to see the chronological priority of either traditional or archaeological accounts of Murugan in the entire country without prejudice to the larger perspective of exotic strains entering the fabric and producing a new trait or traits. In the case of Murugan, first of all we have to agree or disagree firmly whether we consider Murugan as the same as Skanda or Kārttikeya of the Northern Epic and Pauranic tradition. Since in the south itself, we do know that Murugan is freely equated with Subrahmanya and Shanmukha, with all the implications regarding the nature of the consorts of his, his *āyudhas* etc., it is, I believe, certain that we are dealing with a unitary problem. If so, the archaeo-chronological priority that is discernible in the geographical distribution of this Skanda-Murugan cult all over the country should not be too lightly set aside or ignored. It is quite feasible that the indigenous folk of the Tamil country in the early Sangam period did have a god like Muruga, some traits of which, from the sociological angle, might be special to the region only. All the same there is nothing inherently contradictory in the germ of the so-called Muruga *name* being indigenous, while the germ of his *legend* could have been borrowed and made equivalent to that of Kumāra or Skanda of the North. The crux of the controversy would seem to be, if Muruga as a *term* is indigenous or not, and if the former, why it should not be considered as standing for an indigenous god also. Hence, as regards the word, it would seem too farfetched, despite the plausibility of it on the purely hypothetical broader linguistic angle of it, to derive it from the Iranian *murugh* or cock. We have a word Murugu (முருகு) for the ear ornament in Tamil language apart from முருகு meaning

'beautiul' in Tamil. It is just possible that as the child god, he was wearing Murugu and was known as Murugan. Even otherwise, it is too much to make a separate god of him unconnected with Skanda. In the northern tradition, Skanda's consort was Devasena, while in the South it is Valli mainly. In the north, he kills Iṛakasura, and it is Sūrapadma whom he kills in the south. Prof. Sastri has taken pains to show that the 'Greater Vehicle' of northern tradition has coalesced with the lesser vehicle of the southern one. If only we know how a purely linguistic survey will land us in tricky situations, as in the case of Devasenāpati (commander of Deva Army) which is an attribute to Skanda changing into Devasena-pati (the husband of Devasena) and Devasena thus having been created, being followed by a corresponding Daityasena also, and how Devasena in popular corruption in Tamilnad became Devayanai or Deivayanai, and this was later religiously re-translated in Sanskrit to give it respectability as Deva-kunjari (the divine elephant), we would do well to see the *woods* alone primarily and decline to see the *tree* of a part feature of the entire legend. Even the word *Seyon* (name of red-god) given to Murugan in early Tamil Sangam literature (3rd-4th century A.D.) might as well stand for child god (சேவன் meaning child) equatable with Kumāra, although Pundits seem to feel that 'Seyon' means only the red-coloured. Thus, considered from all angles, importation of Spanish, Iranian, or European classical analogies and imagery to explain the individuality of Muruga as a person apart from Skanda or Kumāra of the north would seem to be rather futile. There is no problem at all, if it is accepted that, irrespective of the name, the legends are pertaining to the same all India God.

T. G. ARAVAMUTHAN

Muruga in the earliest Tamil classics and Skanda in the earliest Sanskrit classics are indistinguishable.

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Tenderness, youth, and possession by a divinity being all characteristic of Muruga and being indicated by the word '*murugu*' in early Tamil, it looks unnecessary for the Tamilian to chase this god's bird, the Cock, into Hindi,

Persian and Zend, in an effort to account for his name. Otherwise, the Cock must have flown, with his name, from Persia to Tamil land, without alighting anywhere in between.

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Valli has a parallel in Āndal, each of whom has a divine counterpart. Valli and Āndal are products of the impulse of the human heart to beat in the closest juxtaposition to, and unison with, the heart of the divine. Both are sublimations of that devotee who offers himself as a human Bride to a divine Bridegroom. Each is a reduction, into one human entity, of the myriades of the gopis of the Rasa-krida. Each is a feminine counterpart to Balarāma, the male individual soul that is born inseparable from the universal, cosmic divine soul, Sri Krishna.

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Skanda is blended of aspects of Rg-Vedic Apam-Napat, Trita-Aptya, Soma, Agni, Indra, Varuna, Brhaspati and Hiranyagarbha. The Rg-Vedic mind has a prism built into it which splits Reality into a rainbow of bands of innumerable qualities and powers, irregular in undulation, which run into each other in varied combinations, so that, when each combination is anthropomorphized, we have a galaxy of variegated and versatile divinities, every one of them being a blend and not one being anything but a blend. Skanda is a Rg-Vedic divinity affirming the immensity and the variety of Reality.

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Greece gives us an adaptation of Skanda in Dionysos Bacchus. The closeness is greatest with Soma, an important ingredient in the make up of Skanda. Dionysos is, even in name, the counterpart of Kumāradeva, Young God. He is born from the thigh of his father Zeno, as Soma is re-born of the thigh of the sacrificer. Dionysus, as Bacchus, is Fire-born, like Skanda. His mother is Somele, Hemalaya, Kumara's Pond of Golden Lily, which is his maternal womb. He is clad in, and crowned with, ivy, parallel to the soma creeper. He is the exponent of what soma urges one to, inspiration and ecstasy, which break out into song and dance

and revelry. He wanders with damsels, as does Soma, as Moon, among the celestial damsels that are the stars. He gives wisdom as does Soma. Both are kings. Both are slain. The vitas juices of both are drinks of immortality.

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Israel has given us another adaptation in Moses, the prophet of about 1200 B.C. The adaptation is much fainter and is greatly blurred, for Skanda is presented here on the human plane. Both are born to lead the Chosen of the Lord from the land of bondage to that of freedom. Both are found in clumps of reeds on the margins of waters. To Moses is vouchsafed a new name Yahweh, 'I am that I am' for the god of redeemed Israel, which is equivalent of the 'Tat-Sat' or 'Aham-asmi' which it is that Skanda expounds to the spiritually renaissant and of which Skanda becomes a manifestation. Moses has in Aaron the adjutant that Skanda has in Viśākha. With rod Moses grants the signs which Skanda does with lance. Moses in the cleft has a variant in Skanda battling with Krauñcha. Each sets up a serpent to save. Moses is the cause of affliction to the male first-born of Egypt in much the same way that Skanda's entourage of grahas is to Indian children. Associated with both are mountains. Moses takes his following through sun, desert and hilly tract, on to the Land of Promise, almost as Muruga leads the pilgrim along dreary terrain to his freedom-city, Paran-Kunram, the Hill of Him who is beyond All.

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Parallelisms in Tammuz and in Osiris, other ancient gods of the mystery religions, could be traced, but they are faint.

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The archetypal elements are amplest and clearest in Agni-Soma, incarnated as Skanda. It is from him, therefore, that we must derive those others who present themselves as parallels.

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That among the archetypal elements were a few accounts that are told of in what may be called peripheral regions,

and not in the homelands, is significant. The tale of a sea-fight is told in South India and in Greece but not in between. The Imputation of Skanda of patronage of theft, found in the *Mrcchakatika*, is told also of Moses, who incited his followers to rob the Egyptians. A migration, or diffusion, of an archetypal myth has to be postulated.

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A Dionysos has been recently deciphered in a Linear B tablet from Crete, thus taking the god to an antiquity in the west, and in Aryan culture, to an attested antiquity of about 1400 to 1200 B.C. in Crete and to an inferential antiquity of about 1700 B.C. in Crete itself and in Greece and Ithrace, much earlier date than had so far been believed possible. The archetypal Agni-Soma, who is Skanda, must, therefore, be earlier still. Confessing as Greek sources do that Dionysos had come to them from India, it is not improbable that Skanda started from India on his westward trek very early. Skanda is prominent in Harappan culture. He must have moved at least about 2000 B.C. and reached Greece and beyond, giving Tammuz and Osiris to the West Asian peoples, Dionysos—Bacchos to the Greeks about 1800 B.C. and Moses to Israel, about 1200 B.C. For a variant, it is also probable that Tammuz and Osiris are transformation of archetypal Skanda mutated in the course of his migrations from a probable pre-Indian Vedic home to the rest of India.

DR. K. K. PILLAY

1. The resemblance between the terms 'Murgh' in Persian and 'Muruga' in Tamil seems to be accidental. Did the word 'Murgh' mean cock in Tamil at any time? Or, did any other Persian word occur in Tamil literature so as to make us think that this word, like others, had migrated into Tamilaham? Moreover, if 'Muruga' is derived from 'Murga' in Persian and Zend, one has reason to expect this term to have occurred in the Rig Veda. There is no evidence for that. Did the Persians have direct contact with Tamilaham?

There is no reference in Tamil literature to Muruga having played with and hugged the cock, as found in the



*Mahabharata*. If at all Muruga is derived from Murugh it should have found its way into Sanskrit in the first instance.

2. Was Subrahmanya a hill god in North india as in the South? Here he is the lord of Kurinchi, and more often than not, the temple of Muruga is built on a hill or hillock. Are these features found in the North?

3. How do we account for the comparative fewness of temples dedicated to Subrahmanya in the north?

4. In the north, even in the few temples we have, women do not offer prayers. In the south, he is the favourite deity of men and women, old and young.

5. Muruga is described in *Tirumurugāruppāḍai* as the son of Koravai. Is koravai a Tamil goddess, who subsequently underwent the transformation into Durga and Pārvati? If so, is it not likely that Muruga had a Tamil origin?

6. The Adichanallur finds reveal gold mouth pieces embossed with ornamental geometrical designs. Similar mouth pieces have been found in Cyprus. Gold frontlets similar to the Adichanallur diadems have been discovered in Gerar and they are dated to about 1200 B.C. Iron hoes found in Adichanallur are similar to those found in Palestine, datable to about 1150 B.C. All these suggest a connection between the culture of Adichanallur and that of the eastern Mediterranean. Trade relationship may explain this connection, but then, no place in India other than Adichanallur presents similar relics. There is a possibility that the Dravidians who are believed to have come from the Mediterranean region brought these elements of culture from their original home. However, the Adichanallur finds clearly show that Murugan was worshipped. Besides the mouth pieces, usually associated, with the devotees carrying *Kavidi* to the Muruga temple, the Adichanallur relics include iron tridents. and banner carrying representation of fowl as his emblem.

7. The dates of the *Aitareya Āraṇyaka* and *Mahabhārata* cannot be definitely determined. Further, the possibility of interpolations in them is not ruled out- Therefore, it is not

easy to say that the conception of Skanda or Kumāra had its origin among the Aryans.

8. It is undeniable that in later times there was a syncretism of the legends connected with this deity as with several others—among the Aryans and Tamils. But the question before us is whether the origin of Muruga is traceable to the Aryans or to the Dravidians or Tamils. If the Adichanallur finds provide a clue, it may be taken that the worship of Muruga was introduced into Tamiḻagam by the Dravidians from the Mediterranean region.

#### M. D. RAGHAVAN

The Gods of the Hindu Pantheon are an integral part of the religious life of Ceylon. Psychologically, the distinction is clear in the minds of the Buddhist Sinhalese between the precepts and doctrines of Buddhism inculcating the righteous way of life, and spiritual salvation, and the cult of the Gods propitiated with prayers and offerings for help and divine intercession in the problems and difficulties that beset man in his day-to-day life. The harmony of religious and social life is thus maintained, and no conflict arises between the two systems of religion.

Folk religion as it prevails to day in Ceylon may be broadly grouped under two categories—, the popular folk cults of the Yakkas and spirits, with their traditional ceremonials and rituals, and the cult of the High Gods of the Hindu Pantheon. The two categories developed on different lines. The priests of the Yakka magical cult are the Kaṭṭāḍiyas—a word meaning literally, masked or disguised spirit dancers—and the priests of the Gods are the Kapuralas. The abodes of the Gods are the sacred devalayas, while the Yakkas are propitiated in temporary structures erected for the occasion. The Hindu Gods of Ceylon venerated by Hindus and Sinhalese alike are Viṣṇu, Saman, Vibhiṣana, Aiyanar, Katragama (Skanda) and Goddess Pattini. The priests in these Devalayas are Sinhalese Kapurālās well versed in the religious lore, coming of hereditary families from the Middle Ages.

Among the most popular of the Gods, is Katragama, a name unique in itself, standing for the name of the God, as for his shrine also signifying the village of Katragama, in South East Ceylon, where on the left bank of the Menik Ganga, nestles in its enchanting jungle setting the mystic shrine to God Kadira. A shrine of great antiquity, foremost in all Ceylon as a popular pilgrim resort, tradition has it that King Dutu-Gemunu in the Second century B.C. built the present shrine in fulfilment of a vow commemorating his successful expedition against King Elara (205-161 B.C.). Round this episode has grown the Sinhala folk poem "Kanda Mala," "Garland for Skanda," opening with a narration of the coming of the God to Lanka. God Śiva once told his sons Kanda Kumaru (Skanda Kumara) and Ganidu (Ganesa), that he would give a mango to whoever would first encircle the three worlds. Skanda started off on his golden peacock to carry out the adventure to the very letter. Ganesa cleverly encircled Isvara, saying that the God in himself constituted the three worlds. Śiva was so pleased that he gave the mango to Ganesa. Skanda returning was so enraged that he delivered a well aimed blow at Ganesh, who rolled down breaking one of his tusks—Śiva banished Skanda, who coming to the world of mortals, took his abode at Katragama of South Ceylon. Amusing as an imaginative story in the playful encounters of the two brothers, the puranic background of the God is as narrated in Skanda Purana,—that God Skanda came into being in the course of the devastating war between the *Devas* and *Asuras*. Smarting under the blows inflicted on them by the *Asuras*, the *Devas* in a body waited upon God Śiva, so as to devise a means of crushing the *Asuras*. The answer was the creation of God Kārttikeya—Endowed with the lance, the gift of his mother Pārvati, Skanda encountered the *Asuras* annihilating the *Asura* forces.

The God's romance for Valli, the maiden of the wilds, daughter of a Vedda Chieftain, is among the legends which associate the God with Lanka. Pursuing the daughter of the jungles, Kārttikeya arrives at the jungle resort of South Ceylon now known as Kataragama the abode of God Kadira, where the God marries her. The visitor to Kataragama today if he scales the walls outside the pillared hall, will

notice a series of panels in mild colours, illustrating the life story of Valli from infancy to maiden hood, ending with her marriage to the God. One of the scenes shows the abundant hill crops of maize, with birds hovering over and settling over the maize cobs, Valli sling in hand scaring away the birds, a pictorial version of the episode in the career of the God.

To resume the incidents sung in the Sinhala folk chronicle "Kanda Māla": Prince Dutugemunu preparing for a final assault against the Tamil King Elara was warned in a dream, not to embark on the expedition, unless he secured the divine aid of the God of Kataragama-Appearing in dream to his devotees, is among the notable features of the cult of this particular divinity. No time was lost to do the trek to Kataragama "where the river flowed with water, though no rain fell", in the words of "Kanda Māla", Miracles are yet another feature of the supernatural here, and many are the miracles which are part of the chronicles of Kataragama. The Prince reaching Kataragama went through severe penances for divine blessing. Lost in meditation as the Prince fainted. Recovering consciousness, the great God stood before him and conferred on the Royal suppliant, the boon sought. The Prince recovered sufficiently to make a vow that on his return from victory, he would rebuild and endow the temple. Confident of victory, Dutugemunu entered the field. The final stages of the fight were signalled by a single combat between the two adversaries. Elara was vanquished and killed by an arrow from Dutugemunu, who recovered the throne.

The garland of verses, the Sinhalese folk poem "Kanda Māla", in true poetic flight speaks of a building of three storeys which the King erected with an entrance gateway of seven steps, as thanks offering to the God of war. On the South, he erected the shrine to Ganesh, a kitchen for making offerings, an altar for flowers, and a *Kovil* for goddess Pattini. Four furlongs off, he built the Kiri Vihare and formed parks (Udyana) round the seven sacred hills. If the structure of the Maha Devala as Dutugemunu built it, was of the imposing proportions described in the folk poem, nothing of it is evident today. The shrine room is

of moderate proportions, with the outerwall bearing a series of mouldings. In front is a pillared hall where the devotees assemble, and make offerings. Within the quadrangle, is the temple of Ganesh. Outside to the right is the *Kovil* to Theivayani (Devayani) Amman. A few yards away from the Maha Devala, is the *Kovil* to Valli Amma.

Unpretensions as the structure is, the God is the most omnipotent, and no God in Ceylon is more assiduously propitiated than the God of Katragama. Whether in personal or national causes, prayer is laid at the feet of the God.

Esala (roughly July–August) is the month sacred to the annual festivals of the Ceylon devalas, the first of such gorgeous events being the Kandy Esala Perahera, the celebration in honour of the sacred Tooth Relic at the Temple of the Tooth (the Dalada Maligawa), jointly with the festivals of the Natha, Maha Vishnu, Kataragama and Pattini devalas of Kandy. During the season of the annual celebrations at Kataragama, the narrow road from Tissa–Maharama, the nearest halting station to the shrine, a twelve mile tract is closed to all vehicles and the path left unrestrained to the thronging mass of pilgrims. Footsore and tired, the pilgrim reaches the gently flowing Menik Ganga. Reaching his destination, a sense of calm and tranquility overpowers him. Bubbling over the sandy bed, the stream here is but knee deep. Wading over to the opposite bank, the pilgrims prepare for a full bath. Quite a few cross the river over the suspension bridge, creaking and groaning with age. Refreshed by the dip in the cool waters of the stream, no time is lost to collect the essential offerings of cocoanuts, plantains, camphor and jos sticks, neatly disposed in brass rattan or basket-work trays; and the pilgrims wend their way to the shrine to be in time for the morning Puja. The resonant sounds of bells ringing and conch blowing proclaim the Puja in progress. Crossing over the arched gateway, pilgrims enter the hall of offerings. The sight here is ecstatic. To the peeling of bells and blowing of the conch, men and women of all classes, high and low, rich and poor, freely move about between huge brass lamps, in an air thick with the perfumed smoke, lighting jos sticks and camphor, or offering prayers, down on their knees or standing with bowed heads and hands in prayer. The learned in the sacred lore, chant

long verses in Sinhalese or Tamil in adoration of the one God revered alike for spiritual salvation as for his virtues of delivering you the goods of this world; the God who is looked to in all the ills that man is heir to. The officiating priest (*Kapurala*) presently emerges from the *sanctum Sancto-um*, chanting prayers in hushed tone, holding a brass plate of the holy ash, and sandal paste. This is the occasion for the worshipers to drop their offerings in the plate ranging from a few cents to rich gifts in money or jewellery. *Theertham* (Sacred water) and sandal paste are offered to all, and every one has a helping of the holy ash. Charmed cocoanut oil, is another little thing that women do not omit to collect. The faith is great in the efficacy of the "Kataragama Oil", a family remedy for such ailments as the head-ache.

While this in short is a normal day at Kataragama, the scenes and sights during the days of the annual celebration are too exuberant and exultant for words - Mysticism and the supernatural, reach their climax during these days. Round and round the devala go pilgrims with mouth gagged, silver arrow-headed pins piercing lips or cheeks end to end, or tongue pierced. With hooks pierced in his back, a pilgrim hangs from a beam or drags a decorated cart. Others measure their length on the burning sands, falling, rising and walking alternately. Mortification of the flesh and infliction of physical pain for atonement of and reparation from sins, and acquiring of spiritual salvation, are characteristic of the abundance of religious zeal at festival time at Kataragama. Sacred and special to the God is the *Kavadi*, the arched shoulder pole, gaily decorated with lustrous tinsel and coloured paper, adorned with bunches of the peacock feathers, which the devout pilgrim sports about on his shoulders, stepping and dancing to the tune of the drumming. The pilgrim carrying it, is invariably one who has taken a vow to do the pilgrimage on foot all the way. Mysticism underlies the wearing of the arrow-headed silver skewer by the devout votary. The faith is that the particular devotee is the chosen of the God for this investiture. The God appears in a dream enjoining on him to wear the insignia of the God, the *Mudra*. The belief is also held that the same night the goldsmith of the village has a dream that he is to make the spike for the man who will duly appear.

The actual investing of the Kavadi pilgrim, with the sacred insignia, has its own ceremonial ritual.

The *Kavadi* in a portable form, symbolises the elaborate *Kavadi* car (the *tēr*) the annual progress of which through Colombo roads from the Sea Street Hindu Temple to the Hindu temple at Bambalapitiya, and back to the Sea Street, is an annual event of sacred and spectacular interest. The *Vel* the *ayudha* or weapon of the God - the long lance, has given the name to this the Vel festival celebrated at this season in Ceylon in the shrines sacred to the God.

The concluding stages of the festival, are marked by the fire walking ceremony. Fire walking emblazons the annual festivals at a number of other shrines too in Ceylon, notably the Draupadi Amman Kovil at Pandrippu in the Eastern Province, and Udappu near Chilau, a Kovil of Hindu Karawas,— dedicated to the Pandava Princes and Draupadi, the annual celebration of which terminates with the Fire walking ceremony. Fire walking is the expurgatory ceremonial at all these shrines, refining, chastening, and purifying everything evil by the performance of the ritual passage over fire. The ceremonial at Kataragama is among the most elaborate and spectacular of all, walking over an incandescent mass of embers raised by burning logs about fifteen feet long and four feet high. The leader, the *Giri Pagana Sami*—and the group of fire walkers proceed to menik Ganga at dawn. After a bath in the stream, a procession starts for the temple, reaching which led by the leader, all walk over the red hot cinders, with faith in the God as their only physical protection.

Among the legends of Kataragama, is the one relating to the sacred Chair or throne of Kataragama Deviyo, a description of which, often quoted runs thus :— “A sort of easy chair, covered with the skins of Cheetahs, on which the bows and arrows of the different gods and goddesses are placed and having a fire by its side which is never allowed to be extinguished. The chair is said to be formed of a sort of sacred clay from the banks of the river Ganges, and is held in great veneration as having been the seat of the founder of the Devala, who is represented to have stepped from it from earth to heaven without passing through the gates of death.”

The God meets evil in his own sententious manner. Ribeiro, the Portuguese historian, relates an interesting story of how about 150 Portuguese and 2,000 Lascorins (Sinhalese Soldiers) under the command of Gaspar Figueira de Cerpe, becoming quite excited with the wealth stored in a pagoda held in great reverence rushed into the forest to rifle the pagoda, with its vast wealth of gold, jewels and precious stones enshrined from time immemorial. Says the Portuguese historian Ribeiro :—

“When we came near to the spot where they said the pagoda stood, we took a native residing close to the spot, and our Commander inquired from him if he knew where the pagoda was. He replied that he did, and that it was close by: he acted as our guide and led us through a hill covered with forest which was the only one in the district, and this we wandered round and recrossed many times. It was certain that the pagoda was at the top of it. but do not know what magic it possessed, for out of the four guides whom we took, the first three were put to death because we thought that they were deceiving us, for they acted as if they were mad, and spoke all kinds of nonsense, each one in his turn, without the knowing of the others. The last two deceived us and did exactly the same, and we were forced to turn, without the knowing of the others. The last two deceived us and did exactly the same, and we were forced to turn, back the way we had come without effecting any thing, and without even seeing the pagoda which is called Catergao.”

Viewed against the back ground of early history and the geographical setting, the study of Katragama becomes more objective and intelligible. More than any other factor, its situation in the heart of South East Ceylon determined the part it was to play in the life of the land South Ceylon the Ruhunu of early ages—was not the neglected and the comparatively little known corner of Ceylon that it degenerated to be following the decline of the Sinhalese monarchy. It was a region very conspicuous in the Middle Ages, next in importance only to Raja Rata, within which was included the Capitals of the Kings. That Katragama in the 2nd and 3rd centuries B.C. was the seat of a Kshatriya clan whose representatives “the



nobles of Kajaragama" were present at the festival held at Anuradhapura on the arrival of the great Bodhi tree, we are told in the *Mahāvamsa*. Ruled by the sons of the Kings, and a refuge of the Kings themselves in times of political reverses, Ruhunu was next to Raja Rata, the best governed part of Ceylon. As the Ruhunu Maha Devala, the war God of Katragama was the supernatural force to whom Kings and Princes, supplicated and prayed in a difficult situation such as confronted Dutugemunu, the prince of Ruhunu at the time,—faced with the task of emancipating the Island as already narrated.—In performance of his vow, the Prince endowed, enriched and extended the temple. How far back, in point of time, the temple dates, we are left to surmise, Tamil traditions, reflections of which are caught in the *Kalpana Vaipaya Malai*, ascribes to Vijaya, the building of a temple to "Kadirai-Andavar," a tradition which disposes us to trace the worship of the God, at least to the days of Vijaya (5th Century B.C.). With the goal of political stability set before him it is conceivable that Vijaya was not unmindful of divine aid in his task of overcoming all impediments towards achieving full soveringnity. That Vijaya either inaugurated or advanced the worship of an already existing shrine, as his illustrations successor Dutugemunu did later, is a reasonable conclusion. His sway over South Ceylon, the God of Katragama commands the allegiance of all Ceylon, with the numerous shrines dedicated to the God distributed all over the Island.

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Sri S. T. Srinivasa Gopalachari, then exhibited five specimens of wood carvings.

# LINGUISTICS AND PREHISTORY\*

DR. S. M. KATRE

Modern methods used in linguistics provide a fruitful source of evidence in tracing the history of man like the modern archaeological techniques of carbon—and cobalt dating. Most notable is the lexicostatics which has aided linguists to trace languages during different phases of development as far back as possible on the time axis.

The real nature of language was first discovered in India by Pāṇini, Tolkāppiyar and others. Function of language, it was understood, as a oral means of communication (spoken). This led to an analysis of the pattern and classification in a clear cut procedure comprising (1) the phonology, (2) grammatic system, and (3) words, i.e. the lexical items, in the early centuries of B.C. The approach of contemporaries elsewhere, Aristotle and others, was very different; the language was merely accepted as a 'writing system' by them. It was only in the 19th century that the Science of Comparative Philology took shape in the West after the discovery of Sanskrit by European Scholars. Employing one to one relationship that two languages may show in the phonological systems, it has since become possible to trace genetic affinities in the world languages and to establish the concept of family relationships among them.

Although any sound can be produced by man, chronologically no language has unlimited sounds and therefore, each language develops a recognisable pattern. No language can be considered pure. Alongside elements inherited, elements in each language are borrowed again and again, but maintaining their individualistic patterns, as for example the pan Indian system of sentence formation. In fact, comparative ethnological studies with reference to Nepali by Turner have revealed that 35% of words of modern Sanskrit occurred in modern Indo-Aryan series during 8th–13th centuries.

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\* The above is a summary of the paper read before the Archaeological society of South India, on 9–10–'64.

From a complete statement of languages at different stages of development emerge historic and cultural evidences. The distinguished speaker traced the development of Indian languages from the old Indo-Aryan family through the middle Indo-Aryan and modern Indo-Aryan series with examples. He described the methodology developed to find out old forms by employing structural analysis in reconstruction of words. Characteristics that exist in modern Indian languages such as Sindhi and Punjabi, without much change from many centuries past, have aided in reconstruction of words to their earlier proto-Prakrit forms. This further helps in learning of similar systems lost in other Prakrits.

Dr. Katre considered the question whether reconstructions have any validity, and stressed the need for cultural evidence for reconstructed forms. So is reconstruction of history of fundamental importance.

These aspects, as well as critical studies of co-ordinates traced with reference to (1) community, (2) area, and (3) time, and reconstruction of languages aid in revealing many facets of history of culture of man through the ages and deserve to be pursued further than has so far been done.

(1) Occurrence of words foreign to the pattern of the language indicate external influences coming by way of trade or otherwise, for example Asva versus Gotaka and its derivatives probably from ancient Egypt. (2) In a similar manner he traced rice-threshing and brick-making to Austro-asiatic sources. (3) Similar examples occur in methods of enumeration which show even internal influences between different parts of the country at work.

Mr. M. D. Raghavan, Dr. J. T. Cornelius and Mr. I. Mahadevan participated in the discussion. There was also an exhibition of early stone implements and metallic beads.

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# 'CULT' IN THE PALLAVA TEMPLES\*

K. V. SOUNDARA RAJAN

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This paper does not seek to describe the cultural handi-works of the Pallavas of the *Simhaviṣṇu* line, during their days of glory. They are there for all to see at *Māmallapuram* and a dozen other places like *Maṇḍagappattu*, *Pallāvaram*, *Vallam*, *Kurangaṇilmuttam*, *Māmaṇḍūr*, *Śiyamaṅgalam*, *Daḷavāṇūr*, Upper Cave at *Tiruchirāpaḷli* rock, *Panamalai*, apart from *Kāñchi*, their capital, in addition to which the later Pallavas from *Nandivarman* onwards upto *Aparājita* had also their own architectural creations as at *Kāñchi*, *Tiruppattur* and other places. What the paper is directly concerned with is the inner content of the cult manifestations that prevailed in the Pallava times primarily as *Kāñchi*, from the last quarter of the seventh century A.D. to the middle of the ninth century A.D. Examples from elsewhere and of the immediately preceding phases would be cited to the extent called for.

It would be legitimate to remind ourselves that the Pallavas from their earlier entrenched presence in the southern *Āndhra* country have been the heirs to the cultural heritage of that tract and had later cross-fertilised this further by their historic impact upon the *Chālukyas* of *Bādāmi*, not to mention the more subtle impulses now steadily drifting southwards from *Āryāvarta* to find a new and welcome haven in the virile and transformed local scene in the *Tamil* country. The main elements of the cult worship still centred around the Trinity, but already not only a polarisation but also a resultant syncretisation had been manifest on the pantheon. The earlier Pallavas closer to the progenitor had favoured a mixed patronage to *Śiva* as well as *Viṣṇu*, particularly the latter of whom, however, they were to emphasise only the *Varāha* and *Trivikrama* forms and the *Gajalakṣmī* type. The advent of the *Nṛsimha* form was not to be seen prior

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\* Paper read before the Archaeological Society of South India on 22-10-'64.

to Māmalla stage, although Durga in an essentially Vishnuite garb had already for some time found ready favour. It would seem that Durga in all rock-cut examples whether in the early Pallava examples or in those of the Muttaraiyars, Pāṇdyas or Adigamans was to display a direct nexus with Viṣṇu forms of the standing, seated or reclining type.<sup>1</sup> What is of greater importance however is the fact that from the time of Narasiṃhavarman II *alias* Rājasimha, we have a dominating Śaiva cult receiving royal patronage.<sup>2</sup> At Kāñchi and Tirupattur at least, the succeeding later Pallava reign also continued this Śaiva creed, although it could not be denied that there was again a recrudescence of Vishnuite worship. It is to the mode of Sivaite ritual worship and the monument which was to form its venue that we would now revert. Before doing that we may summarily outline the state of affairs prior to Rājasimha. The set-up at Māmallapuram and elsewhere of the Mahēndra and Māmalla periods including that of Paramēśvaravarman I shows that:

- (i) the main object of ritual worship was mainly the panel of Sōmāskanda on the rear wall of the 'cella' in a niche, or as a separate stela as in the completed top storey of Dharmarājaratha of Paramēśvaravarman's time ;
- (ii) there was no provision for any '*linga*' to be fixed in the centre of the shrine chamber ;
- (iii) there was a likelihood that where the Sōmāskanda panel or any such group was not engraved in relief on the back wall, such a figure was probably done up in stucco plaster and perhaps painted also ;
- (iv) in addition to the main cell containing as above, the other panels displayed on the exterior and sidewalls, despite their diverse sectarian affiliations were equally to be deemed as consecrated objects

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1. e.g. (a) Rāmānuja maṇḍapam ; (b) Trimūrti cave ; (c) Varāha cave of Mallai and (d) Siṅgavaram cave.

2. e.g. Shore temple, Panamalai, Iravatana, Piravatana, Tripurāntaka and Airavateśvara and Kailāsanātha of Kāñchi.

fit for worship, as long as each of them is flanked by *dvarapālas*. Only where such a condition does not exist they are to be dealt with as subsidiary divinities in relation to the main one.

- (v) except perhaps for salutations (as shown by hands in *añjali*) offer of flowers and chanting of hymns, these objects of worship were not subjected to any other ritual mode like purificatory bath, dress etc.; and
- (vi) the shrines in which they were placed were both rock-cut as well as monolithic but in either case, the main deity was in relief or otherwise in a cella with a *maṇḍapa* in front and did not have any practice of circumambulation around it. The cella and *maṇḍapa* projection as that of Tiruchirāpaḷli Upper Cave (where the projection is incipient) or Daḷavānūr and Siyamaṅgalam (where the *mukha-maṇḍapa* is well evolved) had the same basic composition as that of Dharmarāja ratha or Arjuna ratha or Sahādeva ratha or the Pidāri rathas—only, in these latter cases the temple was free standing with exterior decorated all around and with a *maṇḍapa* integrally part of and in front of the temple proper.

(It is only for the first time in the period of Rājasimha that a regular structural temple evolves, as with the Shore temples,<sup>3</sup> but even here there is no clear integration of the central object of worship with a ritual bias for *abhiṣeka* etc. Although 'lingas' are found in most of the temples of Rājasimha, as we see them today, there are strong grounds in favour of their being later insertions. The most outstanding among the reasons is the fact that the *varimarga* and *pranāla* for carrying out the *abhiṣeka* water from the cella to the outside through the wall, is not at all deliberately placed at the time of construction but improvised later in one and all of them.) The fact that neither the way in which the

3. The *dharalinga* found in the eastward-facing larger Shore temple seems to have had its original height much more than its extant dimensions. It does not have any *linga pītha*.

*linga* and its *pītha* are relatively fixed and placed on the cella floor, nor the cutting of the water drain into the topmost moulding (*paṭṭika*) or the next lower recess of the *adhiṣṭhāna* or cutting in the bottom of the lowest course of the wall and allowing water to run over the *paṭṭika* would show that they were not envisaged appropriately at the time of construction. It is also to be seen that the extant *lingapītha* is in most cases round in cross section, unlike the square *pīthas* that had been prevailing in the earlier times, prior to the examples of Pāṇḍyas, or as mentioned in the early texts, and are thus obviously later. As for the *lingas* themselves, many of them either have the faceting usually 16 sides, as in some of the specimens, or do not conform to texts, with square lowest part, octagonal middle part (both of which are to be hidden within the *pītha*, showing only the circular—sectioned shaft above it. Some of the Rājasimha and later Pallava examples which give the faceted *linga* are at Shore temple facing east, Panamalai, Kailāsanātha at Kāñchi and Tiruppattur and these are in fine polished black stone, faceted into 16 flutes. But even these would have any significance only if the *abhiṣeka* water has proper exit. Some of these do not have any *pītha* to this day. At best we may take it that these alone were fixed probably at a date subsequent to the erection of the temple itself, and perhaps it was at that time that the narrow drain through the wall was provided but without any regular gargoyle projecting outside. How long after the erection of the temple were these *lingas* raised and drain hole given is just anybody's guess. At least in the case of Kailāsanātha and Tripurāntakēśvara of Kāñchi, the clumsy way in which the drain cut through the wall has been diverted along the sides of the inner narrow circuit (*Sandara alinda*) and taken through the outer walls against the recessed part near the north-west corner (between *karna* & *bhadra*) face of the north wall, so that the side shrine on the wall may be avoided here, is a tell-tale sign of its being an afterthought. In the case of Tripurāntaka, it is seen that the *lingapītha* brought inside to be fixed into the *linga* was so much outsize that the north wall of the cella has been scooped on the inner face to some extent, most arbitrarily, to provide projection space for the *pītha* channel, the whole affair being

so much a contrivance, not warranted at all on its pristine condition. Even the *pītha* of Iravātana temple could have been taken into the cella only side ways and not in its natural position, since the doorway is much less broad than the diameter of the *pītha*. We note that invariably in the latter temples from early Chola times, the *pranāla* gargoyle is fixed between the *kumuda* and *paṭṭika* in the *antarapatra* or *kantha* provided here, and not in a purely *postfacto* and utilitarian manner as described above. But in most of the Pallava cases, the *vārimārga* alone is cut and a regular *pranāla* as enjoined in Āgama<sup>4</sup> texts has not been provided. It is thus pretty certain that the *līṅga* and much more so the *pītha* in all the Pallava temples of Kāñchi was not original.

If so, what was the object of worship for which the temple was erected? The answer would seem to be that the Sōmāskanda panel itself was worshipped. Let us see if this is an adequate answer both by internal as well as external evidence.

Taking internal evidence first, we note

- (i) that the Sōmāskanda panel in a niche is itself reared over a pediment with a projecting moulding found only on the back wall enclosed within flanking pilasters and a regular *prastara* above, complete with *kapōta* whose side turnings corresponding to the pavilion-like character of the panel-niche is all too deliberately worked out ;
- (ii) the provision of *dvārapālas* to the niche panel on either side of the pilasters would further indicate that it was a regular shrine by itself ;
- (iii) the depiction of the other two members of the Trinity both in the panel itself in a subordinate position, as also on the side walls of the cella; or

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4. The Āgamas enjoin that the *pranāla* should project out as much as its hidden part in the wall and the *vārimārga* should be cut in the floor slabs to be aligned with the *pranāla* within the wall and this *vārimārga* line should be slightly to the east of the north-south axis line of the *līṅga* and should be a straight line and should have its outer end slightly lower than the inner end. Its channel should also be not less than 12 *aṅgulas* (or 9 inches).



the transept (as at Shore temple and Panamalai) would show that the object of worship in the temple was the Sōmāskanda panel;

- (iv) the depiction in some of the later Pallava temples like Mukteśvar, Airāvatēśvar etc., of a team of worshippers on both the side walls of the cella, facing as well as gravitating towards the Sōmāskanda panel and close to the '*dvārapālas*' would further emphasise the above point. These worshipper teams should have been shown outside the shrine chamber, if they were to be taken as worshipping a *liṅga* in the cella.
- (v) the fact that even one and all of sub-shrines in the temples like Kailāsanātha at Kāñchi or Talagiriśvara shrine at Panamalai also show Sōmāskanda panel on the back wall would show that this was a ritual formula, complete in itself;
- (vi) the fact that in the sub-shrines integral with the main shrine, either at Kailāsanātha or at Panamalai, there could not have been a uniform provision for *varimarga* and *pranāla* indicates the absence of such an element; and
- (vii) the rock-cut shrines of the earlier phases either of the time of Mahendra or his successors before Rājasimha do not seem to have any provision for the *liṅga*, and have been built in such a way that the entire cult orientation is incipient and sculptural, and not symbolic.<sup>5</sup> No Āgamas had then been apparently known which enjoined modes of establishment of the central figure for which the

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5. Even in caves of *rathas* of Māmallas or Paramēśvara's line the *liṅgas* now found in them, as in the Trimūrti cave, Dharmarāja ratha third *tala* etc., are not in the exact centre of the shrine cell nor with any regular *pīṭha*. Besides, in rock-cut or monolithic excavations, if *liṅga* worship had become vogue at time of the enterprise we should normally expect a monolithic *liṅga* on *pīṭha*; as in many such case in the Chālukyan country, Pāṇḍyan and Muttaraiyar zones and others as at Mēlachēri etc.

temple is excavated or erected. The Trinity, though getting compartmentalised, had not yet lost their liaison completely. Actual sculptures and not mere symbolic representations have been consecrated for the worship at the temple and the ritual perhaps mainly consisted of *nivēdana* and nothing much more. The offer could have been *patra*, *puṣpa*, *phala* or *tōya* in the spirit of the *Gīta*, but no daily *abhiṣeka* was obviously well established. We may also note here that *Āgamas*, the earliest of them as the *Mayamata* (not to speak of the Viṣṇuite *Vaikhānasa*) mention *liṅga* and *pītha lakṣaṇas* and how to fix them and the *praṇāla* in the cella. They also speak of the circular, octagonal and square *pītha*, perhaps an early polarisation of architectural forms like Drāvida, Nāgara and Vēsara, and on the basis of the actual provenance of such three fold types in the non-Pallava caves we may validly place the earliest Śaiva *Āgamas* as posterior to these caves. Representations of *liṅgas* on *pīthas* usually square are of fairly early origin, some of the earliest being found in coins of Audumbara and Kushan kings which could be dated to the first—second century A.D. Thus the mere knowledge of *liṅga* with *pītha* is not the same as a consecrated use of it in a temple sanctum for which proper canonical injunctions would be required. Personal *aradhana* of a *liṅga* on a *pītha*, however, would not be bound by such restrictions.

When did the *liṅga* arrive then? This would be a legitimate query. We may first consider when we have actual representations of *liṅga* and how we have them, before we find the answer to the date of actual ritual use of *liṅga* in the sanctum.

We may, in passing, consider here the existence of the rock-out pits found in Tiruchirāpaḷli Upper Cave and also at Dalavānūr before we deal with other more direct examples. Besides, we may first note that we have 'the earliest representation' of Pallava Śiva Himself in the Gaṅgadhara form at Tiruchirāpaḷli, where we have the by now famous inscription, felicitous and at

once enigmatic with its lines '*Anēna līngēna līngini jñānam*' having been the bone of contention of South Indian researchers. In dealing with this reference, however, two points have to be conceded first. To begin with, '*līnga*' as well as '*līngin*' used by the royal author of the epigraph should at once put us wise about the *gūḍhārtha* rather than the *vyakta* character of the nomenclature. If Mahēndra meant a physical *līnga*—the object of worship—he would have certainly been more explicit and less pedantic. That he did not imply the material *līnga* is also borne out by the rest of the sentence, which also indulges in denominational jargon of '*vipakṣa vṛtti*' etc. Further, the use of the words '*Sailīm Harasya tanum*' is certainly indicative of a carving of Śiva in stone rather than a *līnga* although versification could have admitted of semantic adjustments. The record further is nearer to Gaṅgādhara panel than to the shrine where the pit is scooped. This may seemingly be explained by the fact that by '*anēna līngēna*' he only meant the *līnga* 'in the cave.' The double pit one at right angles to the other of differing dimensions is again, not in favour of its being a *līnga* pit. We do know at least that at Dalāvanūr also the disposition of the pits is quite similar. There the epigraph talks of a house or residence for Śiva and not of a *līnga*. The negative argument that if no *līnga* was originally there, there was nothing to worship in the temple could not be true if we know Mahēndra's caves as at Maṇḍagappaṭṭu, Pallāvaram and elsewhere. Hence it is likely that a Śiva relief figure, apparently with Parvati, was placed in the pits.

If we take it that the square and oblong pits cut into the shrine cell were to fix a figure, the question arises why he could not have cut it in rock. It is clear that this was not the Pallava vogue and what more, if any stone figure was fixed, it would not have been of granite but perhaps of a softer stone like sandstone and this explains why it has perished. If it was a *līnga* figure in the cell, it does not stand to reason why his successor Māmalla did not fix any *līnga* in any of the shrines but again put Trinity in relief on the back wall. (We are thus led to conclude that the *līnga* got introduced into the sanctum only from the time when there was an Āgamic mandate for such consecration and *abhiṣeka*, and this does not appear to have happened before c. 750 A.D., by

which time perhaps we have some of the earliest *Āgamas*.) If, however, the *līngasthāpana* as given in *Viṣṇudharmōttara* and other *Purāṇas* of the North could have been known by the time, we see no reason why the *bhādrapīṭha* prescribed therein should not have been provided. Contrariwise, the fact that we do have such *līngas* with *bhādrapīṭhas* carved out of the same rock and an improvised arrangement for collection of *abhiṣeka* water in a pit nearby in the cella itself in the caves of the Pāṇḍyas and Muttaraiyars, as elsewhere, would show that these Pāṇḍya caves are themselves perhaps not earlier than 750 A.D. and fall in the *Āgama* period.

All the *varimarga* holes provided in the cella in the Pallava structural examples are leading towards the north. *Āgamas*, however, state that the *varimarga* and the complementary *praṇāla* should be placed above the *prati*, in the *gala* or in the *kumuda*, according to different texts. It further enjoins that the *varimarga* should be to the left of the *līnga*, which usually faces east. In the case of Mukteśvara and Mātangēśvara, which face west, we find the *varimarga* let into the north wall which is unconventional but only follows as incipient stage when northward orientation of the *varimarga*, in relation to the eastward axis of the temple was superceding the fact that it is to be to the proper left of the *līnga*, and thus does indicate a well consolidated cult-practice to be followed integrally with the construction of the *adhiṣṭhana* and *cella* floor and before erecting the body and superstructure of the temple. The fact, however, that none of these cases also shows a *praṇāla* would indicate that they were not actually following rigorously any *Āgama* mandate wherein *varimarga* alone is never specified, but a *praṇāla* as well. (The typical method of actually laying the *līnga*, *pīṭha* *varimarga* and *praṇāla*, all according to the *Āgamic* mode, is found occurring only in the temples from the end of the eighth century A.D. onwards, and between this and the actual construction of the Pallava structural temples was a intermediate stage, when *Āgamas* had called for a *varimarga*, and temples already constructed had to introduce this in a make-shift manner.) (Since this contingency would not have arisen before the initiation of the structural temples by Rājasiṃha, starting perhaps with Mukundanāyanar (and latest the Shore temple), we may consider that the early

Eighth century A.D. brought the priestly class and the *Sthapatis* on the threshold of the *Āgama* period when temple ritual was systematised and regulated on an even keel, with ostensible this-worldly and other-worldly gains for the adherants.) Let us now approach the cult practices from the angle of the iconography of the temples.

(Rajasimha's inscriptions leave us in no doubt that he was a staunch devotee of Śiva and the versatility of executions of Śivaite iconography as in the temples of Kāñchi of this period,) for the first time is quite phenomenal. Amidst these we have *Samhara* forms, *nṛtta* forms, *anugraha* forms, and indeed more fundamental symbolic forms also. Of these latter, we have two instances, one at Kailāsanātha itself and the other at Airāvatēśvara. As, I believe, the latter is chronologically anterior, if slightly, to the former, we may take that first. The representation of Śiva in *liṅga* form here in the panel on the northern wall of the *mukhamanḍapa* is significant in more than one respect. Firstly it is the first sculptural representation of Viṣṇu offering worship to *liṅga* form of Śiva. The sculptor has taken care to depict even the flowers offered by the worshipper. Viṣṇu has been shown with 8 hands and a *kīrīṭa-makuta*, one of the hands holding a flower and the other holding a plucked-out eye, in the process of being offered to the *liṅga* in front of Him. We may note, however, that none of the typical *ayudhas* of Viṣṇu like *chakra* and *śankha* has been depicted on his person. In this respect, though not in depicting Viṣṇu as plucking out (*padmapuṣpam samabhyarchya Hariṇā nētrapūjitam*) an eye of his to worship Śiva, it is dissimilar to the figure from Kailāsanātha which seems to follow the *Uttarakaranagama* type of *Viṣṇu Anugrahamurti* or *Cakradānamurti* almost completely. Viṣṇu is said, according to this legend, which is also alluded to in *Mahābhārata*, to have got his *chakra* from Śiva. The *liṅga* of Airāvatēśvara *Viṣṇu Anugraha* panel is very elaborately erected in three tiers, the lowest badly worn-out being borne by rearing lions forming the cantoning pilasters of the *pīṭha*. The next tier or *tala* is a cubical *bhadra pīṭha* with central and end pilasters and a *prastara* comprising *kapōta* and *vēdika*, over which is raised the actual *liṅga* form in the nature of a pillar with a *padmabandha* in the middle with *ūrdhva* and



Fig. 1. Location of Nāla, Piravātanēśvara Temple, Kāñchipuram



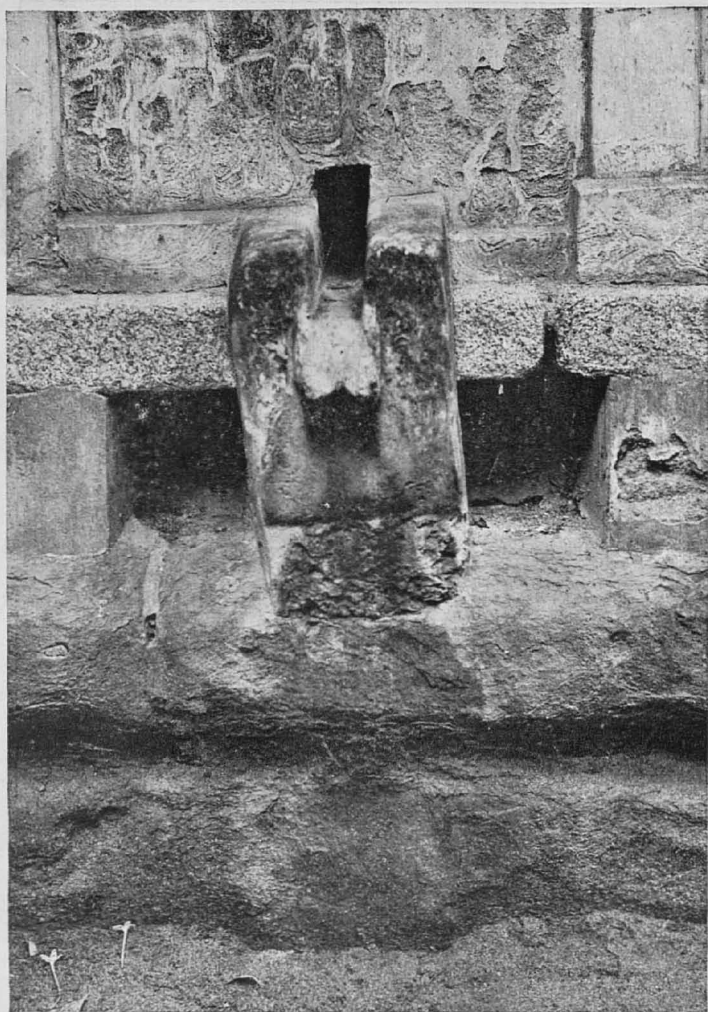


Fig. 2. Location of Nāla, Iravātanēśvara Temple, Kāñchipuram



Fig. 3. Viṣṇu Anugrahamūrti panel in the Ardhamañḍapa,  
Airāvateśvara Temple, Kāñchipuram.





Fig. 4. Location of Nāla, Airavatesvara Temple Wall, Kāñchipuram.

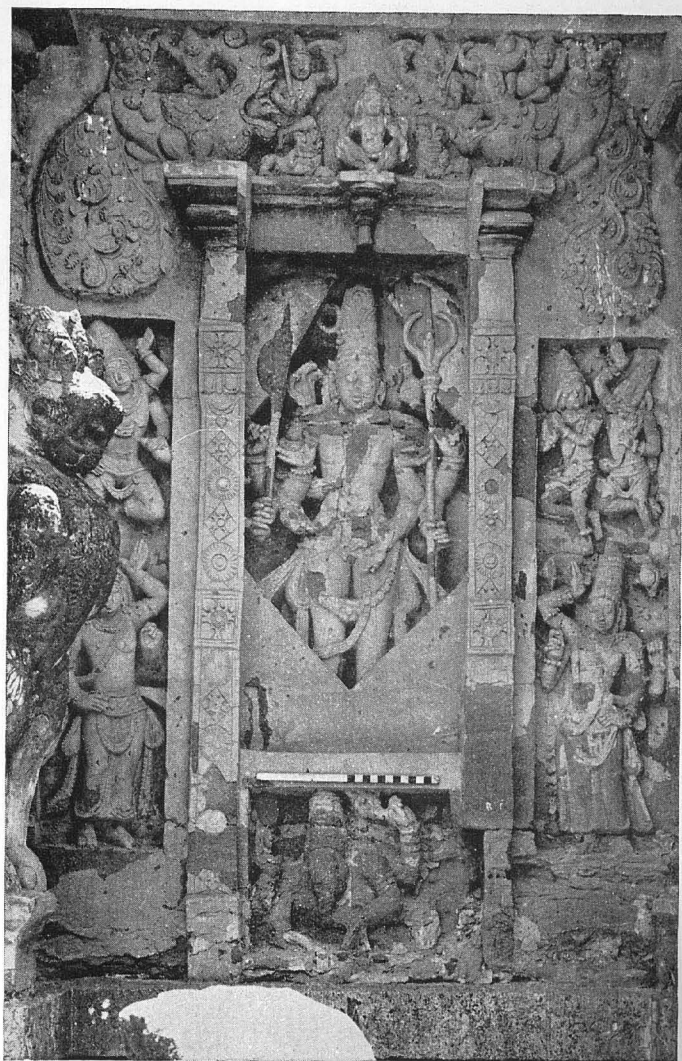


Fig. 5. Lingodbhava Panel, Kailāsanātha Temple, Kāñchipuram



Fig. 6. Improvisation of the Nāla and Abhiṣeka Water Collection,  
Kailāsanātha Temple Wall, Kāñchipuram



Fig. 7. Liṅga-Dhara Śiva in the Kailāsa Panel, Mukteśvara Temple, Kāñchipuram

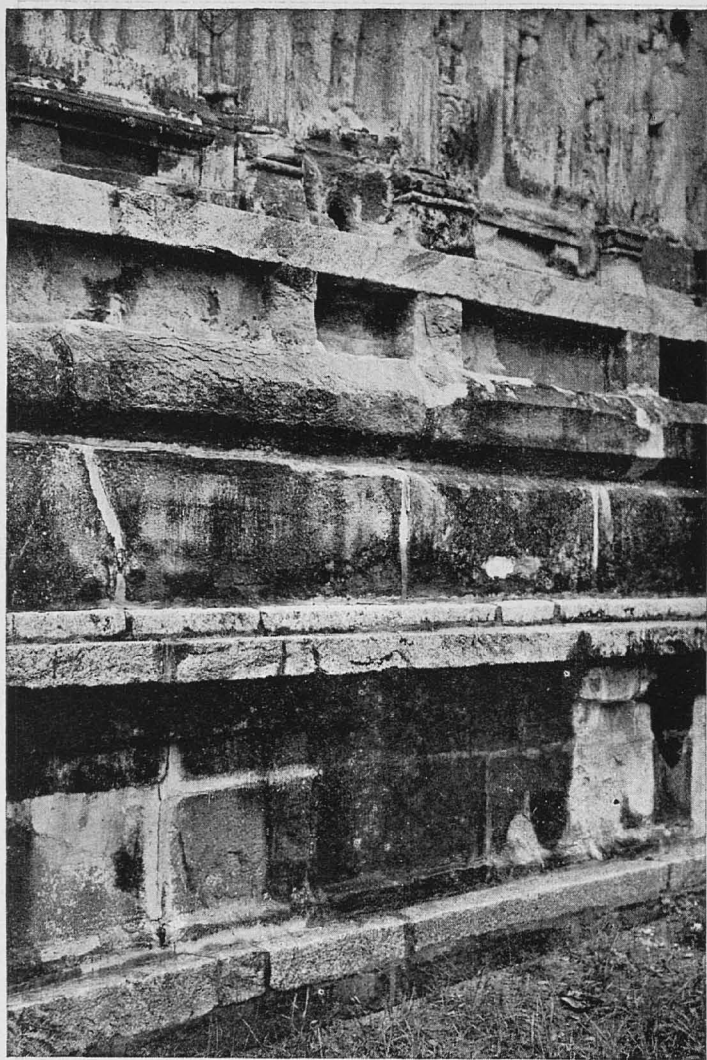


Fig. 8. Location of Nāla opening, Mukteśvara Temple Wall,  
Kāñchipuram



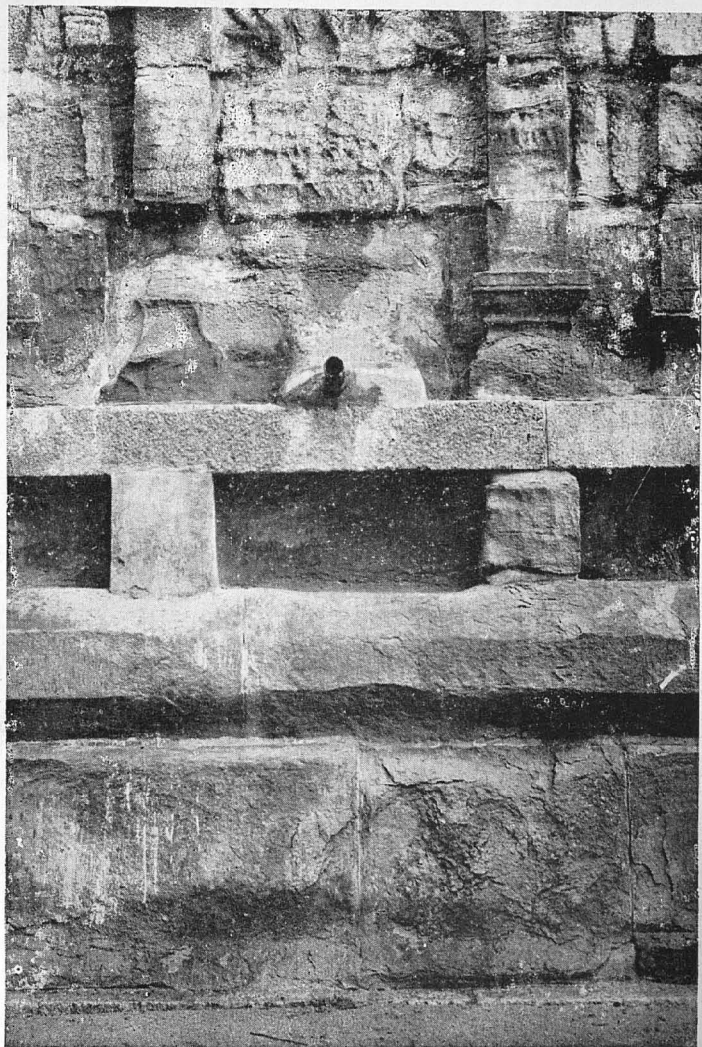


Fig. 9. Location of Nāla, Mātangēśvara Temple Wall,  
Kāñchipuram

*adhōmukha* lotus petals, and the zone immediately above this showing a series of circular medallions in a panel. The topmost part has the curvature of the crest of a *līṅga*, upon which flower petals of *adhōmukha* type are shown, apparently the offerings. This is the most satisfactory representation of a *līṅga* (as a pillar, incidentally) and as if to show that this symbol is the same as Śiva, the god is shown with Pārvati on the top. We may presume from this representation that *līṅga* form as a symbol of Śiva had already been known to the Pallava society. The other figure at Kailāsanātha is that of the Līṅgodbhavamūrti himself. In this the interest, apart from other details, attaches primarily to the upper end of the *līṅga* which has been very smoothly finished off in a curvature. Thus, it is not the representation of Śiva as a pillar of fire without root or terminal, as mentioned in the *Līṅgapurāṇa*, but as *līṅga* which is *sthānu*. We have the third figure of *līṅga* in the Muktaśvara panel where Śiva, seated with Pārvati carries on his left shoulder a replica of a *līṅga* which is a plain cylindrical shaft with curved top and without any *pīṭha* or any workings or faceting on it.

When we have such representations of Śiva in *līṅga* form on the panels of the outer and inner walls of the temples, why could it not have been shown inside the cella itself? This may be a fair query. The reason would apparently be that the Pallava kings, particularly Rājasimha, could not shed off, on the one hand, the Sōmāskanda formula for ritual worship, and, on the other, might not have had the means of procuring a *līṅga* in granite commensurate with the proportions of the temples they were constructing, as mentioned in the *Āgamas* by which the height of the *līṅga* should have a relationship to the width of the cella and the width of the *pīṭha* itself—both being taken as of equal dimensions.<sup>6</sup> It is just feasible that quarrying

6. For instance, in the case of the *Sarvasamālīṅga*, out of which a *dhara līṅga* should be made, the height of the *līṅga* should be 5/16 of the width of the cella, as mentioned in the *Uttarakamihagama*; again a *Drāviḍa līṅga* should have a maximum height of 13/21 of the width of the cella, while a *Vesara* similarly should be 16/25 of the width of the cella and thus in the case of *nagara līṅga* should be 6/10 of the width of the cella as in *Mayamata*. *Dharalīṅgas* could have 5 to 28 facets as per *Suprabhēda*, while only 16 are stipulated in *Karanagama*.

sandstone was different from quarrying granite for a sizeable *līṅga*. Indeed even a monolithic carving of *līṅga* as in the Pāṇḍyan examples is not so difficult as quarrying a separate block for *līṅga*. Aside of this, it would seem that whereas in the representation of the *līṅga* in Airāvateśvara, we have a square *pīṭha* for it, we do not have square *pīṭhas* but only round *pīṭhas* in many of the extant cases at Kāñchi (which thus were later insertions). Thus, the very question whether the *pīṭha* and the *līṅga* were themselves coeval would bear serious scrutiny and perhaps at least in early cases would elicit a negative reply. We are thus led to postulate 3 stages in the ritual worship of the main deity in the cella in Kāñchi temples and of coeval temples elsewhere in the Pallava period ; firstly, when only the Sōmāskanda panel existed as the object of worship in the sanctum ; subsequently when there was a *līṅga* alone erected perhaps without even a *bhadrāpīṭha*. This must have been in the late Rājasimha period and later Pallava Nandivarman phase ; and later, when the *pīṭha* by then usually circular was added to it, either by slipping it into the *līṅga* or by assembling the 'yōnīpīṭha' in parts around the *līṅga*. This should have happened only in the post-Pallava stage coinciding with the early Chōḷa or transitional phases when Śivaite worship definitely got well consolidated and dominated the priestly classes of Hindu society.

The use of regular *praṇāla*, as we see then, came into ritual use by about the end of the eighth century A.D. We may thus take this period (with a margin of 25 years both ways) as the time when regular *līṅga* and a *pīṭha*, usually circular by that time, well proportionate to each other according to the *Āgamas*, came into worship. Where did it first come into use, inside the Pallava dominion or outside? We do not seem to have a ready answer to it now, but if the surface indications in the cella, the nature of the *līṅga* itself with carvings on it, and the historic background of Paraśurāmēśvara temple at Gudimallam is any guide, we may perhaps see in it the immediate precursor to the regular *līṅga* usage in the sanctum, though in a therio-anthropomorphic form, and since Gudimallam *līṅga* cannot itself be of a date later than the 700 A.D., we may see the intrusion of *līṅga* worship in the sanctum of Tamiḷnāḍ temples within half a century therefrom



in favoured places, and this explains the occurrence of these *lingas* even in the cella in the Pāṇḍya caves, none of which can be earlier than about the second quarter of the 8th century A.D. The appellation of *yōni* for the circular sectioned *pītha* with a projecting spout is essentially of an extra-*āgamic* and esoteric significance, and even on literary evidence we do have such a conception of *linga* and *yōni* only from the post-Saṅkara stages. The early Āgama texts do not have any word like *yōni* for the *linga pītha*, and indeed *yōni* was an entirely different and highly technical term which derives the orientation of the *linga* or the main deity of the temple, the determination of which along with five other such factors like *vyāya*, *Āya*, *Ṛksa*, *Tithi* and *Vāra* called *Āyadi Śaḍvargas*, involves arithmetical formulae laid down in the Āgamas, in the *Āyadilakṣaṇa* section.

Before we close, we may indicate that the occurrence of Śiva himself carrying the *linga* on his shoulders, which we referred to earlier, as found depicted in one of the panels of Mukteśvara *mukhamanḍapa*, and which finds preferred and recurrent usage in the Chāḷukya-Rashtrakūṭa zone as at Aiholi, (c. 600 A.D.), Pattadakkal (c. 675 A.D.) and Ellora Kailāsa cave (c. 750 A.D.), is in itself a trend indicating the diffusion of the *linga* cult-worship (a thing apart from *linga* concept which could be much earlier, even in Tamilnāḍ). The occurrence of exactly similar Śiva with *linga* on shoulders at Kodumbāḷūr (c. 850 A.D.), in Mūvar koil on the upper *tala*, would only show that Kodumbāḷūr temples themselves would bear a close further study.

As regards the temples of Vishnuite persuasion like the Vaikunṭhaperumāḷ temple, built during the time of Nandivarman Pallavamalla (c. 750 A.D.), we find that even here the arrangement for the take-off of the *abhiṣēka* water from the cella is most artificial and unplanned, indicating the lack of any regular *praṇāla*. Of course, Viṣṇu worship in early times had not called for *abhiṣēka*, as insistently as in *linga* worship. Even so the trend is significant. The fact that no regular *praṇālas* were fixed in most cases shows that these were improvisations, and where *praṇālas* were actually found, it is obvious that they follow the injunctions of the Āgamas, and thus might not be earlier than the ninth century A.D., which was much later to

the erection of the temples themselves. The north Indian and Deccani practice was somewhat different, and *lingas* were fixed in temples fairly early, but here the introduction of the *pītha* was not coeval and generally only a low *pīṇḍika* on the floor around the *linga* served this purpose, except in the early Chālukyan cave temples (as at Bādāmi and Aiholi).<sup>7</sup>

The fact that, despite the references to Pāsūpatās etc., in his *Mattavilāsaprahasana*, Mahēndra Pallava did not enshrine any regular *linga* in his rock-cut temples dedicated to the Trinity, or individually to Śiva, is reflective of the incipient stage of cult worship then, nor is any evidence forthcoming of any such *linga* erection in the time of Māmalla. (Rājasimha's large-sized temples show Sōmāskanda panel in the cella in which according to religious canons, normally only *one* exclusive object of worship is to be installed. The main Āgama period (from the early ninth century A.D.) perhaps called for the introduction of *lingas* themselves in the sanctum and the *linga-pīthas* followed suit in due course. The early Āgama period when we had *Vaikhanasāgama*, *Kamikāgama*, *Mayamata* etc., perhaps formed the vanguard of the well-systematised mode of daily worship of the deity in a duly consecrated manner.) The earlier texts which gave the necessary direction to the earlier temples, say, from the second century A.D. mainly comprised the *Purāṇas*, *Saṃhitas* etc., of which *Viṣṇudharmōttara* (c. 6th-7th century A.D.), *Brhatsaṃhita* (c. 5th-6th century A.D.), *Agnipurāṇa* (c. 10th century A.D.) to sixth century A.D. with its predecessor, the *Hayaśirṣa-pañcharātra* text which it closely follows, are the most outstanding, and these were followed up by the Āgamas in the South and in the Deccan, and by the end of the ninth century A.D. there was a considerable degree of consolidation and uniformity in the different regions on the basic norms of image worship in temples.\*

7. Here we have monolithic *linga* as well as detachable *linga* on a *pītha*, usually of square section. The latter mentioned specimens could not be later than the early seventh century A.D., while the former could be of mid-late seventh century A.D. In both cases, we have circular, scooped-out depressions on the floor by the side of the *linga pītha*, usually to the left of the *pītha*, for collection of washed-out water. This practice, as we know, invariably obtains in Muttaraiyar and Pāṇḍyan cave temples.

\* The text illustrations follow the order of the temples listed in Appendix I.

## APPENDIX I

*Conspectus of the Pallava structural shrines  
at Māmallapuram Kāñchi and Panamalai.*

### 1. SHORE TEMPLES (KṢATRIYASIMHĒŚVARAM AND RĀJASIMHĒŚVARAM :

These are *chatustala* and *tritāla vimānas* with octagonal *śikhara*, the shrine cell having a *mukhamanḍapa*. Cella has Sōmāskanda panel in niche in both cases, and faceted *dharalīṅga* without *līṅga pītha* in the former ; holes provided for outlet of water at the base of the north wall. The former temple has apart from the Sōmāskanda panel, Brahma and Viṣṇu panels on side walls separately while the latter has Brahma and Viṣṇu in the Sōmāskanda panel itself. Dvārapālakas present.

### 2. MUKUNDANĀYANĀR :

*Dvīṭala vimāna* with cella and *mukhamanḍapa*. Sōmāskanda panel in cella wall. Cylindrical polished *līṅga* in the centre. No regular *praṇāḷa* but only a hole. No lion pilasters. Rock is local granite gneis. Dvārapālakas present.

### 3. PIRAVĀTANA (KĀÑCHI) :

*Dvīṭala vimāna* with octagonal *śikhara*, cella and *mukhamanḍapa*. Sōmāskanda panel with Brahma and Viṣṇu on a raised pediment and within a *manḍapa* relief. No sculptures on the side walls or exterior. Water conduit is scooped over the *paṭṭika* across the wall (Fig. 1). *Līṅga* with large circular *pītha*, larger in diameter than the shrine door. Dvārapālakas present.

### 4. IRAVĀTANA (KĀÑCHI) :

*Dvīṭala vimāna* with square *śikhara*. Cella and *mukhamanḍapa*. Sōmāskanda panel with Brahma - Viṣṇu in the back wall within a *manḍapa* relief. Gajalakshmi on

*lalāṭabimba* in a *makaratōraṇa* *Dvārapālakas*. Sculptures of Gaṇeśa, Dakṣiṇāmūrti, Naṭarāja, Gaṅgādhara, Gaṇeśa, Durga etc., in lower exterior wall. *Pranāla* cut into the *paṭṭika* (Fig. 2). *Līṅga* alone extant in cella on a small raised platform. Water hole in the wall. *Mukhamanḍapa* has Rāvana shaking Kailāsa and Ūrdhvatāṇḍava on side walls.

#### 5. AMARĒŚVARA (TRIPURĀNTAKA):

Sōmāskanda panel over double pediment. *Līṅga* with *pīṭha* too large, and wall scooped partly for the sake of its projecting part. Side walls of *mukhamanḍapa* without sculptures. Gajalakshmi on *lalāṭabimba* within *Makaratōraṇa*. *Varimarga* below *kampa* on the north wall. Outer walls contain Ūrdhvatāṇḍava, Viṣṇu, Varuṇa, Brahma etc. *Dvitala vimāna* with square *śikhara*.

#### 6. AIRĀVATĒŚVARA :

Without superstructure With cella and *mukhamanḍapa*. sculptures as usual on external walls, *mukhamanḍapa* wall having *Viṣṇuanugrahamūrti* (Fig. 3) (Showing a *līṅga* replica of considerable interest) and Ūrdhvatāṇḍava. In the cella Sōmāskanda panel in *mukhamanḍapa* relief with ends of *kapōta* merging with wall corner. In addition to Brahma and Viṣṇu in Sōmāskanda panel, Brahma and Viṣṇu are also shown on north and south walls along with worshippers. Later than the other temples above and nearer to Kailāsanātha. Water hole in the north wall cut into the *paṭṭika* (Fig. 4).

#### 7. KAILĀSANĀTHA :

*Sandaraprāsāda*, Granite stone used at 3 levels. *Vārimarga* over *paṭṭika*. Kubera, Gaṇapati, Varuṇa, Lingōdbhava (Fig. 5), etc. on the walls. *Saptamātrkas*. Sōmāskanda panel of very small size with Brahma and Viṣṇu, on a high pediment in a plain niche panel. No *manḍapa* relief. Faceted *līṅga*; *varimarga* in a circuitous way (Fig. 6). *Pīṭha* of different stone and of 3 pieces assembled together. All wall shrines and subshrines in the main temples have Sōmāskanda panel on back wall.

## 8. MUKTĒŚVARA :

Temple over an *upapītha*. Divided into a cella and front *maṇḍapa* in two *ankanas*, whose architectural features would seem to suggest an incipient ternary division of the temple into an *ardhamāṇḍapa* and *mahāmāṇḍapa*. Sōmāskanda panel occupying most part of the wall and on a pediment. Worshippers on the side walls of cella. Brahma and Viṣṇu behind Sōmāskanda in the panel. Cornice of the panel *maṇḍapa* is shown higher than the *utlāra* components on the side walls showing an evolution. The relief is rather shallow. The *mahāmāṇḍapa* left wall panel shows Śiva-Pārvati figure, wherein Śiva carries in the upper left arm a *līṅga* supported on the shoulder (Fig. 7). This feature is very rare, earlier examples being at Aiholi. Pattadakkaḷ and Ellora (Kailāsa) and the later examples being at Kodumbāḷur and Kīlayūr, *Vārimārga* is cut over the *paṭṭika* through the northern wall (Fig. 8). *Dvitala vimāna* with circular *grīva* and *śikhara*. Cylindrical *līṅga* with *pītha*.

## 9. MĀTANGĒŚVARA :

No *upapītha* but only an *adhiṣṭhāna*. The *alingapaṭṭi* or *gala* between *kumuda* and *kampa* is comparatively much taller. Unit of temple cella. and front *maṇḍapa* in two *ankanas* similar to that of No. 8 above. *Tritala vimāna* with circular *grīva* and *śikhara*. Sculptures on walls incomplete and only roughed out or space alone provided in some cases. Their relief is also very weak. *Dvārapālas* on exterior, side panels of cella door, unlike the occupation of these side walls by carved reliefs in Mukteśvara. Cella shows Sōmāskanda panel with boldness and evolution in figure style, in the middle of the wall but on a very low pediment. *Prastāra* of panel pavilion well spelled out, right upto the *saraphalaka* of the first *tala*. The originally extent *saraphalaka* slabs are found in end sections still visible. Above this, the *śikhara* shell is seen rising in residing square tiers, upto *kalāśa* level. 16-faceted *līṅga* with sand-stone *pītha* (later added) with *vārimārga* on proper right is improvised over the *paṭṭika* (Fig. 9).

Skanda absent in the Rāvaṇa-Kailāsa relief in the *maṇḍapa* wall.

#### 10. VĀLĪSVARA TEMPLE :

The entire *vimāna* appears to be later renovation in brick and stucco, though simulating the Pallava style. The stone walled cella shows *līṅga* 16 faceted in upper part, 8 faceted in lower part and 32 faceted on the tip and without *pīṭha* and with a panel relief of Śiva-Pārvati on the back wall similar to the temple of the Pallavas at Tiruvadigai (South Arcot), and in Pudukkōṭṭai cave temples. This temple might belong to the very close of the Pallavas period i.e., c. late eighth century A.D. if not later.

#### 11. PANAMALAI (SOUTH ARCOT DISTRICT) :

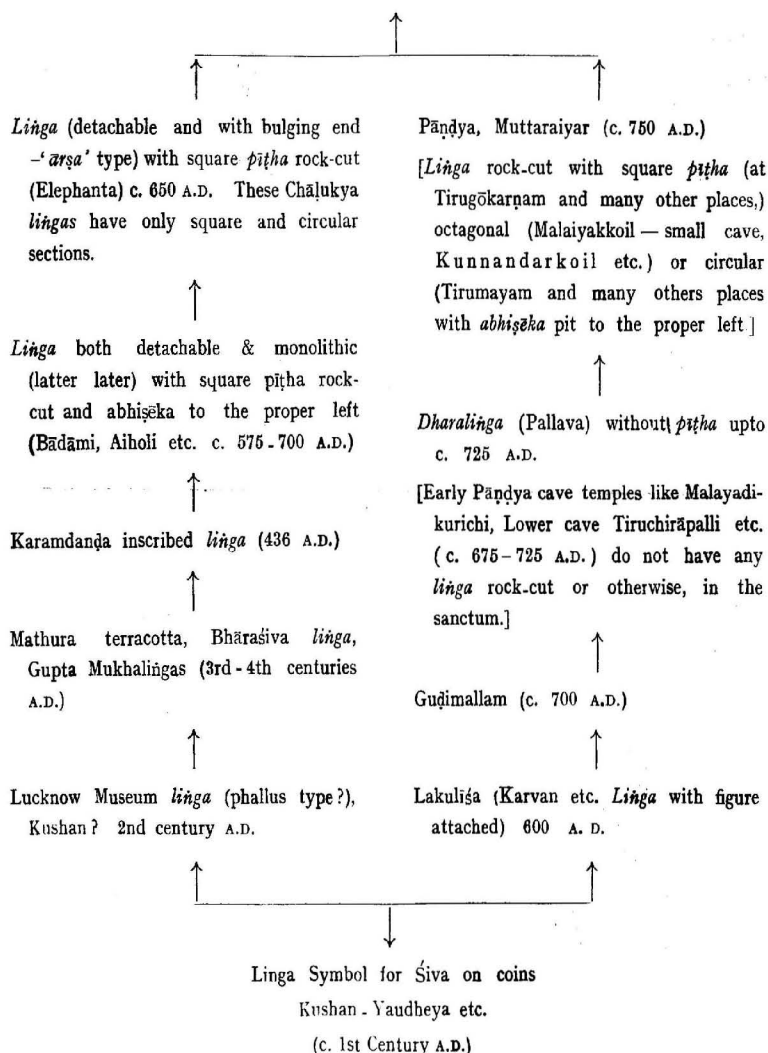
*Tritala* temple with 3 additional side shrines on north, south and west, the former two aligned east and the last towards west. Main shrine shows Sōmāskanda panel on back wall of cella and Brahma and Viṣṇu panel on the transept walls. *Līṅga* with *pīṭha* installed in cella later, Mouldings of the *adhiṣṭhāna* bolder and thicker than anywhere else and similars to that of Shore temple.

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## APPENDIX II

### DISPERSAL OF LINGA FORMS

*Linga* with *pīṭha* always circular in Chōḷa country and invariably square in Pāṇḍyan country, in two pieces upper and lower, or in three pieces with regular *pranāla* (c. 800) onwards. These *lingas* have square, octagonal and circular sections.



(The chart is neither conclusive nor exhaustive, but only indicative and tentative.)

After the lecture, there was a discussion by the participants. The comments of Dr. J. T. Cornelius are given below :

1. The excellent account of Mr. K. V. Soundara Rajan establishes his thesis that the three elements, the Liṅga, the Yōni (*Liṅga Pītha*) and the *Vari Marga* are not well-coordinated in time to be considered as an Āgama sanctioned worship but have added from time to time during the Pallava Period (650-850 A.D)

2. This raises the important question of Liṅga worship in general and its relations to Śiva and Viṣṇu worship in Pallava Temples.

3. There can be no doubt of the Phallic cult in Liṅga Worship. Phallism is defined as the worship of reproduction powers of nature symbolised by the organs of sex and is expressive of the conjugal act.

4. This raises the problem of Liṅga worship which is a phallic cult.

5. In Egypt, the Ithy-phallic cult had its seat at Tanis where Min and Astarte, the moon Goddess, were worshipped with licentious rites. This is of Phoenician origin. This is linked with a fish cult.

6. Pausanios observed that at Ceyllanae (Coelazyria) in Lebanon that the image of Hermes which the people revered most exceedingly was nothing but the erect male organ of generation on a pedestal. The term 'Hermes' means Buffalo, and is identical with 'Erumai' in Tamil (Lahovary : *Dravidian Origins and the West* p. 227,) In Rome, Libera was represented by the female organ of generation, and was the Centre of Bacchanaliam festival of drunkenness and debauchery. Bacchus is identified with Greek God Dionysus.

7. According to Dr. K. K. Pillai, the Gods and Goddesses of Tantric Buddhism became the deities of the Saiva form of Hinduism (*Transactions of Archaeological Society of South India* 1956-1957 p. 30), and he adds that the Buddhist Tārā is identical with Śakti or female energy of Śiva. Now the term Tārā stands for ox or bull and may be derived from



Aramean 'Taura' for bull, according to Lahovary (*Dravidian Origins and the West* p. 227). Lingam, therefore is an emblem of the Bull cult. It is significant that the shore Temple in Mahābalipuram is guarded by bulls, in which Viṣṇu lies asleep on a bed of snakes.

8. From all the above facts the inevitable conclusion is forced on us, that Phallic Cult represented by Lingam is of Vaiṣṇavite origin introduced into the Śaivite religion of the 'Mountain and River' cult of the Agriculturists, and it is for this reason that it finds a place in the Śiva Shrines of the Pallavas.

9. The term 'Pallava' may be split into two components (Pall' = Milk, Avan = Man = Milkman, or Cow-herd) and stands for the cow herd clan (Yadhavas), known as 'Gollas', who trace their descent from Sri Krishna.

10. The Tamil God of Love is 'Kāman' or 'Manmathan', with a fish flag, who may be equated with 'Min' and his wife, 'Rati' (இரதி) = Venus.

Our Antiquarian, Mr. Srinivasa Gopalachari exhibited at our last meeting, 3 pieces of old fish vertebrae which he collected as 'Curios' at Mahābalipuram. Our members will be interested to know that according to D. A. Mackenzie (*Myths of Crete and Pre-Hellanic Europe*-306), spines of fish were laid on the bodies of the dead in Paleolithic times. In Crete necklaces made from the Vertebrae of fish were believed to have a magical significance. It is evident that the sacred pillar, tree, or mountain symbolised the spine of the God', which supported the sky. This belief is of great antiquity and underlies the cults of ancient mediterraneans.

The dolmen worship is a representation of the 'Pillar' cult, and is usually mistaken for 'liṅga' worship.

# KAVERIPATTINAM EXCAVATIONS

S. R. RAO

Under the auspices of the Society, an exhibition of Excavated materials and photographs from Kāveripattinam was organised at the Centenary Exhibition Hall of the Government Museum, by the Archaeological Survey of India, Southern circle. The exhibition was inaugurated on 23—11—1964, by Dr. A. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar, Vice-chancellor, Madras University and a former President of the Society. The exhibition was open to the public from 24—11—'64 to 26—11—'64. The exhibition included enlarged photographs of the excavated structures from Vellaiyan Iruppu, Maṇigrāmam, Vānagiri, Kīlaiyūr, besides a lot of beads. Actual pieces of interest, like bricks, Buddha pāda, brick stone structures, and a Buddha image (bronze), besides terracotta figure, and coins were on the display.

Mr. S. R. Rao, Superintendent, Archaeological Survey of India, Southern Circle Madras, gave a talk on "Excavations" on 25—11—'64. The talk was illustrated with slides. The following is the summary of the above talk.

Kāveripūmpattinam or Pūmpuhār was one of the foremost cities of Tamiḷnāḍ in the early centuries of the Christian era. It was the chief port and great emporium of trade, eulogised by the Tamil Sangam poems and foreign writers like Ptolemy. Different faiths like Saivism, Vaishnavism and Buddhism were popular here. According to the Tamil epic *Maṇimekhalai*, the city was submerged by the sea.

Exploration in the vicinity of this city by the Archaeological Survey of India in 1962 brought to light a number of ancient habitation sites near the coast and the interior suburbs which date back to the early centuries of the Christian Era.

Square copper coins with the royal crest of the Chōḷas viz, tiger were found. Roman pottery and a Roman coin were found, corroborating the literary reference to the presence of the Romans (Yavanas) at Kāveripūmpattinam.

Excavations done at selected sites during the years 1963 and 1964 have resulted in the discovery of three remarkable buildings viz. the Wharf, the Water-reservoir, the Buddhist Monastery.

The wharf was an I-shaped building with massive wooden poles which provided anchorage for the boats at the time of loading and unloading the cargo. The ancient reservoir found at Vānagiri is a testimony for the irrigational activities for which the early Chōḷa monarchs were famous. The discovery of the Buddha-Vihāra with a metal image of Buddha in the *Dhyāna* pose and a Buddha-Pāda in lime-stone slab are of outstanding significance.

These structures and the innumerable antiquities unearthed like coins, beautiful terracotta images, beads of semi-precious stones, decorated ceramic wares etc. now on display, throw valuable light on the manysided greatness of Kāvēripaṭṭinam.

### BUDDHA—VIHĀRA

This building-complex represents a wing of a Buddhist monastery found at Pallavanēs'varam. It consisted of a series of seven square cells or rooms where the Buddhist monks resided. The longitudinal walls were 1.70 metres thick while the transverse ones were 0.90 metres. A beautiful metal image of the Buddha in the *Dhyāna* pose was found in one of the rooms. Closely to the south of the main building, another interesting structure with offsets was partially exposed. It showed use of lime-plaster over the walls. Decorated stucco pieces like the flowerpetal designs etc. were found. With the present evidence the main structure can be roughly dated to the fourth or fifth century A.D. though evidence of more than one phase of construction was discernible.

Further south, a few more rooms were uncovered. The bricks as well as the walls were considerably smaller in size. Here in one of the rooms was found the exquisite Buddha-pāda in lime-stone lying in a fallen, upside-down position. In another room a beautifully decorated stucco figure and a pedestal were found. A number of fallen stucco fragments, some with paintings were collected. An interesting variety of moulded bricks, bevelled, fluted, rounded etc. which probably represent the pillar-corbels etc. were recovered. These were apparently of a later date.

The literary references to Kāveripūmpaṭṭinam as a great Buddhist centre now stand well-corroborated by the discovery of this monastery.

### WHARF

This I-shaped massive brick-structure discovered near the coast represents a wharf projecting into the backwaters. Bricks of abnormal size ( $60 \times 40 \times 12$  cms.) have been used for the construction. A number of wooden poles planted in the structure afforded anchorage for the small boats at the time of loading and unloading the cargo. The existence of such brick jetties in the backwaters of Kāveripūmpaṭṭinam is mentioned in the Śaṅgam poem *Paṭṭinapalai*:

### WATER-RESERVOIR

This is an ancient water-reservoir unearthed at Vānagiri, about a mile to the South of the River Kāveri. It shows a beautifully constructed and paved in-let channel flanked by semi-circular walls built into the earthen embankment of a tank which was evidently fed by a channel from the Kāveri. This is a fine example of irrigational construction of the first or second century A.D.

### BEADS

Hundreds of beads with interesting variety of shapes were found on the beach-site at Vānagiri and also at Maṇigrāmam. Made of semi-precious stones like quartz, crystal, chalcedony, agate, green and red jasper, coral etc., they exhibit considerable dexterity in the bead-making industry.

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# CULTS IN SANGAM CLASSICS\*

M. SHANMUKHAM PILLAI

The *Saṅgam* Classics—the most ancient body of Tamil Literature extant—afford a great deal of evidence on the cults then in vogue in the Tamil country. Some of these references are clear and ample, and some cryptic, revealing in greater or smaller measure, the nature of such beliefs and practices at various levels.

The *Vēdas* and *Upaniṣads* were learnt; Vedic sacrifices performed, the kings, princes and merchants participating and encouraging. The Vedic gods like Indra, Agni and others were worshipped—the first named having a great festival all to himself. *Devas*, *asuras*, *gāndharvas* and many other groups of celestial and non celestial gods and demigods were known to them.

Far higher than these, however, were the great gods Viṣṇu, Subrahmaṇya and Śiva, who were known as Māl, Murugaṇ and Mukkaṇṇan respectively. These are praised directly or indirectly referred to in innumerable places, in songs and poems with much detail as to their form and attributes, and the shrines and holy places dedicated to them. It is clear the those people knew of several *avatars* of Viṣṇu and of many episodes from the *Rāmayaṇa* and the *Mahabharata*.

Śiva and his consort and their son Muruga, occur again and again in the poems, and so do Kṛṣṇa (Kaṇṇan) and Balarāma (Vāliyōṇ) and Brahma too; Viṣṇu and Muruga, however are prime favourites. Several exquisite poems and songs on their 'beauty and their chivalry' are found in the poems. Several of the accounts of all achievements, like the burning of the Three Cities, the killing of Mahiṣa, the splitting of Krauñcha, the rending of Hiranya with tooth and nail are intimately known.

Other creeds like Jainism and Buddhism, monasteries and their priests and nuns are referred to in detail. Those ancient

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\* The above is the summary of the paper read before the Archaeological Society of South India on 30-1-65.

people believed in superhuman beings and objects, in beneficent and malaficent spirits, in dryads and naiads, dwelling or frequenting hills and dales, pools, islets, river mouths and the shores of the sea. These seemed ubiquitous; and dwelt in harps and drums, in doors, door jambs and lintels and in weapons of war, as their presiding deities, ghosts and ghouls and he and she devils of all kinds are referred to; and so are their doings, potent and grin, horrible and hair raising.

Women worshipped the household gods with due ceremony and devotion, had their portraits painted and sculpted on the walls. Such are found elsewhere too and some are fascinatingly beautiful. Grain, food, meat, flowers and toddy are some of the offerings made to gain their favour. The sun, planets and stars, move in a never-ceasing circle around the golden Hill; and were responsible for rain or drought, prosperity or famine. Comets and meteors were portents of evil. Benign stars had festivals in their honour.

Kings reclaimed forests, dug tanks and sought to make the land prosperous. The temple was the focus of the city, and all worshipped the installed gods, decorated them, strewed flowers at their feet, lit lamps, played music, swing censers, offered food, and celebrated their festivals.

Various other festivals were connected with honoured stars with social gatherings, like bull fights, and domestic events, from birth till death, and even after. Wisemen guided them heroes guarded them and both held honoured places in society.

There was thus infinite variety from the great and glorious gods, the celestials and supermen and men of all grades right down to the mean and horrible spirits and goblins. There was however a fundamental unity among them all running like a golden thread, and then people thought of their land as extending as one whole, from Cape Comorin to the Himālayas and even beyond them to the northern ocean.

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After the discussion, in which members present took part, Sri S. T. Srinivasa Gopalachari exhibited his collection of rare books and manuscripts.

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# RAJASIMHA'S TEMPLES IN TONDAIMANDALAM\*

K. V. SOUNDARA RAJAN

## I

The period of Pallava rule starting from Narasimhavarman II Rājasimha had been eventful in many respects. To the students of art and architecture particularly, this fairly sustained and peaceful reign was epoch making in the sense that structural temples in stone were reared up for the first time on an extensive scale and (iconography also did not lag much behind and indeed reflected the state of religious belief of the age to a remarkable degree.) That (Rājasimha was inclined perhaps as a measure of traditional continuity and also the indication of his own calibre to excavate a few rock-cut *maṇḍapas* both religious, as well as secular around Mahābalipuram itself, is seen in the Atiraṇachandaṁaṇḍapam (Fig. 1) and Yalimaṇḍapam (Tiger Cave) at Śāluvankuppam (Fig. 2) immediately north of Mahābalipuram on the coast.) Of these, the former is in the general pattern of the earlier rock-cut *maṇḍapas* and comprised a shrine cell at the back with a projecting front plinth aligned to the two free standing facade pillars beyond its *ardhamāṇḍapa*, with corresponding end pilasters which are deeper on their inner face. The pillars are plain like those of Mahendra's caves, but it is the Sōmāskanda panels—of which there are as many as three—and the central fluted *liṅga* (fixed in the cella later than the cave) that give out the authorship of the cave, not to mention the fact that two inscriptions in the cave about its excavation reveal the title '*atiraṇachanda*' which, as we know, was one of the *birudas* of Rājasimha. (The Sōmāskanda panel in the cella, is accompanied by the figures of Brahma and Viṣṇu by its side. The depiction of Sōmāskanda thrice in the same cave is apparently in vindication of the deep royal attachment to Śiva.)

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\* Paper read before the Archaeological Society of South India on 19-2-65.



on whom the inscriptions in the cave are composed with considerable fervour and literary flavour. The other cave, known as the 'tiger cave' was indeed designed for a temporal purpose and was ostensibly utilised for ceremonial appearances of the king at the sea port and for such other royal occasions. Recent scrutiny of the set-up of the monument seems to reveal that this cave *maṇḍapa* possesses some acoustical proprieties for which the rolled forward tiger heads ringing the cave front, the appreciable height of the actual rock-cut chamber, and the relatively low level of the stretch of sandy area in front with a small conical boulder outcrop in the centre, would seem to have contributed much. Whether it is by accident or design is not, however, so obvious, but Rājasimha is pointedly eulogised for his musical talents in his inscriptions at Atirapaṇḍa cave by the composer *Kalakala*, a title incidentally sported by the king himself, who, it would seem, was over-fond of assuming or receiving titles and had a plethoric multitude of such, giving to his otherwise deservedly celebrated personality, certain hyperbolic dimensions.

These two cave excavations constitute a fitting epilogue to the rock-architectural phase that was unceremoniously departing, ushering us into a more rational and meaningful era of the structural vogue in the Pallava domain, under the direct patronage of Rājasimha himself. The importance of this new development need not be overemphasised. In the monoliths of Māmalla's and Paramēśvaravarman's time, there was no knowing (1) as to how real concepts of solids and voids were actually tackled by Pallava craftsmen in practice, and what, if any, were the adjustments that were inevitably to be introduced into the structural assemblage; and (2) how the actual aspects and what were the architectural dimensions that spelled out the storeyed composition, so characteristic of the style the Pallava kings were fostering.

## II

The temple activity of Rājasimha could be conveniently divided into three major groups for facilitating a better perception of the organic growth implicit in the process. The first group would comprise Mukundaṇāyanar of Māmallapuram (Fig. 3) and

Piravātanēśvara (Fig. 4), Airāvātēśvara (Fig. 5) and Kailasanātha (Fig. 6) at Kāñchi. The next will be Iravātana (Fig. 7) and Tripurāntaka (Fig. 8) and Vāliśvara. The third will be Panamalai (Fig. 9), Shore temple (Fig. 10), Olakkannēśvara (Fig. 11). It may be stated here that by shore temple, although the twin temples at the sea shore with a rock-cut Ranganātha sandwiched in between is implied, the inherent understanding would be that the 'Rājasimhēśvara' (Fig. 12) would be relatively, earlier than the bigger 'Kshatriasimhēśvaram' facing the sea: The first of the above groups differs from the others not so much in general size alone but in the composition of the plinth and the proportion of the body and superstructure. It had invariably a bold *upāna*, a vertical *jagati*, followed by a *tripaṭṭa kumuda*, *kaṇṭha*, and *paṭṭika*, capped by a *prati*. The *kaṇṭha* in Airāvātēśvara at least has the elephant frieze in relief, continuance of the free-standing monolith tradition of Māmalla and Paramēśvara. It has the body or *pada* of the shrine starting almost over the *prati* and it would seem generally to rise not more than two storeys or *talas* in height. It is necessary to find out first why, if at all Rājasimha did not try his hand in monolithic shrines at Māmallapuram, whereas he did excavate two cave monuments as at Sāḷuvankuppam. If a mere hangover of the traditional medium of temple creation was the avowed reason for this, then it would require some explaining as to how rock-cut excavations were re-started by Rājasimha notwithstanding the fact that already by the time of Māmalla and Paramēśvaravarman the rock-cut medium had been given up and monolithic medium started, as in the *Rathas*. If still, Rājasimha wanted to display his skill as an equal adept in rock-cut art, it would be unreasonable to conclude that he did so only in the *maṇḍapa* type of excavations and not the free-standing type. The negative reason that he might not have had the proper rock to create a monolith would be admissible, even for consideration only after the extant monoliths have been carefully examined in this light. As he did create the rock-cut *maṇḍapas* we may have to see if, after all, he might have been the author of any of the free standing *ratha* type as well. In this, the most likely criterion could be any evolutionary element or *aṅga* of the *vimāna* which by its very nature is past the earlier Māmalla stage. Of course, it would

be feasible to argue that there would be no knowing if any such evolved *aṅga* or feature was the innovation of the earlier period of Paramēśvaravarman himself or of Rājasimha. In other words, we may have to see if there is any unity of concept and composition in the monolithic creations of the time of Narasimha I and Paramēśvara I, and if correspondingly there is any unity feasible to be established between any of the free-standing *ratha* types and the subsequent structural creations of Rājasimha.

### III

A significant aspect to be aware of in this connection is that almost all the monolithic *rathas* are not greater than 3 *talas* in stature. Dharmaraja *ratha* is the biggest unit of the group, the rest being almost invariably 2 *talas* or one *tala* in height, whether square, rectangular or apsidal in plan. In the case of Dharmaraja *ratha*, we find that the lower storeys were most probably completed during the time of Paramēśvara I who succeeded Māmalla who started this *ratha*. Thus, the elevational composition of this *ratha* has already been pre-determined by Māmalla, and Paramēśvara at best only was responsible for the arrangement of the superstructures working downwards and the front porch *maṇḍapa* integral with the ground floor main *vimāna*. In this he has shown certain method of perspectives; and the telescoping of the *śala* and *kūṭa* into single *kūṭa-śala* piece, 'L' shaped, at the angle of the front porch roof of the first *tala* of main *vimāna* is one such which is quite faithfully reproduced in the lesser of the two Shore temples, namely, Rājasimhēśvaram, at the same part of the *vimāna*. It would show that there was perhaps a degree of continuity between what Paramēśvara I achieved on the monolith and what Rājasimha displayed on a structural medium.

The style of elevational composition of the two Shore temples, however, are fairly alike, and this is apparently attributable to Rājasimhēśvara having come first and later when the king was planning Kshatriasimhēśvaram, he wanted to harmonise the profiles as much as possible to avoid incongruity in a pair which are so close to each other. Indeed the very conception of the twin shrines which are back to back with each other and have the same god, it itself as unconventional

as it was unique, and the fact that both have their *stūpi* intact and in separate type of stone show that they had been duly consecrated as temples. The smaller of the two has an additional special feature, namely, the placement of the *nandi*, north-south on the roof of the *ardhamandapa* behind the *hāras*. Probably this was not installed on the larger temple, since the corners of the last tall of these temples, particularly the smaller, have conch-blowing *gaṇas*. It depicts a stage when *nandi* had been definitely known

Of Rājasiṃha's own shrines, Mukundanāyanar at Māmallapuram, and Iravātana, Piravātana, Airāvata and Kailāsanātha do not show on the plinth the *padma*, and have on the other hand the earlier form of vertical plain *jagati* between the *upāna* and the *kumuda*, while the Shore temples, Panamalai and Olakkannēśvara shrine alone show the *padma* instead of plain *jagati*. It is, of course, liable to be argued that Rājasiṃha merely diversified the plinth type at one and the same time and no stratification need strictly be employed in studying them. In addition to the above feature, the topmost moulding of the *adhiṣṭhana*, namely, the *paṭṭika* shows a like evolution among his temples in structural medium, one group, perhaps earlier, showing a lineal affiliation with what has gone before on the monolithic medium, and the other provided with an additional *kaṇṭha* pedestal for the operating of *vyālas* of the walls, in feeble or in bold fashion. A postulation, empirically speaking, of organic developments of the structural fabric is admissible in this.

#### IV

An important compositional feature of the free-standing monoliths of Māmallapuram is that almost all of the series invariably show the *hāra* of *karnakūtas* and *bhadra śālas* in each of the *talas*, including the topmost. The significant modification of this rule is the ending of the last *tala* of the *vimāna* with a *kapōta* and *prastara* above, but without the *kṣudra alpa śikhara* above them in their respective places along the periphery of that *tala*. This latter becomes the norm in all the structural temples of post-Māmalla period which further show a secondary variation by replacing the *hāra* of

miniature *śikharas* by the *nandis* placed in the corner. Early Āgamas, like the *Vaikhānasa*, *Mayamata* and *Īśānaśivagurudēva Paddhati*, speak of the *Vāhanas* like *Garuḍa* or *nandi* being placed on the topmost *tala* below the *grīva*. *Vaikhānasa* also speaks of the *kūṭa-kōṣṭhas* on the first *tala* itself. Some of Rājasimha's temples have lion on the corners of the first *tala* top, but not on the topmost *tala*. This lion was apparently the symbol of Rājasimha Pallava and not of ritual significance. It would thus signify the advent of ritual usages in the shrine, in howsoever semi-systematised manner. The point to be noted would indeed be that the arrangement of the miniature *śikharas* over the *prastara* of each *tala* including topmost *tala* is to be construed as the temporal developmental stage of architecture in the early Pallava period irrespective of whether this is seen in a monolithic *ratha* type or a regular structural type.

The monolithic *rathas* are after all petrified specimens of the extant temple mode and would be homonymous with structural examples, perhaps of perishable materials, equally prevalent in that age. Indeed structural counterparts to the '*rathas*' of Māmallapuram had already been developed else-where in the Chālukyan country as at Mahākūṭśēvar and Bādāmi which not only show the *hara* of *kūṭas* and *śālas* upto the topmost *tala* but even show an additional four *kūṭa vimānas* attached to the diagonal facets of the *grīva* and rising upto the lower edge of the *śikhara* itself. Their age is attributable to the first quarter of the 7th if not slightly earlier still, and they had apparently been the earliest structural (or other) examples of a Dravida *vimāna* known in South India. A succeeding and variant stage seems to have these top *alpā vimānas* and *haras* of *śāla* and *kūṭa śikharas* absent in all the *talas* except the lowest, as exemplified by Upper Śivālaya at Bādāmi and Śāgamēśvar at Paṭṭadakkaḷ. (It is from these early efforts that undoubtedly the norms of standing temple styles in the Pallava country had been evolved, probably from the Māmalla stage onwards, leading to entirely structural temples found for the first time during Rājasimha's reign.

It is here that we find a piece of evidence namely that of Piḍāri *ratha* (north) (Fig. 13), which is a *samachaturaśra dvitala vimāna*, with a *mukhamanḍapa* (or *ardhamanḍapa*) and which but for its *chaturaśra* instead of *aṣṭaśra śikhara* is an almost exact

prototype of the Mukundanāyanār structural temple at the same place. Would it go to show that perhaps Rājasimha, apart from the two cave temple types at Śāḷuvankuppam, might have attempted a monolith as well as in the Piḍāri (north),\* but could not complete it and gave up the rock-cut (whether of the excavated or free-standing) shrines, as too time-consuming, and inhibitive apace value within the shrine, and intiated the structural phase? This, if admissible, would indeed explain rationally what Rājasimha did. He had excavated the caves at Śāḷuvankuppam where rock suitable only to caves were available. The Śāḷuvankuppam caves contribute only (1) the multiple Sōmās-kanda panels on the one hand, as if confirming that this was the most indubitable object, of worship, and (2) the secular '*ranga śāla*' or stage-like *maṇḍapa*, in the form of the Tiger Cave.

The continuity of the shrine composition without a *hāra* of *kūṭas* and *śālas* on the top *tala*, and without any bull either on these, is to be seen in the Piravātana temple of Kāñchi, which is a *dvitala vimāna* like the Piḍāri *ratha* and has almost the same type of lay-out and size. It is unfortunate that we do not know the exact nature of the top *tala* of Mukundanāyanār since the conservation measures adopted, after old features were lost, have tended to give an unsatisfactory *ākara* to its elevation. It should be noted that these are very small structural compositions suggesting the incipient stage. These would indeed have to be deemed as the earliest of the Rājasimha structural shrines but perhaps succeeding the Mukundanāyanār temple at Māmallapuram, which has a *hāra* at the lowest *tala*, unlike other Rājasimha shrines. These were apparently the organic extensions of the Piḍāri *ratha* (north) on the structural medium. There is no definite evidence to show if Piḍāri *ratha* (north) could have been cut by Rājasimha but the break from the previous models as seen in Māmalla's and Paramēśvaravarman's Ganēśa

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\* The Piḍāri *ratha* (south) (Fig. 14), which is a *Drāviḍa Vimāna* with octagonal *grīva* and *śikhara* and with *hāra* on the top *tala* as well is clearly earlier perhaps of the time of Paramēśvara and was succeeded by Vaḷayāṅkuṭṭai *ratha* (Fig. 15), which though showing a change in its square *grīva* and *śikhara*, for the first time, still continues to have the *hāra* on the top *tala*. These two thus stylistically antedate Rājasimha's time.

*ratha* and Ādivarāha temple facade<sup>1</sup>, would seem to show that the lack of the *hara* on the top *tala* in Piḍāri *ratha* (north) would tend to place it indubitably in the *transitional* period. The next finite development, as could be seen further below, was the dropping of the *hara* in almost all Rājasimha temples around the lowest *tala* as well, except on the *mukhamandapa* roof.

## V

(An interesting sequel to the ritual development of temple worship was the emergence of the Lingodbhava cult, on the iconographic side, by the same time. No doubt Rājasimha, conceivably in self-adulation, continues the Narasimha panel even in Kailāsanātha shrine, but the proliferation of Sivaite sculptures, particularly the main Śivatāṇḍava forms, Chakradāna and Lingodbhava in them would show the precedence that Sivaite worship took, perhaps, as a mark of royal preference.) It is equally educative to note that the Lingodbhava panel is shown on the *south* wall of Kailāsanātha and not on the (western) back side of the shrine as is generally obtaining in the slightly later more systematised Āgamic context.<sup>2</sup> It is just possible, further, that the larger of the Shore temples was under construction when the *prākara* shrines of Kailāsanātha were being completed in the last years, since both of them show Gaṇeśa figure which does not make its appearance at all till the time of Rājasimha in any of the Pallava rock-cut composition, whether of Paramēśvara, Māmalla or Mahendra in Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam. This Gaṇeśa figure occurs, apart from the Shore temples, in Piravātana, Iravātana and Kailāsanātha temples of Rājasimha on the super structure in the former two and on the body in the latter two. The Gaṇeśa figure is a signature-icon of the Chālukyas and it required some

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1. If the portrait sculptures in this cave represent Simhaviṣṇu and Mahendra—as is most feasible—then we may take it that the facade of this cave alone had been completed last. We note further that Paramēśvaravarman I was an ardent devotee of Śiva while Māmalla did not have any specific bias of this kind. In that case, this cave would have been the work in Māmalla's time.
  2. Even the Pāṇḍyan rock-cut shrines as at Tirumeyyam and Kunnakkuḍi show Lingodbhava in such a way that they follow a systematised Āgama mandate.

lapse of time perhaps after Māmalla when the first impact of the political rivalry would have ceased and more gainful art-dispersal would have been taking place. Since *Gaṇeśa* and *Kubēra* are found in ritual form on the *prākāra* shrine-complex of Kailāsanātha at Kāñchi, in addition to the presence of *Saptamātrkas*, it would be quite legitimate to infer that these were cultural elements for which the Pallavas might have been obliged to the traditions of the Chālukyan (Western as well as Eastern) country.

The way the *prākāra* outline of the larger Shore temple is harmonised with a front *dvāra* on the sea side, in alignment with the the larger temple facing east, shows that the *prākāra* itself is index of the development of the temple-complex. That this *prākāra* does not cover the lesser Shore temple facing west reinforces the argument that the latter is relatively earlier than the *prākāra* and, indeed, than the larger temple too. The two Shore temples are, in fact, not even aligned, the smaller shrine being more to the north of the east-west axis of the larger shrine, the superstructure of the sandwiched Raṅganātha maṇḍapa having been properly aligned with the larger Shore temple and thus suggesting its elaboration as a shrine at the stage of the erection of the larger shore temple.

The most significant part of the shore temple complex is the rock-cut Viṣṇu figure in reclining posture that is found between the two temples, erected here by Rājasiṃha. This rock cut figure has so much dislocated the lay-out of the two structural shrines on either side of it that it would be only appropriate to take it as having existed already. On the one hand, we do most clearly observe the phenomenon of the smaller Shore temple (facing west) having been reared for its plinth partly on the rock containing the Viṣṇu figure, vouching for the Viṣṇu carving having already been there when the structural temple was reared over the rock mass at the back, and on the other, the east-facing larger Shore temple has it-self been completed in such a way that this Viṣṇu figure comes within its back *prākāra* and is actually provided with a decent cella and *mukhamāṇḍapa*, both rectangular with the inscriptional label "narapatisiṃha Pallava Viṣṇu gṛham"



bestowed on it by Rājasimha. If the Viṣṇu figure was the handiwork of Rājasimha, the question arises as to why he selected such an inconvenient place for the carving, which makes the lay-out of his own structural temples look so improvised in both alignment and propinquity. The fact the smaller Shore temple was erected relatively earlier to the larger would not very much affect this argument. The nature of the Viṣṇu sculpture itself bears sufficient evidence to negative its later origin. It is a very unconventional figure of reclining Viṣṇu without *Ananta*, *Bhūdevi* or *Āyudhas*. Its orientation also, is north-south, with head to the south. It is thus more aptly designated as *Nārāyaṇa* (he who has the waters for his abode) rather than *Anantaśāyī*. Any sculptor of Rājasimha who had seen already the sedate figure of *Anantasāyī* in Mahiṣamardini cave would not have carved such an aberrant, unconventional image. Even the plinth mouldings on this rock itself are of the earlier type in relation to the smaller Shore temple near them, and this again reflects its relative anteriority to the Shore temples. It is thus to be taken as having perhaps preceded even Māmalla, or at least pertaining to the earliest part of his reign. The fact that it has already been there prevented Rājasimha, notwithstanding his intense Saiva leanings, to do away with it and it perhaps served his purpose well if he gave this Viṣṇu figure a local habitation, in the *prākāra* of the larger Śiva temple, thus making Viṣṇu subordinate to Śiva. The texts like *Vaiṣṇānasaṅgama* speak of an *Ābhichārika* form of reclining Viṣṇu who is devoid of many of the conventional diagnostic features. The classification was apparently warranted by such aberrant or erratic early specimens of reclining Viṣṇu as the one found at Shore Temple<sup>3</sup>. The hymns that the early Ālvār

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3. It is interesting to note here that *Vaiṣṇānasa* dealing with the four types of seated, standing and reclining forms of Viṣṇu has to state that *Ābhichārika* type of any of these three forms is intended for kings over coming enemies (*Rajitam śatru jayārthica Ābhichārikam*). It further states that the location of this *Ābhichārika* type will be in forest fort, water fort, in another's kingdom, in the enemy's direction etc. (*Vana-giri-jaḷa durgā raṣṭrantarē śatrudikṣu diṣṭmukhē ca ābhichārika sthānam*). As regards the characteristics, the form would be classifiable as the *adhama* class of *Ābhichārika* (*śarpadeham vinā samasthaḷa sayanamadhamam*). Since there was comparative peace in Rājasimha's

Bhūtam sang about the god at Māmallai were perhaps not addressed to this god. This is particularly vindicated by Tirumaṅgai's hymn which alone associates the Śiva shrine and the Viṣṇu shrine here in his imagery, and thus Tirumaṅgai obviously sang it after the Shore temples, as we see them to day, had become accomplished facts. We have thus an interesting evidence for the iconography of an early Nārāyaṇa or Sthalaśayana god (literally reclining on the ground or jalaśayana or resting over water level of the shore) which turns out to have been pre-Rājasimha and perhaps pre-Māmalla as well, since we cannot reconcile this example and the Anantaśāyi panel in the Mahiṣa-mardini (Yamapuri) maṇḍapam as the handiwork of the same king's, namely Māmalla's reign. It might be earlier to the other and perhaps of early Māmalla age. The credit, in any event, for having fostered this vestige for posterity is certainly Rājasimha's, who sandwiched it between his two lofty shrines here.

## VI

Let us now consider what the ground plan of many of these important edifices of Rājasimha have to reveal to us. The earlier smaller group is essentially the reproduction in a free-standing and structural medium of the monoliths except that the front *maṇḍapa* is without free standing pillars. It is only Kailāsanātha and Panamalai temples that are most educative in this regard and, from the earlier pseudo-sandhara type, lead later to the *nirandhara* shrine lay-out<sup>4</sup> with *prakāra*, as in the form of the larger Shore temple at Māmallapuram. Both Kailāsanātha and Panamalai shrines have additional sub-shrines disposed of in the cardinal and diagonal points of the compass, the former containing seven such and the latter three such. Structurally the relatively later stage of Panamalai temple over that of Kailāsanātha is confirmed by the fact that the superstructural

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time, and considerable bad blood was created, on the other hand between Pallavas and Chālukyas during Mahendra's and Māmalla's time, this figure, if the purpose was as mentioned in the texts for such a class, should be pre-Rājasimha.

4. The technique is of the *antara* (inner) and *bāhya* (outer) *bhitti* (wall) to carry the heavy superstructural load, as mentioned in the *Vaiṣṇānasaṅgama*.

mode and the concept of the *śāla śikhara*s with bold, deep *nāsikas*, are almost exact replicas of the *śikara* form of Mahēndra-varmēs'varagr̥ham (Fig. 16) at Kailāsanātha shrine of Kāñchi, pertaining to the time of Mahēndravarmān III the crown prince of Rājasimha who perhaps predeceased his father, by a few years. Thus, they would be ascribable to the very last year of Rājasimha's reign. The disposition of the seven sub-shrines, in addition to the main cella at Kailāsanātha is the structural elaboration of the lay-out plan of Arjunaratha where the *bhadra* and *karna* projections of the *vinyasa sūtra* are well marked out. These instead of having relief sculptures had been converted at Kailāsanātha into regular subordinate shrines. Indeed, the projection of the plinths of these, in an example like Arjunaratha, complete from *adhiṣṭhana* to the *hara* of *kūṭas* and *śālās*, is itself but an abbreviation and schematic presentation of the sub-shrines that each of these projections really stand for. From seven subshrines to three, on the cardinal points alone, except the east, is the next step and this gets ossified subsequently into a simpler shrine lay-out, wherein there is a mere projection of the plinth on the *bhadra* alone, making it a weak, *triratha* plan. The fact, however, that both at Kailāsanātha and Panamalai, the subshrines are also facing either east or west and never north or south, shows that they merely form part of the structural scheme of dimensions of the pseudo-sandhara *vimāna*, having been laid in the wall thickness, and thus not liable to have a different lay-out affecting their length and breadth. This proves their closeness in evolutionary form. A similar interesting analogue between Panamalai temple and the larger Shore temple at Māmallapuram is in the depiction of the *ganās* blowing horns, shown in the corners of the *alīṅgapattī* above the *kapōta* in both, and, indeed, in Olakkannēśvara temple also. This feature is met with in the *Chaumukh* of the Indrasabha rock-cut cave at Ellora, datable to the 8th century A.D. and there perhaps slightly later to Rājasimha's time.

A patently striking feature of the temple is the superstructure which are so unlike any of the other structural shrines of Rājasimha. The heights of the *talas* were conspicuously raised in accentuated relationship to the basal dimensions of each storey on plan, resulting in a very slender and tall elevational profile for

the composition. If we compare Kailāsanātha with the Shore temple, despite the former being *chatustala* and the latter *tritāla vimānas*, the former because of its large *basal width* and relatively *lesser heighted upper talas* is rather subdued in its skyline whereas the latter despite its restricted plan area is rising steeply to considerable height in same three *talas*.

In the matter of inner arrangement of the shrine, it is to be seen that there is considerable similarity between Shore temple (larger) and Panamalai while the Shore temple (smaller) is more akin to temples like Piravātana and Airāvatesvara. Kailāsanātha alone is pseudo-*sandhara*. But as seen already the pseudo-*sandhara* lay-out of Kailāsanātha was born out of a structural necessity in order to provide a wider base wall for the super-structural load and thus it did not show any special trend in this direction. It was followed later by Vaikunṭhaperumal temple at Kāñchi for a grand *tritāla*, tripleshrine complex, at Kailāsanātha, Tiruppattur, again for basal support, both latter in Nandivarman Pallavamalla's time. In all these cases, the *Sandhara* feature is actually *not* intended for a regular inner *pradakṣiṇa* or *Bhramaṇa*, as in the typical *sandhara* shrine in the Deccan and North India, and this non-ritual and functional character is well brought out by the fact that the wall of the *alinda* are not bestowed any mouldings or niches. Thus they are not to be deemed of the *sandhara prasāda* class. It is here that the textual specification<sup>5</sup> that *Nāgara* shrines are generally *sandhara*, finds its substantiation.

An interesting fact about the structural effort of the master masons of Rājasimha is that almost invariably they show an assemblage of coursed masonry, even to represent vertical components like pilasters and pillars. While it is true that this is one of the inevitable reflexes of an artisan steeped in the wood tradition, we are yet not left without any misconception about their glaring incompatibility with heavy stone-quarrying for heavy beams, plinth slabs etc. Where it is only a cantilever principle, as in the case of a *dēvakoṣṭha* with a *kapōta* of its own, well within the main cornice of the lowest *tala*, they are able to place a smaller *kapōta* for the *dēvakoṣṭha* in one piece and let it suffi-

ently into the wall to be pressed by the topload. But where the question of *spanning* comes, the difficulties are more obvious and it was apparently this that forced them to adopt two of the early devices namely the pseudo-*sandhara* lay-out and the side shrines integrated with the wall. Both these have an essentially functional bearing upon the relationship of standing wall and superstructural load, wherein the unit had been relatively medium sized slabs and cut stones assembled in courses. The *sandhara* lay-out, with its *kadalikakarana* method particularly was mainly forced on them, as this feature of an inner circuit is not germane to the *Drāviḍa* styles of temple construction but rather of the *Nāgara*, as profusely employed in the Chālukya-*Nāgara* shrines of the Deccan. The sthapatis of Rājasiṃha soon got rid of it and wanted to show that they could erect fairly tall shrines even without the *sandhara* and subshrine lay-out. It is this which is perhaps reflected in the Shore temple which, for its height, has a rather poor commensurate basal dimensions. It is a tussle between height and basal width in fact, wherein, the grading of the *talas* or *talacchanda* was accentuated by the *hāra* of the ground floor dispensed with, and the *alinda* between the *hāra* and the wall of the next *tala* immediately behind it severely reduced, leading to the *arpita* class of superstructure, as different from the *anarpita hāra*, fully cut in the round, with a perambulatory passage on each *tala*. The experiment had apparently been particularly useful, as we find in the time of the later Pallava king Nandivarman for the erection of a *tritāla* 3 shrine type of Viṣṇu temple, as in the Vaikuṇṭhaperumāl temple, and similarly of Dantivarman in the Sundaravaradarāja temple at Uttaramērūr which is also similar to Vaikuṇṭhaperumāl in form.

## VII

Another interesting feature that was reflected in Rājasiṃha's structural temples is the change in the raw material from granite to sandstone. Owing to the fact that granite quarrying had perhaps been found very taxing and no adequate craft knowledge to control the size required to any limit was yet available, the result was that while sandstone was freely used for the entire temple owing to its easily tractable nature, granite in small thin slabs and blocks was invariably introduced as inter-leavenings in the *adhishṭhāna* mouldings, particularly as *upāna*, and as *paṭṭika*,

in order to reinforce the superincumbent load. This is very clearly seen in many of the earlier temples and in Kailāsanātha temple and even in the later Pallava shrines like Mukteśvara and Mātangeśvara. For the Mukundanāyanār temple at Māmallapuram, however, a hard granitic gneiss was utilised and it had very satisfactorily withstood the ravages of time. The Panamalai temple is the only one where the entire plinth and body is almost employing granite slabs of reasonably good sizes, though not of thickness, and this is perhaps due to the good rocks of granite available nearby.

### VIII

The buildings of Rājasimha, almost all of them, thus have a common characteristic in that the ground floor or the first *tala* has its *prastara* ending with the *kapōta* and *alingapatti* and the second *tala* standing on it immediately with no *hāra* of *kūṭas* and *śālas* on the first *tala* periphery, except on its extension in front of the *vimāna* proper, namely, the *mukhamanḍapa*. This *mukhamanḍapa* has the *hāra* of *kūṭas* and *śālas* on its top, which is sometimes slightly at a lower level than the corresponding level of the first *tala* top and is also in some cases slightly lesser in the gross dimensions of the *kūṭas* and *śālas* than what obtains in the *talas* of the main *vimāna*. The slightly lowering of the *hāra* on the *mukhamanḍapa* is a feature which we have already noticed in the most of the monolithic examples of Māmalla and Paramēśvaravarman as well. But the absence of the *hāra* on the first *tala* top is a rather *fresh* development. The continuity of the normal tradition of the *hāra* going all around the first *tala* including *mukhamanḍapa* is itself preserved in a few of Rājasimha's own shrines, as at Mukundanāyanār at Māmallapuram and Kailāsanātha at Kāñchi. Thus we have some basis to hold that these two might have been relatively the earlier compositions of his. This is because while the addition of some new elements may or may not be significant, the dropping of some important features on the other hand, mark a definite phase in structural formulae. The effect of this new structural scheme of Rājasimha was that while the first and the third *tala* were fairly tall, the second *tala* was rather an interleaving, although with its own *hāra* of *kūṭas* and *śālas*. Since Rājasimha's temples except Kailāsanātha and Shore temple (larger), where the shrines are *chatushthala*

(four *tala*), are generally *tritala* type, in these the first and last *talas* have no *hara*, and the last *tala* in order to be more conspicuous along with the *grīva* and *śikhara* that further surmounts it, has been made taller than the immediately lower one. In the case of Shore temple (larger), we see that the second and third *tala* have been made almost of equal elevation and slightly lesser than that of the ground *tala*. This east-facing Shore temple has also other differences from the west facing one, in its *not* having any *śālā* on the *mukhamāṇḍapa* of the main *vimāna* but only two *kūṭas* at either end and two *nāśika-pañjaras* in the middle. Kailāsanātha, however, has a row of three *śālās*, the middle set a little forward, and two *kūṭas* at the end, consistent with its lay-out containing sub-shrines in the middle and corners of each side on the first *tala*. Thus again Kailāsanātha would seem to be schematically an earlier composition than the Shore temple.

The smallest temple of Rājasimha was Piravātana and next was perhaps Airāvātēśvara. The former does not have its *mukhamāṇḍapa* roof in original condition and thus we are not sure if it contained a *hara* of *kūṭas* and *śālās*, but the strong presumption is in favour of its having had one, and this is particularly due to the fact that this is one of the very few shrines of Rājasimha which do not show any ritual or other corner figures on the topmost *tala*, such as *nandi* or conch-blowing *gaṇa*. It has thus every ground, alike on the nature of its *adhishṭhāna* and the composition of its superstructure, to be deemed as one among his earliest. It is certainly earlier to the *mileau* of diminutive shrines found arrayed around the *prakāra* of Kailāsanātha, since despite their superficial similarity with the Piravātaneśvara, it would be seen that the former do not have any *hara* on either of their two *talas*. Indeed it is notable that even Mahēndravarmēśvaram in front of Kailāsanātha, which is an *āyataśra* (rectangular) *dvitala vimāna* with a *śālā śikhara* on it, does not have any *hara* on either of its two *talas*. In the light of this deliberate and consistent absence of the *haras* of miniature *alpa vimānas* on the *tala* edges in the closing part of Rājasimha's reign, we may perhaps take Talagiriśvara temple at Panamalai as rather closely succeeding Kailāsanātha, and perhaps preceding the *prakāra* complex at the latter (including Mahēndravarmēśvaram), as also the Shore temple. That Olakkannēśvara





Fig. 1. Atiraṇachaṇḍa Maṇḍapam, Sāḷuvankuppam, Mahābalipuram



Fig. 2. Yāli Maṇḍapam and Sculptures on its South, Sāḷuvankuppam, Mahābalipuram





Fig. 3. Mukunda Nayanar Temple, Mahābalipuram



Fig. 4. Piravātanśēvara Temple, Kāñchipuram



Fig. 5. Airāvateśvara Temple, Kāñchipuram

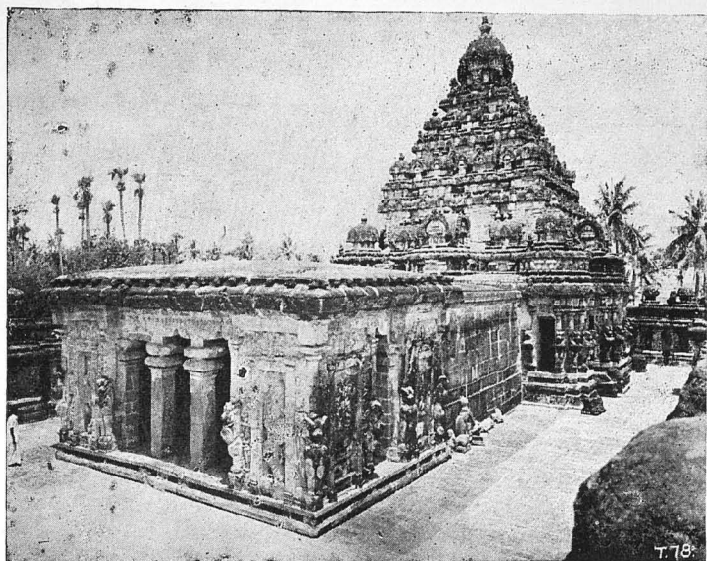


Fig. 6. Rājasimhēśvaragṛham, Kailāsanātha Temple, Kāñchipuram



Fig. 7. Vimāna, Iravātaneśvara Temple (Mṛtyunjaya Temple), Kāñchipuram



Fig. 8. Tripurāntakesvara Temple, Kāñchipuram



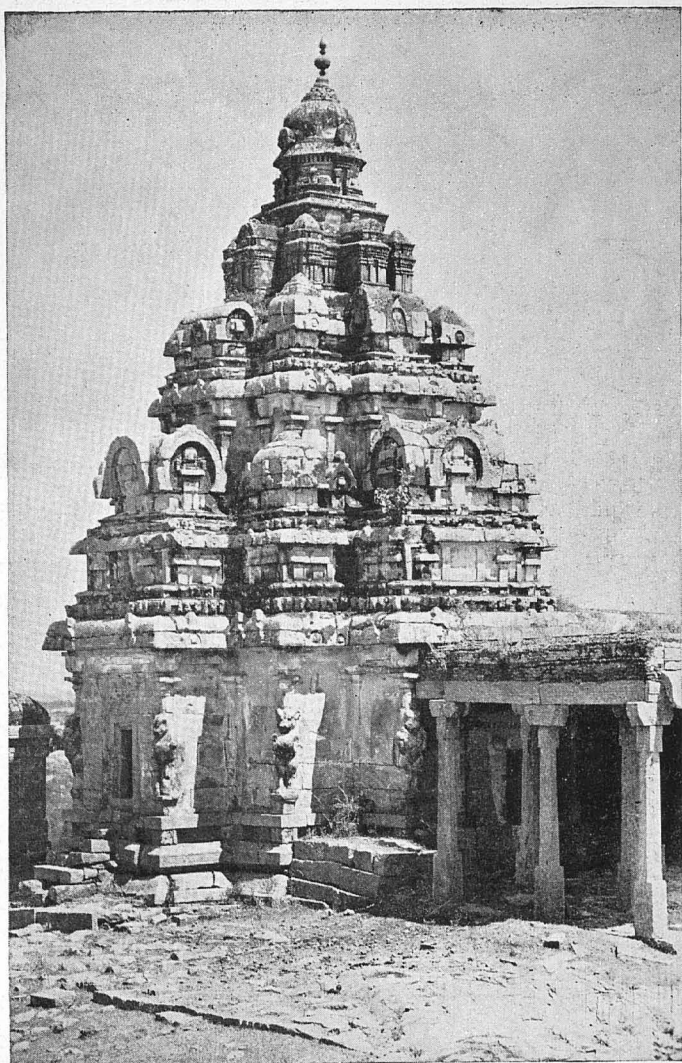


Fig. 9. Talagiriśvara Temple, Panamalai



Fig. 10. Shore Temple, Kshatriyasimhēśvara, Mahabalipuram

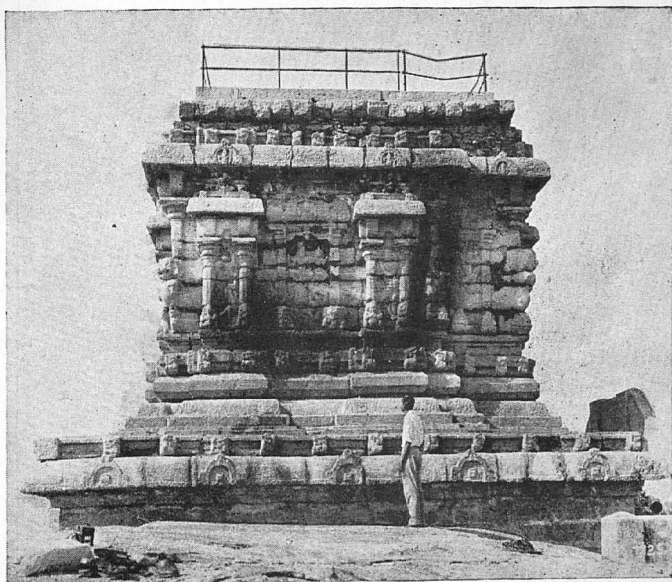


Fig. 11. Olakkannēśvara Temple, Mahābalipuram





Fig. 12. Shore Temple, Rājasimbhēśvara, Kshatriya Simbhēśvara and Viṣṇu Temple in between, Mahābalipuram

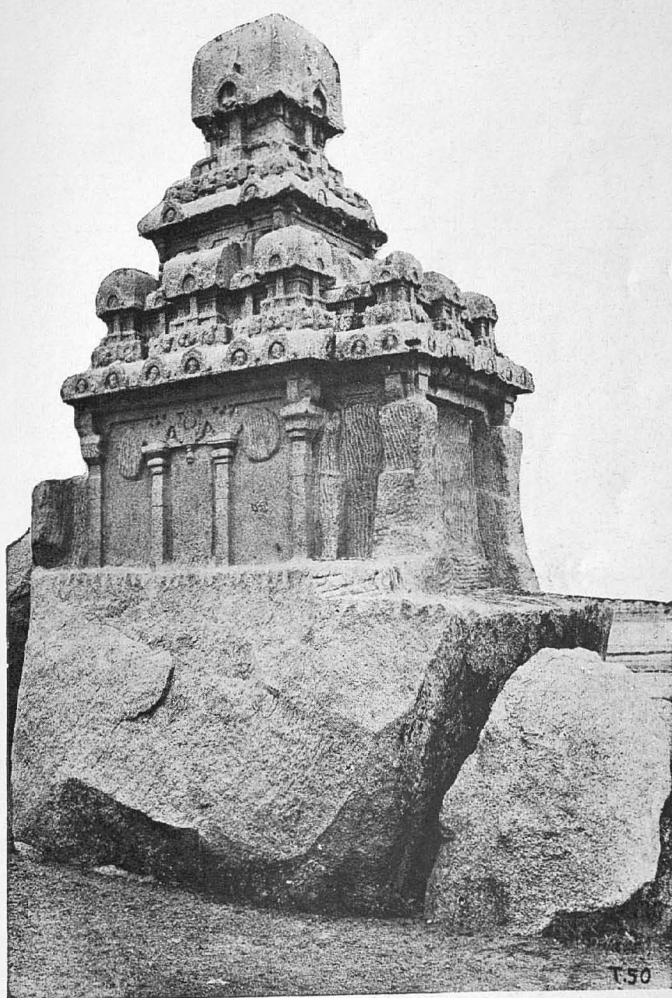


Fig. 13. Pidāri Ratha (North), Mahābalipuram

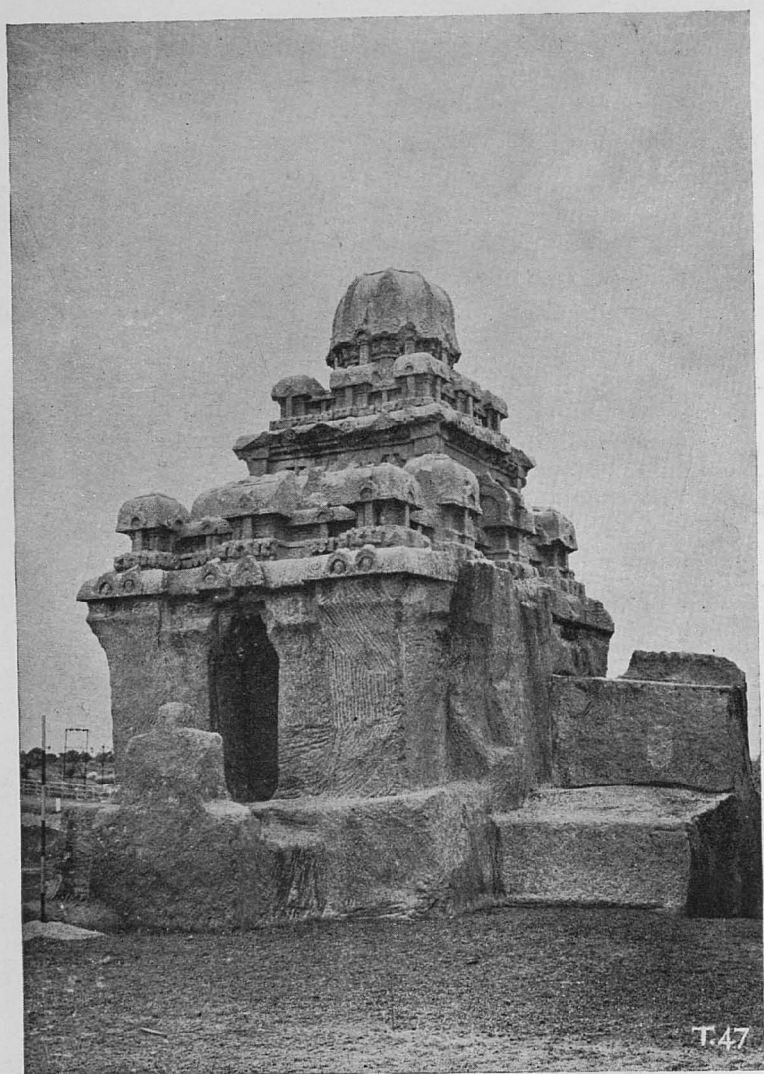


Fig. 14. Pidari Ratha (South), Mahabalipuram



Fig. 15. Valayankuttai Ratha, Mahābalipuram



Fig. 16 Mahēndravarmēśvara Gṛham, in front of Rājasimheśvara,  
Kailāsanātha Temple, Kāñchipuram



Fig. 17. First Shrine in Front of Entrance,  
(Southern most), Kailāsanātha Temple, Kāñchipuram



is the latest in the series, whose superstructure is unfortunately lost to us, would seem to be without doubt.

## IX

The *prakāra* of the Shore temple is certainly based upon the *prakāra* of the Kailāsanātha on one side and Vaikuṇṭhaperumāl on the other, although it was showing only a continuous row of *śālas* on the *prastara* of its *prakāra* wall. The fact that Panamalai temple was not provided with a *prakāra* wall would readily show its having been built at a stage when the *prakāra* wall was not the vogue. Thus the series would seem to have started with Mukundanāyanār, Piravātana, and Airāvātēśvara, and followed by Kailāsanātha during, whose period of construction rose perhaps Irāvātana, Tripurāntaka. This was closely succeeded by the *prakāra* complex and Mahēndravarmēśvaram at Kāñchi, Talagiriśvarar shrine at Panamalai, the Shore temples, and later Olakkaṇṇēśvara shrine at Māmallapuram. Owing to the fact that these three places are widely apart from one another and, in each case, there was need to utilise the local raw material and even slightly variant local guild mannerisms, they resulted in three mildly divergent forms of lay-out plan and superstructure, profile and dimensions. The extension of the *prakāra* complex at Kailāsanātha inevitably carried the sandstone-granite judicious combination for the superstructure. The Panamalai effort was much alike except that granite of very good quality was locally available and thus there was a spurt of technological evolution there resulting in a more consistently granite using plinth unit. The Shore temples, on the other hand, were wedded to the local granite which had fully been exploited in the earlier rock-cut and monolithic stages, and thus while following the use of harder-granite for the *adhiśṭhāna*, it copiously used gneiss for the superstructure, cutting sculptures and figure work also on it. It is significant to note that for the Sōmāskanda panel they invariably used a better stone.

## X

The evolution of style as exemplified in Rājasimha's structural temples was so organic and at the same time selective, that arguing for his authorship of the entire series of monolithic

models at Māmallapuram would be retrograde in conception, a charge that could hardly be placed at the doors of Rājasimha. When it is seen that even Paramēśvaravarman made some indifferent and feeble effort to erect a structural stone temple, as perhaps signified by the ruined apsidal shrine at Kūram and Kalam-bakkam, the utter futility of thinking of Rājasimha-undertaking all the monoliths at Māmallapuram would be patent, even if he were to have the time enough for achieving what took both of Māmalla and Paramēśvara, well nigh six decades.

It is further important to note that of all the Pallava kings, it was Māmalla alone who had taken his army not only into the Chālukyan capital Bādāmi, but even garrisoned it for nearly twelve years. It would be most reasonable to surmise that these 12 years of Māmalla were the most rewarding ones for him and enabled him to plan out his monolithic compositions at Māmalla-puram, apart from the *maṇḍapa* types for which he has already inherited the tradition from his illustrious father. It would be legitimate to infer that much of what characterises the manual of architecture at Māmallapuram had been based upon the early structural temples at Bādāmi and Mahākūṭeśvar seen perhaps by Māmalla personally and certainly by his artisans, resulting in the importing of the architectural norms and idioms and components. Rājasimha's phase saw no war and thus there is hardly any evidence to hold that he made extensive outer contacts. He nurtured essentially what was bequeathed to him by Māmalla and Paramēśvara, not to mention the all too brief and almost uneventful interlude of Mahēndravarman II. Rājasimha certainly gave further impetus to the structural erections and the architectural formulae, and his period particularly formed the threshold, as it were, of the Agamic phase, when ritual needs were increasingly becoming apparent in a temple, thus multiplying the sculptural themes and disciplining the focal point of the temple, namely, the *sanctum-sanctorum* to the high purpose of the temple erection, and systematising the divinities under worship in a manner that gave place later to a gradual polarisation of the main sects of brahmanical or pauranic Hinduism. Decentralisation of the Trinity concept had set in during his time and promised much varied ritual and architectural fare in its further evolution.



The fact that Rājasimha did not mean to waste his time unduly in the rock-cut enterprise is shown by what little he himself excavated, as at Śāḷuvankuppam. It is important to observe in the case of these two that they were both unconventional, atypical specimens of rock-cut *maṇḍapa* types, and were not intended to follow the main line of evolution in both the cases, but rather as an aberrant effort to pander to his own versatility. It has to be conceded, however, that they furnish evidence of his leanings. The Atiraṇachaṇḍamaṇḍapa has only simple facade pillars of the older type, with square lower and upper blocks and octogonal middle section. The entablatures above the cornice are of a highly abridged and perfunctory character, and even the total depth of the cave excavation from the facade pillar inwards is not more than 12 feet. The same is the case with the Tiger cave which is even shallower than the Atiraṇachaṇḍamaṇḍapa. The triple Sōmāskanda panel, on the cella as well as the ardhamāṇḍapa walls, alone are novel, as also the eulogistic inscription in double script. This would suggest that the cave was excavated more as a casual whim of the king and was not expected to be lavishly embellished by the sculptural themes of the day, but was only to be the carrier of his glory engraved there, and the overdoze of Saivism that he had displayed there was to be the herald of his more purposeful and more extravagant structural achievements that followed. Thus even judged by this norm, the more elaborate monolithic *rathas* of Māmallapuram could not be fathered on him.

## XI

These discussions thus particularly show that almost all of the rock-cut and monolithic creations at Māmallapuram would pertain to pre-Rājasimha period, and any theory that would confer upon Rājasimha the authorship of the totality of rock-cut and monolithic creations at Māmallapuram would be fraught with serious discrepancies and would not commend itself for any organic evolutionary scrutiny of its claims. Rājasimha's structural temples are themselves considerable to have kept him fairly fully engaged, after an initial and passing rock-cut phase at and around Māmallapuram; and his temples show an idiom and evolutionary character that are at variance with the style, content

and degree of interior concept and iconographic differentiae of the rock-cut mandapas and monoliths of Māmalla's and Paramēśvara-varman's time.

Even Rājasimha's dabbling at Śāluvankuppam and, if at all, in one of the monoliths; namely Piḍāri *ratha* (north) were steps in the retrograde direction and he apparently did well to retrace his steps on the onward path, well in time, and provided us with a rich heritage of early structural temples which, by their very diversification, indicate a formative period-indeed the cross roads of the early South Indian Architecture and of ritual agamic manuals.

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After the discussion by the members present, Sri S. T. Srinivasa Gopalachari, exhibited a good member of rare books from his collection.

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# ANTHROPOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS ON MOTHER GODDESS WORSHIP\*

DR. M. S. GOPALAKRISHNAN

An Ethno-historic survey of the Mother Goddess cult in South India confined principally to the districts of Kerala and Madras has been attempted in this paper. The temples, legends and festivals connected with eleven mother goddesses in South Malabar, seven in North Malabar, five in Travancore-Cochin, twelve in Madras and four in Chingleput are described in some detail.

The mother goddess shrine in Kerala varies from a grove (kāvu) to a structural temple. The principal deity in such is either symbolic represented by a bronze *mirror* or a circular piece of *stone*, or an actual full figure of the goddess in wood (Daru Bimbam) or in stone. The principal deity is called *Bhagavati* in all the Kerala temples. *Pāñchālī* amman of Kalpathi village in Palghat taluk and *Kanyākumari* of Cape Comorin of Suchindram taluk are exceptions which show distinctive Tamil Characteristics or Tamil influences. The *Bhagavati* of *Koḍungalūr* is exceptional for Kerala in that the deity shows some of the characteristics of the typical *Mariamman* of Madras and is also sometimes associated with the Kaṇṇagi legend of Śilappadikāram. The *Valia Tamburan* who is the titular head of the temple of *Koḍungalūr* gives permission and cockerels are sacrificed for the *Bhagavati*. Pilgrims to this shrine indulge in dances and obscene songs considered to initiate the virgin goddess into the mysteries of sex and procreation. The deity in this temple is covered with turmeric powder which is distributed by Nayar women as *prasādam*. The priests of this temple are designated *Aḍigal*.

At the top of the socio-religious hierarchy of Kerala is the *Tantri*, the *Nambūdiri* brahmin High Priest who directs the ritual practices of the temples under his jurisdiction. He may have as

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many as fifty temples under his control and at the same time is the chief priest (Mēl Santhi) of one of them. Next to this Mel Santhi is the Temple Priest (Kīzh Santhi), a *Nambūdiri* or *Embrandiri* brahmin who is concerned with the performance of the daily rituals and the conduct of the seasonal festivals. This is done with the collaboration with the almost numerous functionaries of the temple. Of these the *Velichapāds* and Kurups (Nayars) who are professional (rarely amateur) shamans have a predominant position. Next to them are the *Nambīsans* or other castes who constitute the *Kazhagam* for carrying temple services such as the decoration, lighting up, and the gathering and making of flower garlands for the worship of the deities. The *Marāv* drummers provide the instrumental music. While these functionaries constitute the institutional structure for the performance of the day to day rituals of the temple as well as its periodical festivals they are at the same time related to the heads of the local families and the community at large. These are the *Ūrālans* who as titular overlords give the permission to the temple functionaries for the conduct of the festivals.

*Paṭṭu* is a temple festival of the Mother Goddess which shows the concerted interrelationships of the entire community in the traditional pattern. The festival principally consists in making a polychrome drawing of the deity, at the same time, singing the praises; and the present description is from that celebrated in honour of the *Kali Kavū Bhagavati* near Manjeri in Ernad Taluk.

The *Ūrālan* hands over a piece of red cloth to the *Kurup* in token of giving him permission to start the festival. The Kurup then enters the *Kalappura* or entrance chamber in front of the shrine of the goddess and performs the *Kura Idal*—spreading the cloth as a canopy, after lighting an oil lamp' under which he then starts drawing the *Kālam*—figure of the goddess with rice flour of five colours red, white, black, yellow and green, at the same time, singing the praises of the goddess—the *Bhagavati Paṭṭu*. Similar festivals in *Nāga* and *Ayyappan* shrines are called *Nagathan Paṭṭu* and *Ayyappan Paṭṭu* respectively.

*The Kālam*: The figure of the goddess on the floor of the *Kalappura* is marvellous to behold.

Glorious in Her seat with dark hair flowing down and Her three eyes creating terror is *Kali* the mother of the village folk Her tongue does not hang out nor does she trample down Her consort. Her *dantrum* (canine teeth) are very piercing and prominent. She has eight hands carrying a *Vattagai* (a weapon like a tiger's claw), a *ṣalli val* (a curved sword), a *Khatwa* (spear), a *Sula* (trident), a *Kapala* (skull), a bell, a shield, and the head of *Daruka*. She is clad in red silk and Her hands are bluish green like those of a maiden in her late teens.

*Brahminic ritual*: After the kurup has completed singing the Pattu and drawing the Kalam the Brahmin priest enters the scene. He places the symbols of the goddess— a sword on *ṣiṭha*-raised stool—and performs *mudra*, *archana*, and *naivēdya*, at the feet of the figure, to an oil lamp. The Kurup enters the Kalappura again singing and this leads on to the next stage of the festival. There is a procession of the Velichapads and the drummers around the temple to a raised platform and towards an *Aswatha* tree. On the four corners of the platform are four linga-shaped stones. The mirror is carried in the procession. The Velichapads then dance around the tree and scatter rice in all directions— *Ari Eridal* to propitiate *Bhūṭa Gaṇas*. The next part of the festival— *Thalappoli* begins now.

*Thalappoli*: Nayar women now follow the procession and take a predominant part. Dressed in resplendant clothes and adorned with costly jewellery they carry with them rice, bananas and cocoanuts and lamps of cocoanut halves on bronze plates (*Thalam*), go round the temple thrice and place the gifts in the Mandapa and these are later distributed to the Velichapads and the drummers along with gifts in cash. This is the Thalappoli which marks the end of the Pattu festival.

The Velichapād and the Kurup enter the Kalappura again. The Velichapād dances his sword dance in ecstasy over the kalam effacing it completely. The Kurup with the help of cocoanut fronds gathers the *Kalappodi*— the rice flour powder which now gets mixed up. Thus the Kurup and the Velichapād who invoke the goddess to take form in songs and colours now help to make Her formless. The *Kalappodi* thus collected is distributed to devotees as *prasādam* and used as *tilakam*. The

Velichapad now at the height of his ecstasy utters his *Kalpāna* – Oracle– as the medium of the goddess who says that she is satisfied with the worship and protection to the community. Thus the worshippers are now enabled to hear the voice of the mother goddess after they have seen her *Form* and heard of her praises and exploits earlier in the Kalappura.

*Palum Vellari*: The house festival of milk and white rice is celebrated in honour of *Karunkali* (Black Kali) at any important household at the instance of the householder by a gathering of Velichapāds. The occasion may be the birthday of a rich householder or it may be a seasonal festival. The Velichapāds of a number of nearby temples visit the house, receive oil for their bath and reassemble again after ablutions. In a consecrated spot in the house a *pīṭha* is put up and adorned with a cloth of red silk. On this is placed a *mirror* as the symbol of the goddess. Next the Velichapads lay down their swords around this in a circle. Offerings of rice, fruits and milk are laid around. The Velichapāds next take up their swords and go into their ecstasy and dance. They inflict sword cuts on their heads and finally one of them gives out the Kalpana. Incense is burnt and then the mirror symbol is removed. The festival terminates with the householder giving rice and cash gifts to the Velichapāds.

Every man who wields a sword is a Velichapād. Contrary to this popular saying not all Velichapāds are given to sabre rattling and blood letting. The Velichapads who play the predominant role in the religious life of Kerala are not only professional men with their licensed office and insignia and uniforms of swords, waist and anklet bands with bells, their red and white clothes, their bald foreheads from excess of sword cuts but also a few amateurs who come of respectable high caste families. Velichapāds attached to Śāsta temples are dressed in black and never cut themselves. The Velichapāds associated with *Naga* shrines are women who are dressed in white and carry *areca palm fronds* instead of swords. The life of the Velichapād is circumscribed by strict austerities especially during the *Maṇḍala Kalam* of forty days (1st of Vriścigam to 10th of Dhanu). His role as the oracular medium of the mother goddess, his blood letting dance of ecstasy, his conventional uniform and

equipment indicate the predominant position he held in former times which has now been whittled down by brahminic priestly ritual. This institution indicates not only the importance of the shaman in the cult of the mother goddess but the high degree of integration and solidarity of the whole complex of brahmin and non-brahmin officiating priests, temple servants and instrumental musicians on the one hand and the local population of propitiators, worshippers and the titular heads of the temples on the other hand. How the traditional institution has gone into the background with the ascendancy of the brahmin priesthood is seen in one of the modern festivals—the *Pūram*.

*Pūram*: The *Pāṭṭu* festival has receded into the background with the growing importance of the brahminic ritual that is so very characteristic of this *pūram* festival. Though the Kurup sings songs in praise of all the deities, the mother goddess Bhagavati, Ayyappan and Nāga on all the seven days of this festival they no longer constitute the *pāṭṭu*. The festival begins in the Tamil month of Phanguni (Mar-April) and ends on the seventh day which falls under the asterism *Pūram* of the Hindu Almanac. The principal ritual on this day is the *Arattu* or *Avabhṛita snana* of the idol of the goddess in the tank or river nearby performed by the brahmin priest under the direction of the Tantri of the temple. This ritual bath of the deity has been observed in the case of the Kunnath Bhagavati of Manjeri. In consonance with the brahminisation of the ritual is the conversion of the goddess into a benign deity *Santi Durga*. Even the general designation of the brahmin priests a *Mēl Santhi* and *Kīzh Santhi* in all kerala temples is indicative of the change in the belief from a terrific deity propitiated by blood letting and animal sacrifices to a benign deity worshipped by brahminic ritual and vegetarian offerings of rice, fruits and flowers, etc. A comparison of mother goddess worship in Kerala with that of Madras brings out into relief certain clear cut parallels on one side and certain distinct variations on the other side.

*The Mother Goddess temple in Madras*: It is characterised by the following features with regard to the deities, the officiating priests and other functionaries, and the beliefs and practices in relation to them.

A stone slab may represent the deity in symbolic form. A stone head of the deity in a small wayside shrine is usually associated with the Renuka story. A full stone image represents the goddess in Her terrific aspect with four hands and four emblems. One or more Nāga Kal, snake stones under Pepul trees and Neem trees ; an anthill under these trees is even in many temple compounds. The image in stone representing a Muni as the consort of the goddess is found in some temples in addition to the image of the goddess. In some of the larger temples usually situated outside the village or town limits there is an image of the goddess in the main shrine and one or more, usually seven munis in brick and mortar. The single Muni may be seated holding a sword in his hand when he is called a Vāl Muni. Or there are usually seven Munis in a row of whom the biggest is said to be the youngest. They are either seated or represented as equestrian figures. So far every one of these mother goddess temple houses a deity which is terrific and benign, at the same time, requiring propitiation in the form of animal sacrifices and worship. There emerge gradually other types of temple and deities which have assumed many of the characteristics of the brahminic temples. Some of the temples wholly devoted to mother goddesses have in addition to the principal feminine deity, a stone image of a Gaṇeśa under a tree on a platform or in a niche or a stone Linga. Stone image or images of the mother goddess in benign form, yantras or Śrī Chakras, and bronze image or images of Gods and Goddesses used as Utsavamūrtis (deities for processions) are found in most of the brahminised temples.

*Priests and Shamans:* The Mother Goddess temples of Madras and their officiating personnel considered as a whole show not only a gradual transition from the simple village shrine of the gramadevatha with its non-brahmin shamans and priests and the practices of blood and animal sacrifices to the highly brahminic temple with the gradual ascendancy and predominance of brahminised or brahmin priests with their elaborate vedic rituals and purely vegetarian offerings of flowers and fruits. This clear dichotomy as between the non-brahminic and the brahminic is seen in the legends and beliefs of the transformation of the terrific virgin mother goddess into a benign



deity at the instance of such religious reformers like Sankara by the addition of a consort in the form of a Muni or Śivaliṅga. The virgin mother goddess now becomes an enternal sumāṅgali, benign in nature when subdued by her consort. The division into non-brahminic and brahminic temples with disinctive personnel and practices can be seen clearly through transitional stages. The common indigenous local terrific mother goddess is still propituated and appeased at least in ritual fashion with blood sacrifices by a hereditary priesthood belonging to certain traditionally established non-brahmin communities. Thus the priest of the Amman temple in Periyapalayam is a Baliḷa by caste. On the other hand there are the benign mother goddess deities of the great brahminic temples at Kāñchi and Tiruvottiyūr with brahmin priests though non-brahmin priests are given precedence in the latter on festive occasions. In addition to the non-brahmin officiating priest of the Osar or other community a number of other functionaries are intimately associated with most of the mother goddess tempels. There is the non-brahmin shamans who performs the *Karagam*<sup>1</sup> dance and acts as the Oracular medium of the goddess; he may even belong to one of the service castes such as the washerman (vaṇṇāṇ) or the guardian of the crematorium (veṭṭiyāṇ). Besides every such mother goddess temple has associated with at a party of non-brahmin professional musicians, two of whom play on the *Uḍukkai* and *Pambai*; two as a pair dance with the *kaisilambu*; the entire party of four singing at the same time the praises of the goddess called *Varnippu* in Karagam processions. On the other hand associated with brahminic temples are the great Nādaswaram musicians of the Melakar or Maruthuvan communities; the temple servants of the Sattani or other non-brahmin community; and the brahmin priests varying from the lowly Gurukkal to the high class Nambūdiri.

*Ritual practices*: There is a clear distinction between the ritual practices of the small mother goddess temple and the great Brahminic temple. The deities of the former go by such

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1. The Karagam is a decorated pot symbolic of the mother goddess carried on the head of the Shaman.

names as Māriamman—the smallpox deity, Aṅgālamman—the deity of the crematorium, Nāgathamman—the deity of the serpent shrine, Draupadiamman—the deity of the Mahābhārata legend and so on. The ritual practices characteristic of these deities have much in common and they are intimately related to the personnel who officiate at the shrines of these deities and the general non-brahmin population served by them. At the same time each mother goddess shrine has its special characteristic practices. Thus the Māriamman is associated always with poor feeding with ragi porridge and kumbam (heap of food) feast at home for the elite. Nāgathāl is associated with the offering of milk and eggs and the presence of twin trees, the Neem and the Aswatha as well as the anthill, abode of the serpent. Again Aṅgālamman is usually connected with practices relating to the pillage of the crematorium by the goddess every year on the new moon night after Sivarathri. Similarly Draupadiamman is associated with the annual festival of the devotees walking on fire led by the Karagam dancer. However these practices are not exclusive and any and even every one of them may be associated with any of the deities. Not only are some of such practices associated with the non-brahminic mother goddess shrines but they are equally common in the higher brahminic temples. Thus the common offering of toy cradles made by the potter and offered by the devotee to the deity for the blessing of children to barren women is found in practice in many of the Amman shrines of the brahminic temples. The officialing personnel of these temples fall into the common group of Karagam dancers, Varnippu musicians and hereditary priests of traditionally established communities. In relation to these personnel there is a common pattern of ritual practices in these temples though each has its individual characteristics. These are not, however, exclusive as one deity may take upon the attributes of another provided the practices at the shrine are established by tradition and custom.

*Māriamman Worship:* The Māriamman temple is a common feature of almost every Tamil village. It is, however, characteristically absent in Kerala. At most of the Māriamman temples in Madras women offer pongal on Fridays and on Sundays especially in the Tamil month of Āḍi (Aug.). The ritual practice

of animal sacrifice is by letting off goats and fowls alive at the temple or the offer at the devotee's household of Kumbam (a heap of animal food with rice flour lamps) after poor feeding with ragi porridge. The poor feeding is carried out at midday and the offering is made at night and consumed by the members of the household. The same kinds of offerings are made as a preliminary to the celebration of almost every marriage in fulfilment of vows made to the goddess. This is *Kuḍam Kalyānam* in which the bridegroom dressed as a woman or even the bride carries the Karagam in procession to the temple, with Varnippu musicians and dancers, offers Pongal at the temple in fulfilment of prayers for recovery from illness.

*Nāgathal worship*: In most serpent shrines women offer milk and eggs to the serpent deity residing under the Peepul and Neem trees. An anthill, or snake stones represent the deity. Barren women circumambulate the deity and the per of trees for the blessing of children. Thus there is the common saying about a woman who, went round the peepul tree and neem tree and touched and felt the lower part of the abdomen (to see if she had become pregnant as a result of such circumambulation). (அரசு வேம்பை சுற்றிவந்து அடி வயிற்றை தொட்டுப் பார்த்தாளாம்).

*Āṅgālamman worship*: Āṅgālamman is the Kālī of the crematorium believed to hanker after the flesh and blood of the dead and as such propitiated by an archaic Dravidian festival beginning on Sivarathri and reaching its climax on the newmoon night thereafter. The usual features of mother goddess worship are poor feeding with ragi porridge followed by Kumbam (animal food) feasts in the devotees' houses and the Karagam procession to the burial ground to the accompaniment of Varnippu music. The characteristic feature is the *Masāna-Kōḷḷai* or the pillage of the crematorium at dead of night of the newmoon day by the goddess who is taken there in procession. Such an archaic feature has, however, been overlaid with modern features in one instance, for the Muṇḍakanni amman, where a bronze image of the goddess is taken out on a Hamsa Vāhana in procession.

*Draupadiamman Worship*: In the single instance considered the worship of this deity presents a harmonious blend of brahminic and non-brahminic practices. The Gurukkal brahmin priest celebrates Amman Tirumanam and Sandanakāppu and procession of the bronze images of the deity: while the Karagam dancer who carries the fire leads the devotees in the ceremony of walking on fire and earlier carries out the ritual of the balancing of the sword on the pot, *Aḷagu Panai Tiruviḷa*. The offering of pongal and silver votive objects in fulfilment of vows and the offering of cradles for the blessings of children is also made. The offering of cradles is made in many mother goddess temples as in the Śāngamēśwarar-Vēdanāyaki amman temple at Bhavāni and the Periyapalayam Amman temple. In the latter the miniature cradle offered by the woman for the blessing of children has a toy baby in it. If it is a male baby the cradle is called a Paraśurāma cradle thus connecting the shrine with the Renuka legend, Renuka being the mother of Paraśurāma.

*Family Mother Goddesses*: Apart from the worship of mother goddesses at shrines certain practices are carried out exclusively in the houses by women which are of the nature of the deification and worship of dead persons. Such are the *Sumāṅgali pūja* of the brahmins, the *Poovāḍaikāri Kumbiḍutal* of the Tamils and the *Perantalu* of the Telugus. In all these the dead sumāṅgalis are propitiated by the offerings and worship at the commencement of auspicious events such as marriages. Very often living sumāṅgalis are selected and worship is offered to them (to appease the dead) by gifts of coloured clothing and other auspicious objects which are the emblems of a sumāṅgali. This is done on the occasion of Śhrādda. Not only sumāṅgalis but even living kanyas, virgins are given gifts to appease virgin deities as the goddess at Cape Comorin where devotees offer *kanya pooja* and *kanya bhōjan* to nine virgins selected by the officiating priest of the temple. These virgins are fed and given gifts of such articles as combs, mirrors, vermilion, turmeric, silk and cotton clothes.

*Mother Goddess worship at brahminic temples at Madras*: The two great examples which have been considered in this direction are the temple at Tiruvottiyūr of Tripurasundari

and the one at Kāñchipuram of Kāmākshiamman. The tradition of the former is that the original mother goddess, a terrific deity *Vattappa Nachiar* with four hands, one holding a trident, two holding a skull, three partially underground and four in *abhaya* pose was propitiated by the sacrifice of 75 goats and a buffalo. Even now the festival is conducted for seven days by the Osar while the daily ritual is conducted by Gurukkal and Nambūdiri priests. It is said that Śaṅkara established here *Kala Bhairava* who put to shame the Kālī and forced her to give up her lust for blood sacrifices. At the same time the Āchārya established Tripurasundari, a virgin mother goddess. Other features of the mother goddess shrine are the Ākāśa Liṅga in the form of an anthill, Puthu Lingam and the presence of a fig tree, the hollow of which harbours serpents. Sri Rāmaliṅga swāmīgal has sung a hundred songs in praise of Vādivuḍai amman, the Tamil name of Tripurasundari. The predominance of the Osar priests during the annual festival and offering of ash pumpkins would go to show the recent ascendancy of the brahmin priesthood at this temple. This is borne out by the comparison of the practices in a temple in which the prominence of the brahmin priest is more firmly established. In the Kāmākshi Amman temple at Kāñchi the tradition is that Śaṅkara established the Śrī Chakra in front of the Virgin Mother Goddess with four hands and seated in padmasana and archana is first offered to the Śrī Chakra, a symbol of the Goddess. There is also the tradition that Śaṅkara denied and forbade worship of the inauspicious deity Jyeshtha by mutilating her bas relief image in the temple. In a line with these reforms there are only brahmin priests for the mother goddess, gurukkals for daily rituals and high class brahmins for festive occasions.

*Conclusion :* Mother Goddess worship in Kerala and Madras have certain distinctive features associated with the shrines, beliefs and practices. In Kerala the predominant cults are the Bhagavati, the Nāgathan and Ayyappan connected principally with Kāvus which later developed into structural temples. The beliefs, and practices connected with them relate to ensuring the fertility and fecundity of the people and their protection from epidemics and calamities.

The mother goddess is believed to be both a benign and terrific deity, at the same time. The goddess is represented by a female deity serpent god, and a male consort or attendants. The practices are mostly of the nature of propitiation of the deities by means of sacrifices and offerings. Animal and blood sacrifices predominated early and these have been whittled down to ritual form especially in Madras. While there is a harmonious integration of the hierarchical temple personnel and the general community of worshippers and devotees at large in Kerala there is at the same time an established ascendancy of the brahmin priesthood and their ritual practices. Such an ascendancy has not resulted in the dichotomy of mother Goddess worship in Madras into indigenous local temples with their non-brahminic personnel and animal blood sacrifices and the greater brahminic temples with their vedic rituals. The process of brahminisation is in progress as brahmin priests and their rituals are gradually replacing the earlier animal and blood sacrifices which are seen at most in ceremonial form. This process which goes with the conversion of the terrific, malevolent mother goddess with her thirst for blood being toned down into a benign goddess by her vedic consort is evidenced by the traditions of Śaṅkara at Kāñchi and Tiruvottiyūr and more recently by Śrī Rāmaliṅgaswāmigal at the Thulukkanāthuamman koil in Madras town. But the wide gap in the worship of the mother goddess between the brahmins and the non-brahmins which is so much in evidence in Madras is scarcely visible in Kerala which exhibits harmonious inter-relations as between all the communities in the expression of their religious beliefs and practices.<sup>1</sup>

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# MAIN AND PARIVARA SHRINES - SOME ASPECTS\*

K. V. SOUNDARA RAJAN

It is well known that temple architecture evolved in magnitude in direct proportion to the growth of temple rituals. Whether in the north or in the south, the temple unit had in the main only the cella and a front porch to start with. While the evolution of the superstructure of the *vimāna* or the *prasāda*—as the temple is apt to be called in the south and the north respectively—is an entirely independent development, the enlargement of the temple dimensions had always been dictated by the larger and yet larger number of subsidiary deities that adorned the various parts of the temple and it is the fixation and consolidation of the role of these subsidiary *dēvatās* variously called *parivāra dēvatās* or *avarana dēvatās* that ultimately resulted in the provision of separate, if subordinate to the main, shrines to them in the temple premises. The ritual that made for an early multiplication of the temple units in the north at least by the 8th century A.D., if not earlier, was called the *Pañchāyatana* form of worship. This envisaged the syncretisation of the divinities—albeit orbiting around the main focus of a major member of the Trinity—and its earlier symbolic form was aniconic, with the five gods, namely, Viṣṇu, Śiva, Gaṇeśa, Dēvi and Sūrya represented by black stone, white stone, red stone, metallic ore and crystal respectively. It was clearly understood in such a *pūja* which was a *Smārta* development, that there was no narrow loyalty to only one of these gods but these were rather considered as the five major emanations of the universal principle. It was this that was reflected in the multiplication of the sub shrines in the temples in early periods. The northern tradition on the Śaiva side was characterised by the central main shrine being that of Śiva, the four peripheral shrines that were located on the four corners of the large plinth terrace were those of Gaṇeśa to the south—east, Sūrya to the south—west, Viṣṇu to north

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\* Paper read before the Archaeological Society of South India on 2-6-65.

west and Durga to the north east. It is such an arrangement that we see in the most finite and classical early Pañchayatana temple at Osia near Jodhpur datable to the last quarter of the 8th century A.D. It is, however, to be noticed that we did have multiple temple units even earlier in the north, as at Bhūmara wherein the main shrine in the centre of the terrace contained an *eka-mukhalīṅga*, while there were two subshrines, located at the level of the outer ground, flanking the entrance flight of steps and facing the same direction as the main temple. This temple is definitely earlier even than the famous Daśavatāra temple at Deōgārh and should thus be datable to the 1st half of the 6th century A.D., if not slightly earlier. The Deōgārh temple had only four prominent porches in front of the main shrine door as well as that of the large panels on the centre of the remaining three sides. This temple further had flights of steps on all the four sides of the plinth terrace, at the central points. At Nālandā had been excavated four miniature shrines at the four corners of a main temple. Coming in the wake of Śiva Pañchayatana shrines in the north, the Viṣṇu Pañchayatana forms got evolved further into *navayatana* and *Dvadaśayatana*. The Hayaśīrṣapāñcharātra text (Ādikāṇḍa) gives reference to such and in this scheme, the Pañchayatana comprises Viṣṇu-Vāsudēva in the centre, Vāmana to the Āgnēya (south east), Narasimha to the Niṣṛutya (south west) and Hayagrīva to the Vāyavya (north west) and Nṛivarāha to the Īśānya (north east) or alternately with Nārāyaṇa in the centre, and Ambika to the south east, Sūrya to the south west, Brahma to the north west and Liṅga or Rudra form to the north east. The fact, on the one hand that this option involves both a purely Viṣṇu oriented, as well as a mixed complex and, on the other, that in addition to these the Dikpālas are also expected to be shown in their respective parts of the main shrine, would indicate that this was a fairly evolved stage and the consensus of evidence tends to place such a usage in the 9th-10th centuries A.D. This is all the more attested by the composition of the *navayatana* from which would have Puruṣottama in the central main shrine, Chandika on a south east corner subshrine, Ambika in the south west, Sarasvati in North West and Padmā in the north east. In addition to these, it would have Lakṣmī-Vaiśravaṇa on the Valabhi zones on the east, Mātṛigaṇas with Skanda, Īśāna and Gaṇeśa on the south, Navagrahas on the



west and Daśavatāra on the north, This would show that corresponding to the Viṣṇu vyūha there would be a Śrī or Śakti vyūha also and such a development of the Śrī or Śakti or Amba cult had not grown before mid 10th century A.D. which would probably be the most reasonable date for Hayaśīrṣa Pāñcharātra text. It is interesting to note in this connection that this text indicated the prohibited zones from which Āchāryas for ritual consecration of Viṣṇu temples should not be drawn. These areas include Kaccha (Cutch in the present Gujarat State) Kāvēri, Aṅga (South East Bihar), Kāmarūpa (Assam), Kalinga (Orissa), Kāñchi, Kāshmira and Kōśala. It is not clear what was the basis of this zoning. It would however, be plausible to associate these places with areas where Sivaite worship had been deeply entrenched at the time this Pāñcharātra text came to be compiled in the north. It is significant that it almost excludes a large part of Western India, South and Eastern India and North West thus making the Gangetic valley as the most favoured zone under the implications of the text.

Multiple shrine units dedicated to Viṣṇu had been prevalent at about this time in the north in Rajasthan and Gujarat-Saurashtra in an evolved pattern. At Nāgda (the ancient Nāghrāda) near Udaipur, very close to the famous Saivite centre of Eklingji, we have a considerable group of shrines going under the name of Sas-Bahu temples, and reared upon a common *jagati* terrace. In addition to the two main shrines dedicated to Viṣṇu, we have a string of subshrines, many of which, however, had all but disappeared. They are variously dedicated to Brahma, Durga, Śrī, Nrisimha etc., and the main shrines themselves show on their walls the sculptures of composite forms like Brahma-Iśāna-Arka as also all the three Rāmas namely, Rāghava Rāma Parasurāma and Balarāma in one and the same temple, on the niches and the valabhi zones. It is very significant particularly that one of the subsidiary temples shows on all the three main niches the figure of Sarasvatī, holding combination of her *ayudhas* such as Vīṇa, Pustaka, akṣamāla, Kamaṇḍaḷu etc. It is obvious that this temple was largely influenced by the Pāñcharātra text of the Viṣṇu vyūhas. At Delmal in Gujarat, we have again an arrangement of a main shrine with subshrines essentially of the Viṣṇu Pāñchāyatana type on the four corners. Of these,

particularly the south-west and north west subshrines dedicated respectively to Lakṣmi Nārāyaṇa and Sūrya are significant. The main shrine had been very extensively renovated in later periods and is now considered as a Dēvi shrine. We have many other Viṣṇu Pañchāyatana shrines in Gujarat as at Asoda in Jasmalanathji temple. The celebrated Vāsudēva temple at Dwāraka in Saurashtra near Okha port, going by the name of Ranachodrai temple, has again the Pañchāyatana form of temple dedicated variously to Pradyumna, Puruṣottama, Trivikrama and Vēṇi Mādhava, apart from Devakiji and other minor shrines and even Śiva shrine known as Kuṣeśvar Mahadev. In the north the Pañchāyatana pattern of temples had been extensively adapted to the Jain religion also in the mediaeval periods, the subsidiary shrines in such cases being dedicated to the chief *tīrthaṅkars* like Ādinātha, Pārśvanātha, Nēminātha and Vardhamāna and are indeed a variation of the *Chaumukh* shrine, with doors on four sides and showing the four important *tīrthaṅkaras* in the centre facing four directions and providing space for circumambulation around it, which becomes an invariable adjunct of any Jain shrine.

In the South, however, early temples had always been unitary in character without any subsidiary shrines for minor gods until the early Chōḷa period. We have no separate dēvi shrine until this period and whatever form the female Śakti of the Universal principle is embodied in, it is generally shown side by side with the main deity and not in a separate shrine. We have of course separate shrines for Durga almost from early Pallava times as at Māmallapuram. But we do not find such a shrine as an adjunct to the main temple until the Chōḷa period. On the Sivaite side, we have the replacement of Sōmāskanda group by aniconic *liṅga* by the end of Rājasiṃha's reign (early 8th century A.D.) and thereafter Durga becomes established on the outer northern wall of *ardhamanḍapa* of the main shrine, a practice which continues well into the Chōḷa period. It is not clear if a separate shrine for Dēvi was well established, say, before 1050 A.D., although the existing shrine complexes in many places have a dēvi shrine closely juxtaposed to the main Śiva shrine on its north, often integrated with the outer *mahamanḍapa* of the main shrine. The fact, however, is that their architectural style as also, their relative posteriority to the main shrine unit

which most often did not have a very large *mahāmaṇḍapa* until 1000 A.D. would tend to suggest that the main shrine itself incorporated the Dēvi form. This is, of course, not to say that Dēvi forms were never worshipped independently earlier than this period. We have indeed considerable volume of structural evidence in this direction. The earliest Chōla temple namely Vijayālayachōliśvaram (c. 875 A.D.) at Nārttāmalai had a string of seven subsidiary shrines around it, of which only a few are in good repair and indeed none preserves the original affiliation of its deity. It is at the same time noticeable that in this case, the subshrines are facing almost all the directions, the general underlying principle perhaps being that every one of these subshrines should be looking towards the main shrine and not away from it or in the same direction as the main temple—a practice which obtained in the Pallava shrines like Kailāsanātha and Panamalai although these subshrines were integral parts of the main shrine structure. The temple at Tirukkaṭṭalai again, going by the name of Sundarēśvara, has seven subsidiary shrines (not to mention a later Dēvi shrine facing south) which appear to be built abutting against the *prakāra* wall, thus inevitably oriented towards the main shrine in each case, and excepting that the Nārttāmalai subshrines are free standing, is largely paralleled by them. This temple was built by Āditya I (871–907 A.D.), who was probably the son of the author of the Nārttāmalai group. The Tirukkaṭṭalai subshrines are dedicated to Sūrya on the south east, saptamātṛis on the south, Gaṇēśa on the south west, Subrahmanya on the west, Jyēṣṭha on the north west, Chandra on the north and Chandikēśvara on north east. It is by no means certain if the arrangement of the subshrine goddesses are actually following their original disposition. Significant, however, is the presence of Jyēṣṭha. This goddess of ill-luck is usually relegated to an uncereemonious spot within the temple premises, in later shrines. But in this and some earlier temples as at Tirupparānkunram, she had been deliberately consecrated. She is an invariable concomitant of female potentials as adumbrated in the later *Līṅgapurāṇa* etc. The arrangement of the subshrines at Tirukkaṭṭalai could be usefully compared with a similar but an almost *navāyatana* shrine around the main temple inside the village at Mukhalingam in Srikakulam District of Andhra Pradesh. Here the subshrines

in the four corners are usually dedicated to Śiva in different names, such as Indrēśvara (South-East), Āgnēya (South-West), Yamēśvara (North-West), Varunēśvara (North-East), while the three rectangular *śāla śikhara* shrines placed in the centre of each of the *prākāra* walls are dedicated variously to Gaṇēśa (south), Kārttikēya (west) and Durga and Saptamātā (north). The Dikpālas are shown in sculpture on the main walls of the temples or on the *rathakas* of the mandapa which show externally the aspect of a corner shrine on two adjacent faces. The Mukhalingam temple is approximately of the same date as those at Tirukkattalai.

At a slightly later date, as in the Kodumbāḷūr temples of Aivar Kōil and Mūvar Kōil, the subshrines are at the corners of the main shrine but the interesting feature about the former is that they are facing the direction in which the wall in which they are set is facing in each case, but all the four invariably have a short balustraded flight of steps which has either an easterly or westerly aspect, thus approaching the subshrines in each case either from the east or west. This seems to be a compromise between an independent and an interdependent alignment for these subshrines. Mūvar Kōil, however, contains three main shrine units and the *prākāra* around it has as many as fifteen minor shrine chambers and is doubtless a very much more evolved stage than the Aivar Kōil or any of the earlier stages. The Mūvar Kōil temple of Bhūti Vikrama Kēsari is datable to the second half of the 10th century A.D. In the arrangement of the minor shrines placed in the cloister of the *prākāra*, it recalls the temples at Drākshārāma and Bhimavaram of the time of Eastern Chāḷukya Bhīma in the 1st half of the 10th century A.D.

It is obvious that even in the Mūvar Kōil set up, there was no provision for a major and associate Dēvi shrine. This comes up, perhaps for the first time, only in Gaṅgaikondachōḷa-puram in the Bṛihadīśvara group, but is fairly common from the time of Kulōttuṅga Chōḷa. The Vaishnavaita usage of the shrine for Śrī or Tāyār (holy mother) has an almost parallel evolution, with this difference that while in many of the later Chōḷa temples, the Dēvi shrine is facing south into a common vestibule with the main shrine—the Vaishnavaita Tāyār shrine is almost always

located in the south west corner of the temple premises facing, as the main shrine does, east. Only where there was no *dēvi* shrine to start with and an independent shrine had been provided subsequently, the location is sometimes improvised, as at Śrīkūrmam where the Tāyār shrine is located abutting on the south east corner wall of the *mahamaṇḍapa*, just outside it, and is facing west while the main shrine is facing east. The Vaishnavaite arrangement of the subshrines is that of Śrīdēvi on the south west side, Narasimha facing west, behind the main shrine and Gōḍā or Āṇḍāl on the north west corner. The superstructural niche figures in a Viṣṇu shrine should according to *Hayaśirṣa Pañcharātra* contain *Maḥavarāha* with Śrī on his lap on the eastern side, *Narasimha* on the southern side, *Śrīdhara* on the west and *Hayagrīva* on the north; correspondingly on the South East, it should be *Paraśurāma*, on the South West it should be *Śrī Rama*, on the north west it should be *Vāmana* and on the north east it should be *Vāsudēva*. Always the ground floor or the lowest floor should have *Anantaśāyī*, the next floor seated Viṣṇu and the third standing Viṣṇu and the fourth should be flying, fifth *Yōgamudra*, sixth, *Yogāsana* and seventh a *yōga sthanakamūrti*. It is to be noted that this tradition is being only partially followed in the south. A peculiar feature of this *Pañcharātra* text is that while it is generally using architectural terminology like *Jangha*, *manjari*, *śikhara*, *jagati*, *piṇḍika*, *bhramana*, *sukanasi* etc. which accords more with the northern or *Nagara rathaka*, *rēkha śikhara* style, its description of the superstructure is actually conforming to southern style where there could be a shrine in every *bhūmi* (or *tala*). It, however, restricts the number of *Bhūmis* permissible to seven. It also gives affiliatory names for the temples with different number of *bhūmis*. For *Nāga*, it should be *ekabhūmi*, for *Agni* cult it should be two, for *Indra* cult—three, for *Varuna* four, for *Sūrya* five, for *Chandra* six and for *Viṣṇu* cult it should be seven *bhūmis*. It also stipulates that *Garuḍa* should be placed at the four top corners. Thus it is obvious that this text is by implication, intended for southern usage also, although it had apparently been compiled in the north, and indicates a stage when seven *bhūmis* or *talas* were the highest achieved or conceived. We have shrines which rise to more than seven *talas* in the Tamil country, but mostly dedicated to Śiva. The practice of the *Pañchavatana* worship

together with the *talacchanda* and its affiliations would show that it pertains to a period when the temple structure was itself in a stage of flux, evolving a formula for subordinate shrines. By this token also, the age of the text cannot be earlier than the late 9th or early 10th century A.D. The arrangement of the sucshrines for *navagrahas* does not accord with the actual usage extant in Tamil country for the *navagrahas*, namely placing this group at the north east corner of the shrine *mahamandapa* or outer vestibule. The *Pādmāsāṃhita* *Pāñcharātra* states the *avarana dēvatas* which should take the place of their counterparts in the Saiva scheme, thereby indicating that the usage closely followed the fixation of the Saiva *parivāra dēvatas*. It says that *Puruṣa* and *Achyuta* should replace *Sūrya* and *Chandra*, *Hayagrīva* should be in the place of *Sūra* (*Indra*). *Śaṅkarṣana* should be in the place of *Brahma*, *Varāha* in place of *Gaṇēśa*, *Pradyumna* in place of *Kārttikēya*, *Ananta* in the place of *Kātyāyini* or *Durga* and *Aniruddha* in place of *Nirṛuti*, *Narasimha* in place of *Śiva*. As regards *Śrī* by which is apparently meant *Lakṣmi*, the consort of *Viṣṇu*, in all her *śaktis*, *Pādmāsāṃhita* states that she is to be placed on the south-west *ankana*, while on the southern *ankana* *Saptamātṛs* are to be placed. Since this is apparently not the procedure that obtains in any of the *Vaiṣṇava* temples today, we have to take it that this prescription has been older than a later one by which *Lakṣmi* is placed in a separate shrine on the south west of the main shrine (without violating the direction already given in *Pādmāsāṃhita*) but so *Saiva* deities like *Saptamātṛs* etc. were included in a *Vaiṣṇava* temple. We may almost be sure that this systematisation would definitely have been a post-*Rāmānuja* phenomenon and thus we are led to the conclusion that a separate *Dēvi* shrine, even on the *Vaiṣṇava* side, might not have materialised very much earlier than mid 11th century A.D.

What could have been the reason for a relatively late appearance of a separate shrine for *Dēvi* as a female counterpart of the main God? The answer has largely to be discovered in the multiplying rituals and legends that enveloped the temple activities. The existing pattern of having a name for the main God (be he *Siva* or *Viṣṇu*) specific to the place and a corresponding name for the Goddess would itself have been one of the vogues that started only from the time of separate shrines for them. The

earlier temples neither had divergent names for the main God and Goddess nor separate shrines for them. The idea that the Goddess was an inclusive feature of the God was more current. The postulate of an *adya Śakti* or *Prakṛiti* which operates the God Himself, in abstract, was applied to temple rituals at a relatively later day. It was given momentum only after S'āṅkara and Rāmānuja propounded their cosmic philosophies. The earlier Pañchāyatana worship whether Śaiva or Vaiṣṇava essentially inculcated a diversity of the extant pantheon and did not reflect any deep sectarian polarisation. The representation of Durga as a concomitant, as much of Śaiva iconography as Vaiṣṇava, is a case in point. Similarly, the reference in *Padmasaṃhita* of *Saptamātṛs* which are shown along with Śrī in the *ankanas* surrounding the temple reflect such a liberal attitude. The advent of Rāmānuja thus is largely to be taken as having brought about a new lead in the disposition of shrine units in the temple complex and a separate and important shrine for Śrī or Tāyar was part of such a movement. It is just possible that even on the Śaiva side, the movement was of a like character and was preceded by the temple complexes like those of Vijayālaya-chōḷiśvaram, Tirukkaṭṭalai, Kīlappaluvūr. In the last mentioned place where the main shrines Agastīśvaram and Chōḷiśvaram would seem to be datable to the time of Āditya, we have a separate Amman or Dēvi shrine (in the name of Kuntalāmbika) to the North West of the smaller main shrine—both the main shrines face west—and the other subshrines are aligned as follows: Sūrya to the east, Saptamātṛikas to the south, Gaṇeś'a to the south west, Subrahmaṇya to west and Chandikēśvara to the north west. It is to be seen that the position of the subshrines for the above deities is *directionally* identical with that at Tirukkaṭṭalai except that the temple itself at the latter place is facing east, as is most common. Thus it would appear that the position of the subshrine is fixed irrespective of the orientation of the main shrine. The only aberrant factor at Kīlaiyur are the Sūrya and Dēvi shrines, the latter of which is not to the South West of the main shrine attached to its *mahamaṇḍapa*. It is, however, significant to note that as in the Dēvi shrine at Tirukkaṭṭalai, this also is facing south and this orientation in both the places was perhaps deliberate, as it operates irrespective of the differing orientations of the main temples in both places. Since both the temples are



built during the reign of Āditya, that of Kīlaiyur being slightly later to that of Tirukkṛṭṭalai, we may presume that this period, namely the close of the 9th century and early 10th century A.D. saw a sea change in the disposition of the Devi shrine *vis-a-vis* the main shrine and in relation also to the other subshrines. We do not know, however, if the separate Devi shrines in these two places were coeval with the main shrines or not. This was obviously a stage, just prior to the location of the Devi shrine as adjoining the *mahāmaṇḍapa* of the temple which came into being, approximately from mid 11th century A.D. It is interesting to note that even temples of the time of Parāntaka and later upto the Imperial Chōḷa line do not have any Dēvi shrine well aligned to the main temple in the original conception, although most of the temples now show a Dēvi shrine integrated with *mahāmaṇḍapa* of these temples. It is needless to say that in most of these cases, the *mahāmaṇḍapa* is not part of the original lay-out wherein only the main *vimāna* with an attached *mukhamaṇḍapa* (now called *ardhamaṇḍapa*) existed and thus the question of taking the existing Dēvi shrine in original is largely negatived. Even in some of the temples of the time of Rāja Rāja, we have Dēvi shrines either not existing separately, or occurring separately on the North West side of the main temple, and facing the same direction as the main shrine.

Thus, by and large, we are drawn to the view that the diversification of temple units within the main complex providing for separate ritual worship of many deities other than the main deity, the fixation of the Dēvi shrine as that of the chief and immanent consort of the main deity, the giving of names to the main god and goddess in a manner different from the earlier practice of calling it after the *biruda* of the patron king, had all coeval and almost concomitant initiation and could not have been earlier than the first quarter of the 10th century A.D. This is, however, only a preliminary stage to the still later and almost consolidated practice of the Amman shrine facing a common vestibule with the main shrine; and having the sub shrines like Gaṇēśa, Subrahmaṇya, Chandēśa to the south west, North west and north respectively. It is no less interesting to perceive that in the process of the differentiation of the minor deities including the main goddess, Subrahmaṇya and Gaṇēśa, and in the shedding of the Trinity affiliation almost



for ever (except in the Dakṣiṇāmūrti icon combining the concepts of Brahma and Śiva, in a way not offensive even to Vaiṣṇava usage as seen later) the *Saptamātrika* shrine disappeared, and was not seen occurring beyond mid 11th century A.D. in the Tamil country. The conceptual elements inherent in the *Saptamātrika* group had been virtually distributed among the main and the subshrines of the Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava temple units after this period, resulting in the dissolution of this concept.

A significant difference between the main *garbhagrihas* of Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava temples in this context would be that while in the former, the invariable presence of a *nirguna Liṅga* on a *pītha* without any ostensible Dēvi association would make a separate shrine for Dēvi quite rational, in the Vaiṣṇava case, the occurrence of the original consorts *rī* and *Bhū* alongside the main deity in the cella whether standing, seated or reclining would make the separate Dēvi shrine, as arose later, appear redundant. But in this would lie the internal evidence that the earlier stages showed the female consorts alongside (both materially and conceptually) and thus did not need any separate Dēvi shrine. In the case of the *liṅga*, the fact of the female presence is predicated almost from this period, by the disposition of the *liṅga pītha*, which by the invariably circular shape it assumes from this time, was looked upon as the *yōni* or the *adhara Śakti*, a character which was not given to the *pītha* in its earliest occurrence, or to the word *yōni* in its earliest architectural currency. The fact remains that this was brought about by the ramification of rituals and the persistence of the Bhakti cult which made Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja alike, aside of their philosophies, give preference to Sri or Amba as the very *Dhatri* or sustainer of the universe and the repository of all graces.

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At the end of the lecture Messrs. S. R. Venkataraman, B. Sitaraman, S. Rajam and A. G. Venkatachari took part in the discussion. Sri S. T. Srinivasagopalachari then exhibited few rare bronzes.



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