





*Archaeological Series No. 56*

**SRI  
AHOBILA  
NARASIMHA SWAMY TEMPLE**  
( TEMPLE MONOGRAPH )

*By*

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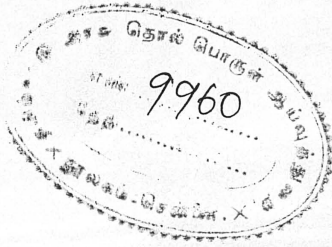
*Published by*

**THE DIRECTOR, ARCHAEOLOGY & MUSEUMS  
GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH  
HYDERABAD**

**1982**



730.95484  
81T



PRINTED AT THE RAMESH PRINTERS & PUBLISHERS,  
CHIKKADPALLY, HYDERABAD-500 020.  
Phone : 63338.



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DEDICATED  
TO  
BHAGAVAN SRI SATHYA SAI  
NARAYANA

—SITARAM



## INTRODUCTION

This monograph has been prepared by me on 'Ahobila Sri Narasimha Swamy Temple' as a result of a discussion a few years ago with His Holiness Sri Jayendra Sarawathi Garu, the Sankaracharya of Kanchi-Kamakoti Peetham, when he was camping in the precincts of Swrajya Printing Press, Secunderabad during his Chaturmasya Deeksha. His Holiness then was pleased to suggest that I should prepare a monograph on the Ahobilam temple. I also visited His Holiness Sri Vedanta Desika Yatindra Maha Desikulu, the Jeeyangar of Ahobila Mutt, who is the reigning 44th Pontiff of Ahobila Mutt, in September, 1980. When I mentioned to His Holiness that I was preparing the Ahobilam monograph he was very pleased to bless me and the project and has sent me several rare photographs which are used in this publication.

My Sashtanga pranams are offered on this occasion at the lotus feet of Shri Satya Sayeesa Gurudev of Prasanth Nilayam, but for whose grace the book would not have been written.

My sashtanga pranams to the feet of the Divine Couple - Mother Chenchulakshmi and Sri Ahobila Narasimhaswamy in Ahobilam, Sri Amruthavalli sametha Shri Lakshminarasimha Swamy at Chinna Ahobilam and the lotus feet of Sri Yoga Narasimhaswamy in the Alagai Singar Shrine at Tirumalai.

Sri S. Narayana Rao, as Technical P.A. to the Commissioner has accompanied me several times to Ahobilam during field studies. Sri P. V. Sarma, Technical Assistant, Vijayawada, has read the proofs. Both of them have seen the publication through the press and the publication has come out quickly. I am grateful to them.

This book would not have been written, but for the grace of Bhagwan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. The book is therefore dedicated with love to the twin feet of Sri Sathya Sai.

— SITARAM  
(P. Sitapati)



## CHAPTER I

### AHOBILAM

Ahobilam is famous in Andhra Pradesh for its great and ancient Sri Narasimha Swamy temple. Actually Ahobila Kshetra, which is the Narasimha Kshetra in India, comprises the famous Nava Narasimhas or nine Narasimhas with shrines for all the forms. Ahobilam is a hill temple for Ugra Narasimha Swamy, the Lord who destroyed Hiranyakasipa and bestowed his blessings on Prahlada, the virtuous son of Hiranyakasipa. The hill temple on Eguva Ahobilam is 8 km. away from the Diguva Ahobilam town, set in picturesque mountains of Nallamalai hills in Kurnool District of Andhra Pradesh in India. Diguva Ahobilam can be reached from Hyderabad by road via Kurnool (135 km. from Hyderabad) and Allagadda (Kurnool-Allagadda 130 km.). Diguva Ahobilam is 24 km. away from Allagadda.

Ahobilam (or Upper Ahobilam or Eguva Ahobilam) has the main temple for Ugra Narasimha and shrines and locations for all the nine or Nava Narasimhas; the lower Ahobilam (Diguva Ahobilam) has a temple for Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy, which is a beautiful treasure house of unique sculptures of the Vijayanagara School of sculpture and architecture. The lord of the temple is obviously an ancient tribal deity worshipped from countless ages by the tribals in the Nallamalai hills—more particularly the Chenchus. It is thus that the consort of the Lord hails from the Chenchu tribe and is the famous Chenchu Lakshmi, wooed into holy wedlock by the Man-lion incarnation of Vishnu. The Narasimha cult of worship appears to have commenced in Andhra Pradesh and south India even before the dawn of the historical age in India. The lion must have been an animal which was part of the fauna of India in those ancient days. The lion is the most majestic of the animal kingdom and it is not surprising that man all around the world has held it in awe, admired its majestic mien and valorous qualities and tried to measure up to its qualities of majestic beauty, strength and mobility.

Vishnu, it is well-known, is famous for his Dasaavatars. Lord Krishna in the Gita has explained the rationale for his Avatars in the famous sloka.

“Yada Yadahi dharmasya Glanirbhavati bhārata  
Abhyuththanamadharmasya tadatmanam Srijamyaham.  
Paritrānaya Sadhunam, Vināsayācha Dushkrutam  
Dharma Samsthāpanarthaya, Sambhavami Yuge Yuge.”

The latter portion of the sloka says, ‘To protect the righteous and punish the wicked and to reestablish Dharma, I reincarnate yuga after yuga’.

Among the ten avatars of Vishnu :

“Matsya, Kurma Varahascha Narasimhascha Vamanaha  
Ramo Ramascha Ramascha Krishna Kalki Janardhanaha”

The avatar of Narasimha is for protecting the righteous, and his devotee Prahlada and to punish the wicked Hiranyakasipa. In the process Dharma was reestablished.

It is said that when Lord Narasimha destroyed Hiranyakasipa, all the celestials, and rishis and others acclaimed him as “Aho ! Balaha”. As Lord Narasimhaswamy was greeted as ‘Ahobala’, the Lord is said to have stated that the teertha where the Lord manifested himself would become known as Ahobala teertha.

Yerrapragada, the Telugu poet, the author of the Telugu ‘Nrisimhapuranam’ – a contemporary of Prolaya Vema Reddy - starts his Nrisimha Purana as follows :

శ్రీకి నిరంతరంబు కడుదెన్న సలాడేడు రాగలీల ను  
తృకము బొంది యొప్పు తన చిత్తము జూపిడు మాడ్కినిత్య ర  
మ్యాకృతియైర కౌస్తుభము, నగ్గుపయింబదరించు నుత్తమ  
శ్లోకుడహోబిలేఘడిలోకుడు లోకముగాచుగావుతన్.

Annamacharya, the great Tallapaka poet considered that there was no difference between Lord Narasimha and Lord Venkateswara in the words :

ఈవల నహోబిలాన నిరవైయున్న వాడు  
శ్రీవేంకటాద్రి మీద సిద్ధమూర్తి యీతడు.

The Lord of Ahobilam is thus the cosmic one Sri Narayana, who is the Paramatma. May He bestow his grace on all mankind!

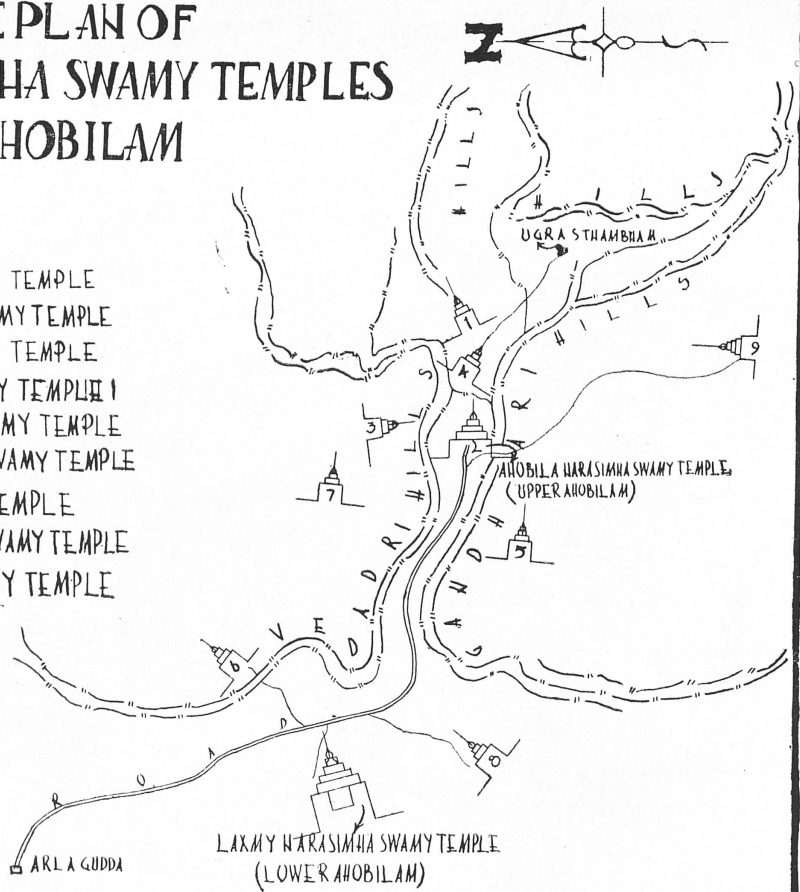


Fig. 1

# SITE PLAN OF NAVA NARASIMHA SWAMY TEMPLES AT AHOBILAM

## REFERENCE

- 1 JWALA NARASIMHA SWAMY TEMPLE
- 2 AHOBILA NARASIMHA SWAMY TEMPLE
- 3 MALOLA NARASIMHA SWAMY TEMPLE
- 4 CRODA NARASIMHA SWAMY TEMPLE
- 5 KARENJA NARASIMHA SWAMY TEMPLE
- 6 BHARGAVA NARASIMHA SWAMY TEMPLE
- 7 YOGA NARASIMHA SWAMY TEMPLE
- 8 CHATRAVATA NARASIMHA SWAMY TEMPLE
- 9 PAWANA NARASIMHA SWAMY TEMPLE



Drawn by  
S. Bhaskaran (S.A.)  
S. Vishnumathy (D.M.)

## CHAPTER II

### THE NAVA NARASIMHASWAMY SHRINES

Figure 1 shows the site plan of the nine Narasimha Swamy temples. Actually it will be seen that there are ten shrines including the Lakshminarasimha Swamy temple in lower Ahobilam. The traditional accounts of the Nava Narasimha Swamy shrines in the Nava Narasimha Kshetram of Ahobilam is described in the Ahobilam Kaifiyat.

#### Ahobilam Kaifiyat :

The Ahobilam Kaifiyat forming part of Mackenzie collections gives very valuable information regarding the Ahobilam temples. The Kaifiyats, which are digests prepared from 'Kaviles' or village registers containing information on the political, religious, social and other conditions of villages in Deccan, were prepared by pandits and musaddis working under Col. Mackenzie.

The Ahobilam Kaifiyat is in Telugu and was written by one Kasuba Karnam Ramanna in the year 1810 (28th July, 1810). The Kaifiyat is available in the State Archives at Hyderabad.

#### Traditional Accounts of the Nava Narasimhas :

The Ahobilam Kaifiyat gives the legendary account substantiating the name of Ahobilam. "In the cosmic expanse and in the fourteen worlds is the earth; on this and in the 'abhinava jambu dweepa' and to the south of the area of mount Meru and near the southern Varanasi - Srisailam, a part of Karnataka Country— is to be found the Nallamalai hill range. On one of these mountains, eight amadas from Srisaila Kshetra, Garuda commenced silent penance to obtain a vision of Lord Narasimha who destroyed Hiranyakasipa. The Lord in his grace, after long years of the tapas of Garuda, manifested Himself in the cave of a mountain".

"Ten 'paruvus' to the north-east of the mountain where Garuda was doing penance, a vision of his manifestation was then granted to Garuda, who after obtaining a sign of the location of the mountain-cave, gladly travelled thither and saw the embodiment of the satswaroop. Mahapurusha, Lord Jwala-narasimha not easily accessible to common people. Garuda then worshipped the Lord, and praised him that 'Ahobilam is mahabalam' (Ahobilam is a great sustainer with great strength). The Lord's *Divya mangala vigraha* was worshipped by him with several stotras, Garuda then considered himself as blessed after a vision of the Lord. This divine place thereafter obtained the deserving name of Ahobilam".

"The mountain on which Garuda performed tapas became famous as Garudachala. In the days of yore when truth and dharma prevailed, great heat was observable near the mountain-cave of Ahobila; according to legend when green grass was put in the cave, it would catch fire and smoke would be



emitted. Several great Rishis lived there for a time; after sometime with the knowledge that great places would become common janapadas in the Kali age, they left for northern lands, covering up the Narasimha cave with boulders. Traditionally therefore this place is being called the Narasimha Kshetra. There are thus nine Narasimha places—Rishi-installed and worshipping areas.

Jwala Ahobila Maha Lola  
Kroda Karancha Bhargava  
Yogananda Kshatravata  
Pavaneya Nava Moorthayaha

The nine Narasimha sthalas are— 1. Jwala Narasimha 2. Ahobila Narasimha 3. Mahalola-Narasimha 4. Kroda Narasimha 5. Karanja Narasimha 6. Bhargava Narasimha 7. Yogananda Narasimha 8. Kshatravata Narasimha and 9. Pavana or Holy Narasimha.

The Jwala Narasimha is ten 'paruvus' to the north-east of Garudachalam hill. To the south-west of this place is Ahobila Narasimha in Garudadri hill-cave. To the north of this place at a distance of one coss is to be found Mahalola Narasimha. To the south of this place at a distance of one coss is Kroda Narasimhulu. To the north-west of this place at a distance of three paruvus is Karanja Narasimhulu. In the direction of Kubera, at a distance of two paruvus is Bhargava Narsimhulu. To the west of this place at a distance of three paruvus is Yogananda Narasimhulu. To the south-west of this place, at a distance of six paruvus is Kshatravata Narasimhulu. To the eastern side of this place at a distance of one amada is Pavana Metu Narasimhulu. To the north-east of this Ahobila temple at a distance of ten paruvus is to be found the Ukkukambalu (steel pillar) on a mountain, the place where Lord manifested himself out of a pillar on Prahlada's prayer. This is by tradition the place of Hiranyakasipa, where Hiranyakasipa vadha took place."

The above is the account given in Ahobila Kaifiyat regarding the Narasimha Kshetra of Ahobilam.

The site plan in figure 1 shows the nine Narashimha temples which are to be found both at Diguva Ahobilam as well as in Eguva Ahobilam.

At a distance of eight kilometres from the Diguva Ahobilam is Upper Ahobilam among the very picturesque Ahobilam mountains. Six Narasimhamurtis are enshrined in these mountainous zones. Shrine No. 1 in the sketch is the temple for Jwalanarasimha Swamy. Shrine No. 2 is the main Ahobila Narasimha Swamy temple on Garudachala. Shrine No. 3 is the Malola Narasimha Swamy temple, while shrine No. 4 is the shrine for Kroda Narasimha Swamy and shrine No. 5 is the temple for Karanja Narasimha Swamy and shrine No. 9 is the temple for Pavana Narasimha Swamy.

There are three Narasimha Murtis in the Diguva Ahobilam area on the plains. These are shrine No. 6—the shrine for Bhargava Narasimha Swamy, shrine No. 7 is the shrine for Yoga Narasimha Swamy and shrine No. 8 is the shrine for Chatravata Narasimha Swamy. In addition there is the Diguva Ahobilam shrine for Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy (No. 10).

## UPPER AHOBILAM

1. *Ahobila Narasimha Swamy* : The Ahobila Narasimha Swamy temple (at No. 2 in the sketch) is the ancient temple for Lord Ahobila Narasimha Swamy. The Ahobilam Kaifiyat mentions that Garudalwar who performed tapas saw the Lord as an embodiment of Lord Jwala Narasimha. The cave temple with a 'bilam' is in Upper Ahobilam for Ugra Narasimha Swamy.

The Lord Ahobila Narasimha Swamy manifested Himself in a cave in Upper Ahobilam on Gafudadri. This Lord appears to have been worshipped by the tribal people of the area even in the early dawn of the historical age. The sanctum sanctorum in the temple is actually a very naturally formed cave in solid rock measuring about 8' x 7' with the height being 3½' only for half of the western portion of the cave where the Mulamurti has manifested Himself facing east. The rest of the cave i.e.—nearly about half of the small cave shrine is also only 6' in height.

### The Mulamurti in the Garbhalayam i.e., the cave shrine

Plate I shows the Mulavirat – the Ugra Narasimha Swamy in the cave temple of Upper Ahobilam. This Swamy is the Ahobila Narasimha Swamy. According to tradition the material of the Murti is made of Salagramasila. The mountains in the area are made out of solid granite rock but the Murti appears to be made of black basaltic stone.

The main shrine is entered through a 'bila' – or mouth of a cave. The Lord is on the right side, as one enters the bilam i.e., on the western side of the cave, facing east. There is an image of Prahlada opposite the 'Mula Murti' on the eastern portion in a small niche. The bilam on the western side has just sufficient space for the priest to sit down under the rock ceiling above.

The 'Mula Virat Murti' at Ahobilam is a *unique*-seated Ugramurti. The 'Swamy' is a Sthauna-Narasimha, as One who has emerged out of a pillar. The Sthauna-Narasimha is usually an image with four arms, while the neck of the Narasimha image is covered with thick mane. The left leg is folded while the right leg is hanging down. In other forms of Sthauna Narasimha, there are eight, twelve or sixteen hands, some of them holding the Hiranyakasipa asura, drawing out his entrails and killing him.

The Ugra-Narasimhaswamy, an ancient stone image is in the Sukhasana pose with right leg folded and the left leg dangling down. The Ugramurthi is shown destroying the demon Hiranyakasipa lying on his lap. The demon's head is to the right and his legs to the left. Prahlada is shown to the right in anjali-hasta pose. The Ugramurthi shows the ferocious aspect of Lord Narasimha. The entire image is considered to be made of Salagrama stone. The image is 3 feet high. The Simhatoranam may be noted. The Salagrama mala and Lakshmi-mala may also be noted.

The Jwala Ahobila Narasimha Swamy bronze (usually kept in the down hill shrine) is a unique, beautiful form of Narasimha with ten hands. The Swamy is in the seated pose, killing Hiranyakasipa on his thigh. This is a beautiful bronze (Plate 1 AA) with ten hands. The Garuda at the base is in flying pose.

The ten hands of the Lord are as given below :—

1. The uppermost right and left hands hold the Sankha and Chakra as in Vishnu images. (2)
2. Hiranya Kasipa is on the lap of the Lord, with feet to one side and one hand is holding the head of the demon in position. (3)
3. One hand is holding the demon's feet in position. (4)
4. Two hands (with the talons of the lion) are tearing out the entrails of the demon (6)
5. Two hands holding the intestines of the demon (8)
6. Two hands are holding Ankusa and mace (10)

The bronze has a sthanaka 'Prahlada' in the anjalihasta pose.

There is another Prahlada on the eastern side of the 'bilam' is a seated Murti in the Padmasana in Anjalihasta pose. This Murti is about 3' high on a base about 9" high. (Plate 1A).

The Lord Ahobila Narasimha has been worshipped and praised by countless devotees, down the ages. Among them are Sri Tirumangai Alwar, Sri Ramanuja Acharya and Sri Nigamantha Desika and the famous Chaitanya Deva. Tallapaka Annamacharya has also worshipped the Lord and sung his praises.

Lord Vishnu in the Narasimha form has been worshipped by the great Sankaracharya in the wellknown 'Lakshmi Nrisimha Sthuthi'.

Srimathpayonidhi Niketana Chakrapane  
Bhogindra Bhogamanirajitha Punyamurthe  
Yogisa Saswatha Saranya Bhavabdhipotha  
Lakshmi Nrisimha Mama Dehi Karavalambam

Lakshmi pathe Kamalanabha Suresha Vishno  
Yagnesa Yagnamadhusudhana Viswarupa  
Brahmanya Kesava Janardhana Vasudeva  
Lakshmi Nrisimha Mama Dehi Karavalambam

Prahladavarada Parasara Pundarika  
Vyasambarisha Suka Saunaka Hrunnivasa  
Bhaktanuraktha Paripalana Parijatha  
Lakshmi Nrisimha Mama Dehi Karavalambam

Samsara Sagara Nimajjana Muhyamanam  
Dinamvilokya Vibho Karunanidhe Mam  
Prahlada Khedha Parihara Paravatara  
Lakshmi Nrisimha Mama Dehi Karavalambam





PLATE 1 : Narasimha Swamy, Upper Ahobilam



PLATE 1A : Prahlada in Anjali-hasta pose in a niche of cave temple, Upper Ahobilam



PLATE 1AA : Jwala Narasimha Swamy (Dasabhuja Narasimha), Upper Ahobilam



PLATE 2 : Kroda Narasimha with a figure of Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy

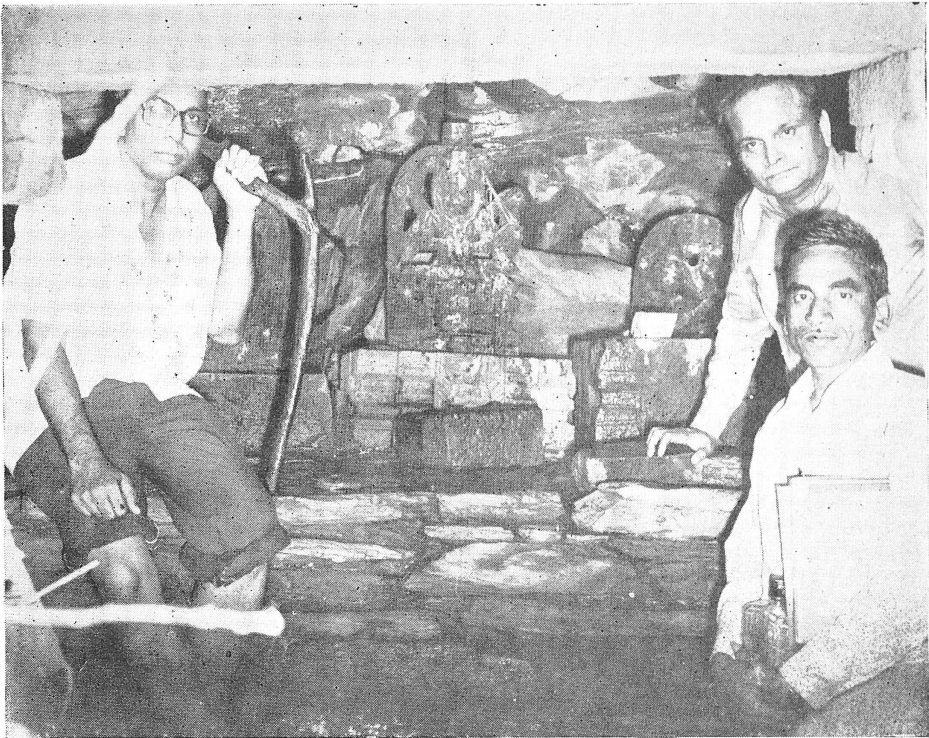


PLATE 2A : Inner view of Natural Cave-shrine of Jawala Narasimha Swamy, Upper Ahobilam





PLATE 2AA : Shrine of Kroda Narasimha Swamy



PLATE 2B : Bhargava Narasimha Swamy

#### THE NAVA NARASIMHA SWAMY SHRINES

Matha Nrisimhascha Pitha Nrisimhascha  
Bratha Nrisimhascha Sakha Nrisimhascha  
Vidya Nrisimho Dravinam Nrisimhascha  
Swamy Nrisimha Samkalpam Nrisimhaha

Prahlada Manasa Saroja Viharabringa  
Ganatharanga Dhavalanga Ramasthithanga  
Sringera Samgara Kritalasadvaranga  
Lakshmi Nrisimha Mama Dehi Karavalambam

This Lord is worshipped as —

Ahobilay Garuda Salla Madhye Kripa vasatha  
kalpitha Sannidhanam  
Lakshmya Samalingitha Vama bhagam  
Lakshmi Nrisimha Saranam Prapadye.

Another famous 'sthothram' of the Lord Nrisimha Deva, is the 'Srimanthara raja Pada sthothram' traditionally attributed to Sankara, who is said to have praised the Lord in eleven slokas. Similarly 'Sri Nrisimha Panchamrutham' is another famous sthothra attributed to Sri Rama. Both these sthothras are given in Appendix E in the Telugu script.

#### Other Narasimha Murthis on Upper and Lower Ahobilam

2. The *Kroda Narasimha Murthi* or Varaha Narasimha Murthi is on the banks of the Bhavanasini on the way to Jwala Narasimha Swamy shrine. There is a sixteen pillared mandapa here with bas reliefs of Rama, Anjaneya, etc. There is a small temple cave where there are two images, one of Lakshmi Narasimha swamy and another sthanaka figure of Varaha Narasimhaswamy with Goddess Bhudevi on the left shoulder of Varaha Swamy. The Goddess is shown as embracing the 'snout' portion of the Lord (Plate 2). There is an image of Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy also in the cave shrine. (Plate 2A shows the shrine).

3. *Jwala Narasimha Swamy on Upper Ahobilam*: The Jwala Narasimha Murthi is between the two mountains Garudachalam and Vedachalam on a hill called Achalachayya Meru according to tradition. This is said to be a difficult trip but the shrine on the mountain was visited by the author and party\*.

The Jwala Narasimha swamy stone image here is similar to that of Ugra Narasimha Swamy at Upper Ahobilam. There are a few other stone sculptures here. Chapter III gives a detailed account of the trek to this temple.

4. *Bhargava Narasimhaswamy*: The Bhargava Narasimhaswamy shrine stands on a precipice 3 Kms. away from Diguva Ahobilam. An Akshya Tirtha is also reported to be here. Plate 2(B) shows the

\* Chapter III describes the 'trek' in detail.

idol of Bhargava Narasimhaswamy. The Lord is shown here with four hands, the upper two holding the Chakra and Sankha while the lower two hands are shown destroying Hirenayakasipa tearing out the intestines. Hiranyakasipa is shown with his right hand holding a sword. Prahlada is seen on the right in the sthanaka Anjali hasta pose. The crown of Lord Narasimha is worth noting as also the Dasa Avatara bas-reliefs on the torana which forms an integral part of the sculpture.

5. *Yogananda Narasimha Swamy* : The Yogananda Narasimhaswamy shrine is a plain stone structure lying at a distance of 3 Kms. from Lower Ahobilam. Plate 2(C) shows the plain shrine. It has a square sanctum sanctorum.

Plate 2(D) shows the stone image of Yoga Narasimhaswamy. The idol is broken and has the Chakra and Sankha in the upper hands while the two lower hands are seen resting on the Yoga-patta. This image conforms to the type of traditional Yoga Narasimhaswamy images.

6. *Karanja or Saranga Narasimha Swamy* : Plate 2(E) shows the Karanja or Saranga Narasimhaswamy shrine. The shrine has no special features but has been constructed with granite slabs.

Plate 2(F) shows the stone image of Karanja Narasimhaswamy. It is worth noting that this idol is shown with a open-cobra hood over the Lord. The Lord is shown holding a Saranga or bow. The Lord is shown seated in meditation. The stone idol is not very well preserved and deserves better attention from Ahobilam Temple authorities.

7. *Malola (Lakshmi) Narasimha Swamy* : The Vedadri mountain in Upper Ahobilam area is also known as Lakshmi Kshetra. The shrine for Sri Lakshmi Narasimha is one mile away from the Upper Ahobilam shrine. The Swamy here is a Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Murthy, the bestower of 'Iha Para Loka Sukhamulu' (ఇహ పరలోక సుఖప్రదాయకమూర్తి).

Plate 2(G) shows a general view of the dilapidated Malola Narasimha Swamy shrine. Plate 2(H) shows the stone idol of Malola Narasimha Swamy. The Lord is seen seated here in the Sukhasana with his left leg folded while the right leg is shown dangling at an angle. Sri Lakshmi is shown seated on the thigh of the Lord with kataka and Prasrita vama hastas; the Lord's two upper hands hold the Chakra and Sankha, his lower right hand is in the Abhaya hasta pose and the lower left hand is shown embracing his consort. The Lord is Malola as he is Lover of Mother Lakshmi. This kshetra is well known as Sridevi Kshetra. According to tradition, devotees who recite the Ashtakshari Lakshmi Narasimha mantra obtain riches and Mukti (Ihapraloka Sampadalu and Mokshamu) without fail.

8. *Pavana Narasimha Swamy* : Plate 2(I) shows a general view of the Pavana Narasimha Swamy temple at a distance of 4 miles from Garudachalam on the banks of river Pavani.

Plate 2(J) shows the picture of Pavana Narasimha Swamy. This is actually a Lakshmi Narasimha swamy with the Lord with Abhaya hasta pose. The usual chakra and sankha are in the upper hands of the

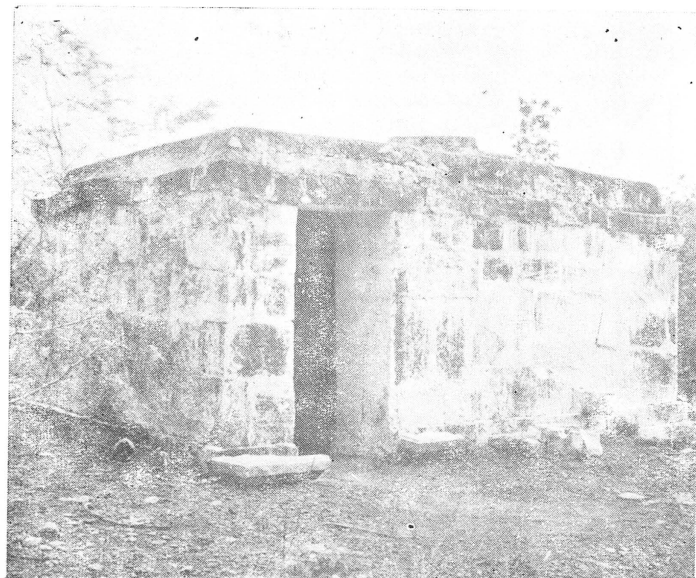


PLATE 2C : Yoga Narasimha Swamy Shrine



PLATE 2D : Yoga Narasimha Swamy





PLATE 2E : Saranga Narasimha Swamy shrine and Anjaneya temple



PLATE 2F : Karanja Narasimha Swamy



PLATE 2G : General view of Malola Narasimha Swamy



PLATE 2H : Malola Narasimha Swamy

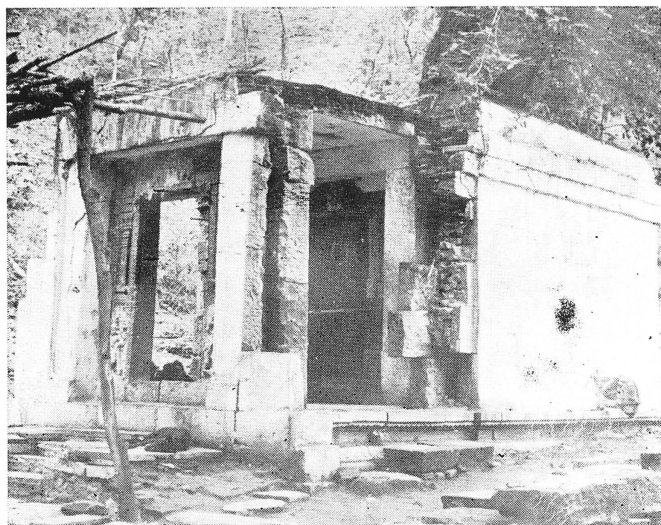


PLATE 2I: A general view of Pavana Narasimha Swamy Temple



PLATE 2J: Pavana Narasimha Swamy



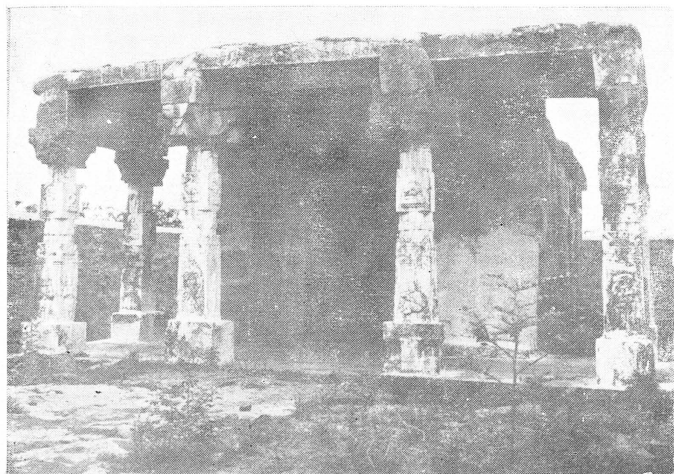


PLATE 2K : View of Chatravata Narasimha Swamy Shrine



PLATE 2L : Chatravata Narasimha Swamy





PLATE 2M : His Holiness Jiyyangar of Ahobila Mutt, Sri Vedanta Desika Yatindra Mahadesika

Lord. The lower right hand is in the Abhaya pose, while the lower left hand is shown embracing Lakshmi seated on his left thigh. The Lord is seated in the sukhāsana pose with his left leg folded while the right leg is bent at the knee and dangling down. The seven hooded Sesha near the crown is also worth noting.

9. *Chatravata Narasimha Swamy* : Plate 2(K) shows a view of Chatravata Narasimha Swamy shrine. This shrine is about 4 Kms. away from Lower Ahobilam. It has a six pillared mukha mandapa. The pillars have square adhishtanams and bear bas-reliefs of Sri Narasimha swamy, Anjaneya etc. The pillars belong to the Vijayanagara period.

Plate 2(L) shows a view of Chatravata Narasimha Swamy. This deity carved in black basaltic-stone is very beautiful. The Lord is seated in the padmasana pose. The two upper hands hold the Chakra and Sankha. The lower right hand is in the abhaya hasta pose while the lower left hand is a kati hasta, placed on the waist and the left thigh. The yagnopavitam also is seen. It is a well preserved Narasimha of the Vijayanagara period.

10. *The Prahlada Varada Narasimha Murthi* : The temple for Prahlada varada Narasimha Murthi in Diguva Ahobilam is described in detail in a separate chapter.

11. *The Ugrasthambam or UKKU pillar* is at a distance of about five miles from Upper Ahobilam. The UKKU pillar was visited by the author in 1964. The pathway to this place is a very strenuous traverse. There is a small pillar of Iron (not steel) here on the cleavage of a mountain.

### CHAPTER III

#### SRI JWALA NARASIMHA SWAMY SHRINE

The Jwala Narasimha Swamy shrine is one of the Nava Narasimhas of Narasimha kshetra briefly mentioned in Chapter II. The trek to Shri Jwala Narasimha Swamy's shrine is a difficult and strenuous journey; the journey however is very pleasant half the way along the banks of Bhavanasini river, and only the steep climb of the Ahobilam range of mountains thereafter is taxing. A party consisting of the author, Dr. V.V. Krishna Sastry, Chief Technical Officer of the Dept. of Archaeology, Mr. R.S.P. Anjaneya Sarma, P. A. to Commissioner, Archaeology and Sri V. Yellaiah, Photographer, Dept. of Archaeology, Government of Andhra Pradesh made the pleasant trek to the Shrine of Shri Jwala Narasimhaswamy on twelfth in the month of September 1980. The journey commenced at 10 A. M. in the morning and the party returned by 2 P. M.

The onward journey to the base of the Achalachayya Meru parvata between the Garudachalam and Vedachalam mountains was all along the banks of the river Bhavanasini. The party started from the Garudachalam shrine of Upper Ahobilam Shri Narasimha Swamy, from which there is a pedestrain walk. There are some mantapams on the way in ruins. The pathway was on the banks of the Bhavanasini upto a distance of one and a half miles Plate 3 shows a picturesque scene of the Bhavanasini river on the route to Jwala Narasimha Swamy shrine. Plate 4 shows the thick vegetation on way to the shrine.

The shrine of the Kroda Narasimha Swamy is on the way, on the banks of the Bhavanasini river Plate 5 gives a view of the Kroda Narasimha Swamy shrine from the river-bed. It is seen that the mantapa of this natural cave shrine is covered with creepers. Plate 6 gives a view of the Vijayanagar period mantapam and a view of the cave shrine of Shri Kroda Narasimha Murthi, or Varaha Narasimha Murthy, one of the Nava Narasimhas. Plate 7 gives a view of the basreliefs of a hunter with bows and arrows and Anjaneya Swami in anjali hashta on one of the mantapa pillars of this temple. Plate 8 gives a view of an erotic sculpture in this shrine showing a nude lady. Plate 2 shows the image of Kroda Narasimha Murthy in the cave shrine. The image is roughly carved out and damaged, It shows the Varaha Murthi with Bhudevi embracing the snout of the sthanaka Varaha Murthi. Another crude image of Narasimha Murthi with his consort Lakshmi may also be seen in the cave.

Proceeding further, the party had to cut their way in the thick vegetation to reach the base of the Achalachayya Meru Parvatha. A very beautiful and enchanting view of the Achalachayya Meru Parvatha was obtained, along with a view of the splendid water fall, which was christened by the party with the name of 'Akasha jyotir Ganga'. Plate 9 gives an enchanting view of 'Akasha jyotir Ganga' falling from the top slopes of Achalachayya Meru.

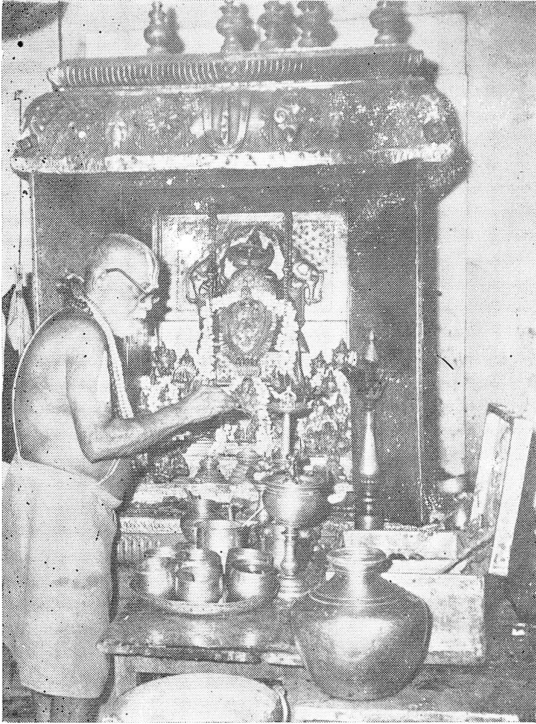
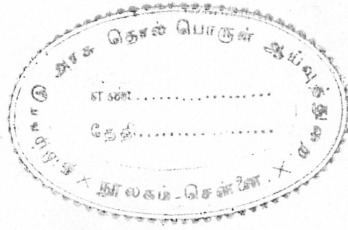


PLATE 2N : Worship of Ancient Malola Narasimha and other deities of Ahobila Mutt



PLATE 2 O : Gold image of Lakshmi Narasimha Presented by Prataparudra Deva to Ahobila Mutt





PLATE 3 : Bhavanasini river view on way to Sri Jwala Narasimha Swamy shrine



PLATE 4 : Thick vegetation on way to the Jwala Narasimha Swamy shrine



PLATE 5 : Kroda Narasimha swamy Shrine on the bank of Bhavanasini River

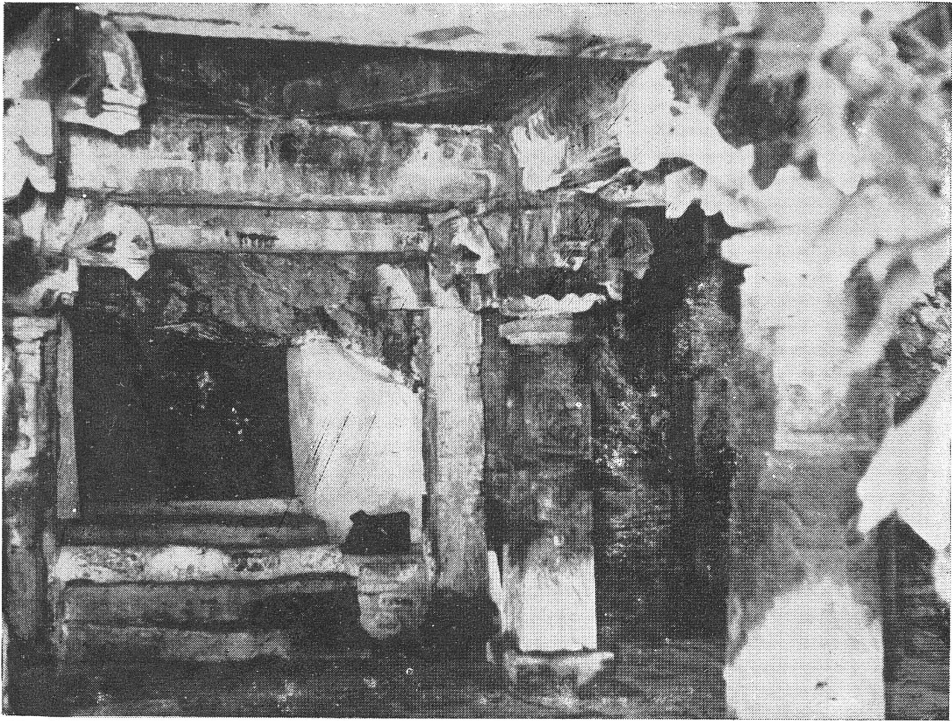


PLATE 6 : Vijayanagar mantapam and cave shrine of Sri Kroda Narasimha Swamy, Upper Ahobilam



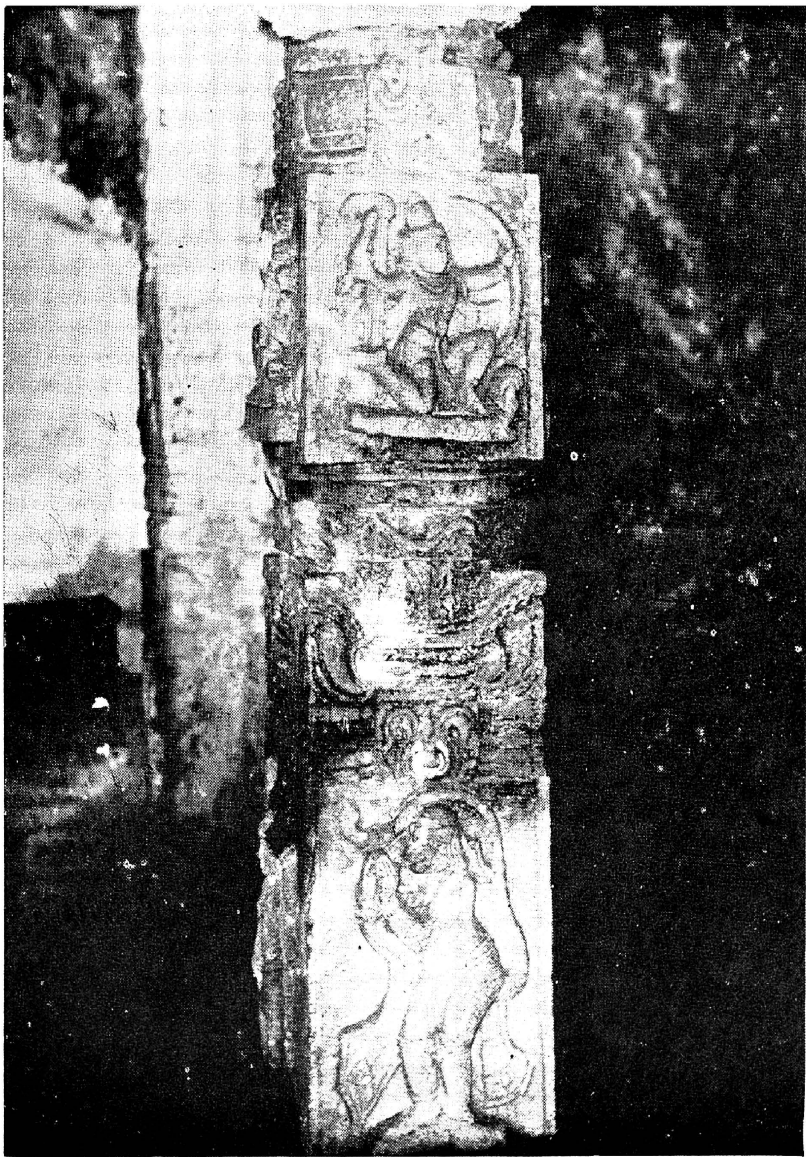


PLATE 7 : Pillar View of Kroda Narasimha Swamy shrine



PLATE 8 : Erotic Sculpture in Kroda Narasimha Swamy shrine



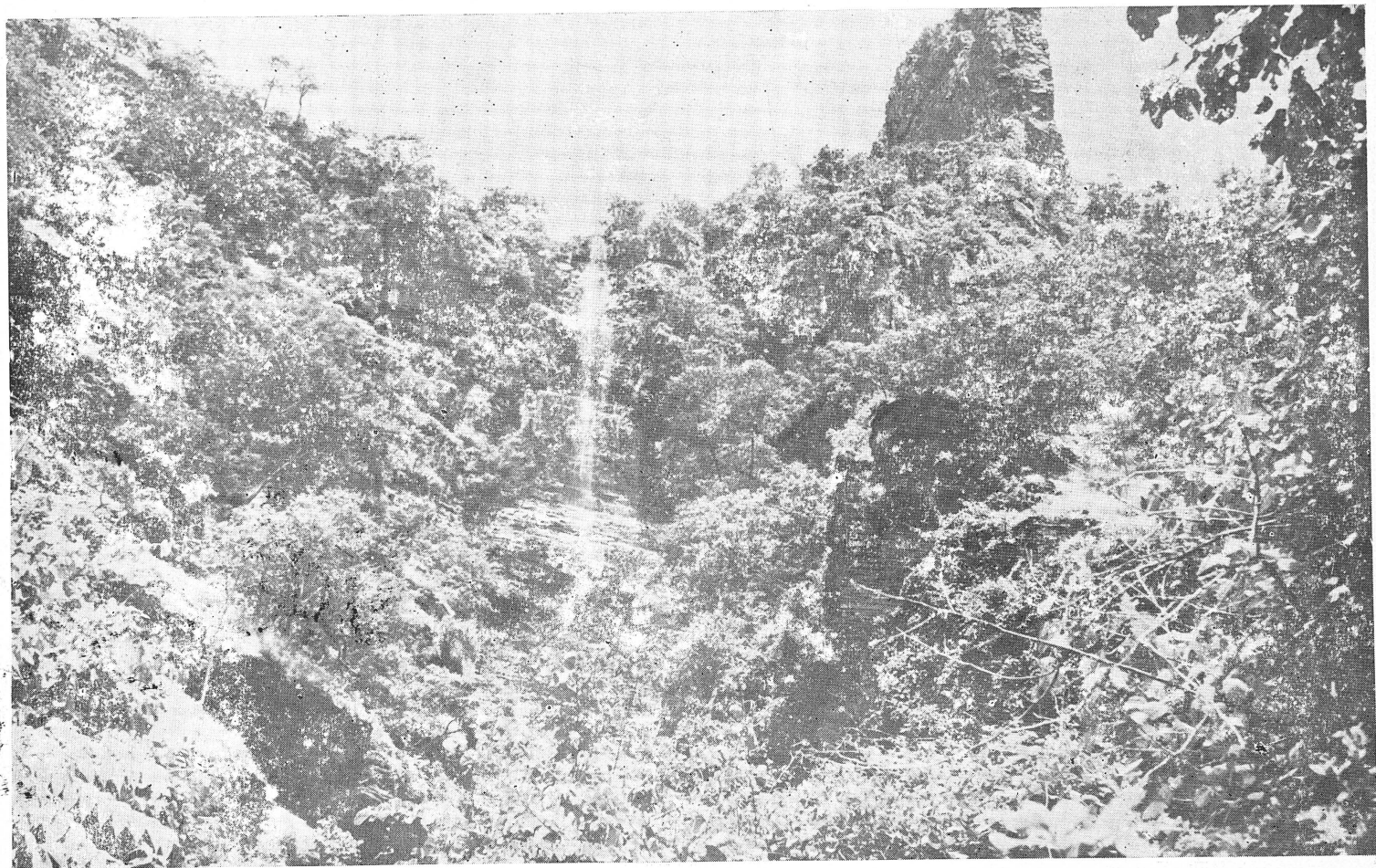


PLATE 9 : View of Akasha Jyothir Ganga falling from top slopes of Achala chayya Meru



PLATE 10 : Closer view of Akasha Jyothir Ganga



PLATE 11 : Narrow, risky mountain ledge under Akasha Jyothir Ganga water fall



PLATE 12 : Natural mountain cave shrine of Sri Jwala Narasimha Swamy, Ahobilam





PLATE 13 : View of Sri Jwala Narasimha Swamy at Ahobilam in cave shrine on Achalachayya Meru Parvata.



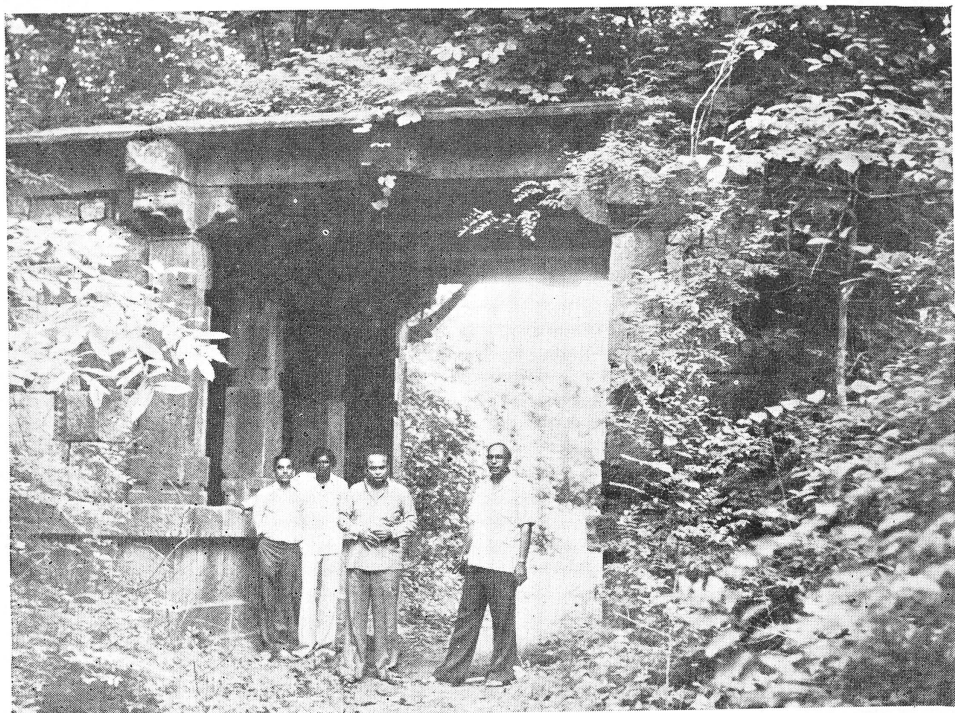


PLATE 14: Durudu Mantapam on way to Upper Ahobilam

The party then made the strenuous climb of the mountain, cutting their way up the mountain side. There is a rough path upto the temple, but the path is always covered with thick creepers and vegetation except in the festival seasons, when the growth is partly cleared, it is said, by the temple authorities. Plate 10 gives a closer view of the 'Akasha Jyotir Ganga.'

The party reached the waterfall near the top of the mountain. There is a very narrow and risky ledge of about three feet on the mountain over which the Akash jyotir Ganga falls down in large showers. This ledge was then safely traversed by the party to reach the cave shrine of Shri Jwala Narasimha Swamy. Plate 11 gives a view of the party manoeuvring the difficult and slippery mountain ledge under the Akash jyotir Ganga Waterfall.

A small natural mountain cave, on the other side of the waterfall traversed, houses the image of Shri Jwala Narasimha Swamy. Plate 12 shows the natural mountain cave housing Shri Jwala Narasimha Swamy. Plate 13 shows an inner view of the party in the natural cave Shrine of Shri Jwala Narasimha Swamy. Plate 13 shows a clear view of the Shri Jwala Narasimha Swamy shrine.

The Lord's image is over a 'Garuda' peetam in stone. The stone image is about 3 feet high. The Lord has ten hands; the upper hands hold the chakra and sankha. Two hands hold the demon 'Hiranya Kasipa' on the lap of the Lord, who is in the Sukhasana pose with his left leg folded and the right leg hanging down freely. His other hands are carrying weapons and also tearing out the intestines of the demon and destroying Hiranyakasipa. Prahlada is in Anjali hasta pose to the Lord's right side. An image to the right shows Shri Narasimha chasing the Chenchu maiden Lakshmi who is carrying a sword and shield.

On the extreme left is seen a stone image of Lord Narasimha emerging out of a pillar. Blessed must have been the pillar which played the role of 'Mother' giving birth to Lord Narasimha.

## CHAPTER IV

### HISTORY OF AHOBILAM TEMPLES

The main temple in Ahobilam is the temple for Lord Ugra Narasimhaswami at Upper Ahobilam. The God worshipped here is the man-lion form of Vishnu. The temple itself is situated in the Nallamala range of hills in Deecan, and the area is people by the tribal chenchus from ancient days. Even to this day the tribals visit the temple in fairly large numbers, and it is not an uncommon sight to see them offering animal sacrifices and more particularly fowls. The worship of the Lord appears to have started as the worship of a tribal deity, and later the deity, it would appear, came to be recognised and worshipped as the Narasimha form of Vishnu.

The mention of Vishnu in the man-lion form is to be found in the *Vishnu Sahasranama*, a part of Mahabharatha. The Vishnu Sahasranama which contains 142 verses is from the Anusasanika parva of the *Mahabharatha* as a dialogue between Bhishma and Yudhisthara. Vishnu is worshipped as "Narasimhavapuh and Sriman". 'Narasimhavapuhu' is the One who has the form of the Man-lion i. e., whose limbs are as those of a man and a lion combined. Sriman is the One who has Sri Lakshmi eternally abiding in the chest of the Lord. 'Narasimha Vapuh Sriman' is the lord who has the body of the man-lion and the one who is beautiful. He is also the 'Simha' the destroyer of sins and the reference is to Narasimha.

The Srigiri Parvata is a big range of hills traditionally recognised from ages as a huge cobra basking in the Sun with its hood at Tirumalai, its middle at Ahobilam, and its tail-end portion at Srisaillam, with the wellknown shrines on them. The Srisailla parvata is also mentioned in the Mahabharata, with references to Arjuna's battle with Lord Siva before he got the 'Pasupata'. One can therefore on the basis of mention of 'Narasimha Vapuhu' in Vishnu Sahasranama argue that the worship of man-lion form had been prevalent during the time of Mahabharatha; the man-lion incarnation is also by tradition accepted, as having taken place in the Narasimha kshetra, at Ahobilam and therefore one can take back the history of the cave Narasimha temple to the days of the Mahabharatha. The Mahabharatha period has been given various dates from 3102 BC to 9th Century BC. One can however accept the later date, and agree that, at the latest, Narasimha worship in India, has been ancient and prevalent from olden days.

#### The Puranas :

The Kurmah puranah gives an account of Vishnu tearing Hiranyakasipa to pieces. "The circumstances in which Vishnu had to assume the curious form of man-lion" are not mentioned in this Purana. Gopinatha Rao states that "Hiranyakasipu had, in his earlier life adored Brahma and obtained

from him boons to the effect that he should be so invulnerable as not to be killed by man or beast; that he should not die either in the day or in the night, and that no weapon of any kind should injure him. After he obtained these boons he naturally became haughty and irrepressible in his worrying behaviour towards the gods, and it became imperative that he should be killed. But at the same time the boon conferred by Brahma on him had to be respected. Consequently Vishnu assumed the form of a man-lion, and tore Hiranyakasipu with the claws at the time of lingering twilight forming the junction between day and night, himself being seated upon the doorsill of the mansion of Hiranyakasipu. It is obvious that, in so causing the death of the asura, not one of the boons bestowed on him by Brahma was counteracted and shown to be futile." This account given in the Padma-purana is in agreement with what is found in the Vishnu-purana and some other Puranas also.

The dates given to the Puranas vary and historians differ in this. A. L. Basham in his book 'The wonder that was India' has stated that "the Puranas (ancient stories) are compendia of legends and religious instructions. There are eighteen chief Puranas; the most important among them are the Vayu, Visnu, Agni, Bhavishya and Bhagvatha puranas. In their present form they are not very ancient, none going back earlier than the Gupta period and all containing interpolations, but much of their legendary material is very old indeed".

The commencement of the worship of the ancient deity in Ahobilam in the natural rock cave of Ahobilam mountains, can be, with reason taken back to very ancient times.

The tamilian saint Tirumangai Alwar who is given the date 8th century A.D. is also associated with the Ahobilam temple. The songs sung by him form part of the Nalayira Divya Prabandham famous for its 4000 pasurams. It is said that the saint visited Ahobilam calling it 'Singavelkundram' and proceeded to Tirupati from here. Ahobilam is one of the 108 Divya Tirupatis in India.

Traditional accounts also connect the history of the temple with Pratapa Rudra Mahadeva of the Kakatiyas. While there is no epigraphical basis to this traditional account, the presence of the early Kakatiya influence in the pillars of the Mukhamantapam of the Upper Ahobilam temple give support to the traditional account of the connection of the temple with Kakatiyas. The Mukha mandapa Kakatiya pillars only could belong to the Early Kakatiya period of Pratapa Rudra Mahadeva. The Ahobilam Kaifiyat also mentions that one Nandana Chakravarti – in the lineage of Parikshit, Janamejaya, Satanika, Aswamedat, Mahakshemendra, Rajanarendra, Somendra, Uttangabhuja (Uttangabhuja being the father of Nandana Chakravarti) was the king in whose reign, worship was being performed regularly to Ahobila Narasimhaswamy. Similarly such worship is mentioned during the time of the Chalukya kings Jagadeka Malla, Bhuvaneka Malla and Tribhuvana Malla rajas. This Kaifiyat mentions that worship was also going on during Ganapati's reign; and thereafter in the reign of Pratapa Rudra Deva Maharaja of Warangal. The reference is obviously to Kakatiya Kings of Warangal. The Ahobilam Kaifiyat mentions that the *Utsava Vighras of Ahobilaswamy were got moulded and made by Pratapa Rudra Mahadeva*. It also mentions that local people say that he did some work for *the temples and mandapas of Ahobilam*.



According to the traditional history of the Ahobila mutt, while the first Swamiji of the Ahobila Mutt was alive, Pratapa Rudra of Warangal during a campaign of his, camped near Ahobilam and melted Gold to make an image of Lord Siva, for his daily worship. Pratapa Rudra was a saivite and thus a worshipper of Lord Siva; it is said that the melted gold however kept on turning into an image of Narasimha. Pratapa Rudra is then said to have worshipped the Deity Narasimha, and gave the gold image to the first Guru of Ahobila Pitham. At present His Highness the Jiyar of Ahobilam is Sri Vedanta Desika Yatindra Maha Desika. He is the 44th Pontiff of Sri Ahobilam the Satagopa Yati propagating Srivaishnavism. This 44th Pontiff who was visited by the author of this monograph in the Ahobila Mutt at Srirangam is seen in Plate No. 2(M). Plate No. 2(N) shows the Jiyangar worshipping the ancient Malola Narasimha of the Ahobila Mutt including the gold Narasimhaswamy which was presented by Pratapa Rudra Mahadeva to the first Pontiff. Plate 2(O) shows the small gold image of Lakshmi Narasimhaswamy presented by the Pratapa Rudra Mahadeva to the first Pontiff of Ahobil Mutt. The 44th Pontiff who is doing Abhishekam to the Swarna idol of Alagai Singa presented by Pratapa Rudra Mahadeva and other deities also confirm the traditional version of history commonly current as the traditional history of Ahobila temple.

#### **Epigraphical history of Ahobilam temple :**

The temple inscriptions in Ahobilam as well as one inscription in the Srisailem temple give epigraphical confirmation of the history of the Ahobilam only from the 14th century A. D. One Prolaya Vemareddy, founder of the Reddi Kingdom of Kondaveedu (a General under the Kakatiyas who carved out a kingdom from them later) has claimed that he constructed the Sopanamargam (steps) both to Srisailem as well as Ahobilam. It is this King's court-poet Yerrapragada who is the author of the celebrated Nrisimhapuranam which gives glowing accounts of God at Ahobilam. Prolaya Vema belongs to the middle of the 14th century (1325-1353 AD) and it is obvious that the temple must have been an important pilgrimage centre by this time. This inscription is at Appendix A in original.

However, in addition to the early inscription of Prolaya Vema Reddi already mentioned there is one more inscription of King Katama Reddi Vemareddy in Salivahana Saka 1332 corresponding to 11th December, 1410 A. D., which mentions of the grant of a village by Vemareddy to Ahobila Deva for the accrual of merit to King Komaragiri Reddi of Kondaveedu. The inscription mentions that gifts were made for the 'nitya avasaru' of Sri Ahobila Deva. This inscription is at Appendix B in original.

The inscriptions of the temple also confirm that the main patronage of the temple was at the hands of the Rayas of Vijayanagar.

The Mackenzie manuscript of Ahobila Kaifiyat also mentions of an inscription (not discovered and read so far by epigraphists) referring to the construction of a Mukhamandapa in Upper Ahobilam in Salivahana year 1317 corresponding to 1385-86 by King *Harihara Maharaya* of Vijayanagar. This Harihararaya is obviously Harihara II son of Bukkaraya. The sasanam cited in the Mackenzie manuscript of Ahobilam reads as follows :

“ఈ హరిహరాయలు ప్రభుత్వము యేలుచుండగానే అహోబిల దేవాలయములో మహిమ కట్టించి శాసనం వేయించినారు. దాని యొక్క సారాంశము శిథిలమైనది. అందులవైనము ॥శ్లో॥ దేవశ్రేణి శిరోరత్నం దైత్యదీప మటంకుశం, జయయశ్రీ నృశిం హృన్య దేవ దేవస్య శాసనం — ఇక కొన్ని సంస్కృత శ్లోకాక్షరాలు శిథిలమై వున్నది. అందుచూస్తే చాల పరమేశ్వర అనిన్ని హరిహరక్షేణి పతే అనిన్ని శకాబ్దే శైలచంద్ర జ్యోతిరశిమితే భావజ్యేష్ఠ కృష్ణాష్టమ్యాం సరోజక్షేణి జననదీపి శ్రీ నిధా సౌమ్యవారే పాత్రాణాం మౌళిరత్నం హరిహర దేవతా. అహోబిల శ్రీ మనుజ మృగపతి మంటపస్య (ప్రతిష్ఠాం) ఇంద్రులో శక సుంజ్ఞ ౧౩౧౭ సంవత్సరం ఈ ప్రకారం (1817 భావ) వున్నది.”

It is also worth noting that during the period i.e., between 14th and 15th centuries, Vaishnavism took root in Andhra. Mention has already been made of the first Pontiff of Ahobila Mutt and his obtaining a Swarna Lakshmi Nrusimha image from Pratapa Rudra.

There is a very important inscription of Krishnadeva Raya who visited the temple in Salivahana Saka 1438 Yuva year. An inscription issued by him indicates that he visited the temple on his way for the conquest of Kalinga and offered the God, a necklace, a pendant of diamonds, rubies inset with emerald, a pair of bangles covered with rubies, a golden plate, and thousand varahas while his two Queens Chinna Devi and Tirumala Devi presented a Pendant. Maddur village in Chagalamarri was also gifted to the Lord for the ‘Anga Ranga Bhogas’ of the Deity. The inscription also mentions of the exploits of Krishnadeva Raya and gives his title as ‘Purva-Dakshina-Paschima Samudradhisvara, Yvanarajya Sthapanacharya and Gajapatidala Vibha’ etc. This important inscription of Sri Krishnadeva Raya and a few other important inscriptions are given in Appendix C. It is also a well known fact that Allasani Peddanna in the court of Krishnadevaraya had the then Satagopa Yati of Ahobila Narasimha Mutt as his Guru. Vaishnavism therefore prospered during this period; and Ahobilam also prospered.

Ahobilam became more popular during the time of King Sadasivaraya as a series of inscriptions in the temple during his reign confirm and mention about gifts to the Lord, feeding of Srivaishnavas etc. An inscription in Salivahana Saka 1486 referring to Sri Paramkusa Sathakopajiyangar (with English summary) is at Appendix D.

After King Sadasivaraya, there is one important inscription (Appendix E) belonging to Srirangaraya I when he was ruling at Penugonda or ‘Ghanagiri.’ By this time, the Vijayanagar Kingdom had gone into eclipse and fallen on bad days. This inscription in Salivahana Saka 1506 corresponding to 13th April, 1584 informs of the plundering of the Ahobilam temple by the armies of Ibrahim Qutub Shah also known as Malkabhiram or ‘Vibhramvaru’ and how the temple was under the possession of Muslims for several years. The plundering of the temple was in Salivahana Saka 1500 corresponding to 1578 A. D. According to tradition when Muraharirao, the Maratha Chief under the command of Qutub Shahis, brought the idol of Narasimha and produced it before Ibrahim Quli Qutub Shah, he vomitted blood and died. The traditional explanation given for this mysterious death of Ibrahim Qutub Shah is that the Lord of Ahobilam avenged the attack and the plundering of Ahobilam temple. The plundering of the temple by the forces of Ibrahim Qutub Shah is a historical fact in Salivahana 1500 A. D., and in this the forces

were assisted by the Hindu Hande Chiefs of the region. This inscription also refers to Satagopaswamy, the disciple of Parankusa Mahamuni the head of the Ahobila Mutt visiting the court of Srirangaraya to request him to release the Ahobila temple from Muslim suzerainty. Sri Kodaraju Venkataraju and Sri Tirumalaraju, Telugu Choda Chiefs were given this assignment by the Raya on the request of the head of the Ahobilam Mutt, who then marched against the forces at Ahobilam and freed the temple from Muslim control. The temple was then renovated by them and worship recommenced. The two Chiefs also obtained certain honours and privileges in the temple for themselves and their progeny.

Thereafter, a few inscriptions during the Venkatapathideva Maharaja's time mention the worship to God Ahobileswara.

The Ahobilam Kaifiyat mentions the various historical facts based on the inscriptions mentioned above. It however gives certain additional facts of the history of the temple under the Nawab of Kandनावolu or Kurnool after the fall of the Hindu Chief Gopalaraju of Kandनावolu. It would appear that many of the remaining jewels, gold vessels and silver vessels were again looted by the Muslim invaders of the temple, after the plundering of the temple by Ibrahim Qutubshah's forces. The names of Munwar Khan, Meera Saheb and others are mentioned in the Kaifiyat in this connection.

#### **Munro and Ahobilam :**

There is also a mention that the English Collector (actually a Scotsman) Col. Munro arranged for an annual payment of 100 varahas from Rudravaram village in the East India Company Taluq to be paid to Ahobilam temple.

Alapa Khan son of Munawar Khan, it is said was appropriating the Hundi collections and the 'kanukas' given for the Lord both at Upper Ahobilam and Lower Ahobilam. The Kaifiyat also mentions that there was no one (in 1810 A. D.) to support the temples, and that only the Garbhagudi and Prakaram were left in the temple; the mandapas and gopuras were in ruins. The Kaifiyat also mentions that Sri Parankusa Sriman Satagopa Jiyannagar of Ahobila Mutt who was then Guru of the Pitham was staying at Kumbakonam and that Pancharatra pujas were being performed in Ahobilam then. The absence of the Jiyannagar in Ahobilam is also mentioned. In 1810, Upper Ahobilam had one pujari and two sudras, and these were also staying there on festival days only. There were two 'pujari' brahmin houses and ten huts of 'sudras' in Diguva Ahobilam. Worship was being done for Sri Narasimhaswamy in Upper Ahobilam and also for the Chinna Ahobila Narasimhaswamy. The festival for the Swamy at both places were being performed from the 15th day of Suddha Phalguna month upto the 12th day of Bahula fortnight.

The Ahobilam temple continues to be under the Jiyars of the Ahobila Mutt even todate. The Endowments Department of the Government of Andhra Pradesh has not yet taken over the temple. In the year 1963 a renovation committee was formed with several members with Dr. N. Sanjeeva Reddy as Chairman. Renovation work was then started. The Tirumala Tirupathi Devasthanam also released

funds for putting up a choultry at Ahobilam. Several works were then taken up for the renovation of the temple. The Upper Ahobilam Rajagopura Vimanam obtained Maha Samprokshanam, after renovation on Friday, the 30th June 1978. However, there is need for more renovation work; better transport, lodging and boarding facilities which are absent now need the attention of the Endowments Department and the Temple authorities. The need for atleast a good canteen in Upper Ahobilam and Lower Ahobilam should be recognised immediately. The Tourism Department would do well to arrange daily tours to Ahobilam and back, starting with weekend services from various important centres such as Hyderabad, Madras and Bangalore. Better worship conditions should also be organised in Upper Ahobilam. Better lodging facilities are required at Upper Ahobilam. There are no such facilities whatsoever at Upper Ahobilam. With better facilities for overnight's stay, more and more pilgrims would visit the Ahobilaswamy and obtain His blessings. This will result in an increase of income to the temple.

The Ugranarasimha Swamy on the Hill at Upper Ahobilam is still receiving sacrificial worship by way of sacrifice of animals and more particularly fowls. It is desirable that this practice indulged by the tribals to this day is stopped forthwith.

Arrangements for more efficient and satvika worship of Chenchulakshmi sahita Ahobilaswamy-varu will certainly receive the blessing of the Lord Ahobila Chechu Lakshmi Narasimhaswamy to the people of Andhra Pradesh and India as a whole.

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## CHAPTER V

### ART AND SCULPTURE IN UPPER AHOBILAM TEMPLE

Figure II showing the site plan of Upper Ahobilam exhibits the various structures in the Upper Ahobilam temple in Eguva Ahobilam. This temple is on the banks of the River and sacred theertha Bhavanasini. The Theertha which is in the form of a Kundam is called 'Gaja Theertha' also. The Ahobilam Kaifiyat writer states that the Bhavanasini which joins the River Krishna at Nivarthi Sangamam does not appear to be this Bhavanasini. The Bhavanasini arises in the Nallamalalas near Atmakur and joins the River Krishna at Nivarthi. Traditionally this Bhavanasini is supposed to arise at Ahobilam, he says, but this does not appear to be so. Perhaps the Bhavanasini is a Gupta Gamini in certain areas.

#### **Durudu Mandapam :**

The ghat road from Diguva Ahobilam slowly winds its way through picturesque country with evergreen trees on both sides to the famous Eguva Ahobilam temple. On the way to upper Ahobilam is the Durudu mandapam with twelve pillars, on the sopana marga. This is a plain mandapa which has in all twelve small pillars, six on each side. There is an inscription on a slab near this mandapa which is described later in this chapter. Plate 14 shows this Durudu mandapam on the way to upper Ahobilam on the Sopana marga. It is a late structure, with no special architectural features worth-noticing.

#### **Sixteen Pillared Mandapa on the way to Eguva Ahobilam :**

There is a bigger sixteen pillared mandapam three kilometres away from Diguva Ahobilam on the way to Eguva Ahobilam. The inscription on the slab near the Durudu-mantapa mentions of a sixteen pillared mantapa on '(Pa) dunalla' for the Swamy who descends down to Diguva Tirupati for the festivals (sixteen day festivals). The Swamy is to rest on this mandapa ('Vemchaya navadharinchi') and is given offerings. The donor is Mahamandalesvara, apratika Mallikuncheti Venkatadri Maharaja son of Obula Raju and grandson of Timmarajadeva Maha Raju of Kasyapa Gotra. The inscription is dated Saka 1476, Pramadi Saravana bahula dasami day corresponding to 3rd August, 1553. This inscription is mentioned in Ahobilam Kaifiyat also. South Indian Inscription No. 235 of South Indian Inscriptions however refers to a slab inscription (set up near the sixteen pillared mandapa on the way to upper Ahobilam), which says a sixteen pillared mandapam to the south of Diguva Tirupati was built by Mahamandaleswara Kuncheti Timmaraju son of Vobulaju and grandson of Kunicheti Bai - Na Deva Choda Raja. The donors do not appear to belong to the same family; the earlier inscription (Saka 1476 - 3rd August, 1553) gives the name of Venkatadrideva Maharaju, son of Obulaju and grandson of Timmarajaye of Kasipa Gotra, *Apastamba sutra*, Yajus sakha and Solar race. The later inscription Saka 14(80) dated 13-12-1558



# PLAN OF NARASIMHA SWAMY TEMPLE AT UPPER AHOBILAM

SCALE 1CM=2M

- REFERENCE
- 1 GARUDA GUDI
  - 2 CHENCHU LAXMI GUDI
  - 3 MATHA MANDAPA
  - 4 KALYANAMANDAPA
  - 5 UYYALA MANDAPA
  - 6 VAHAHA MANDAPA
  - 7 ALMAR'S SUPERIE
  - 8 KARWAL MANDAPA
  - 9 DHANU STHANAM
  - 10 BALI PEETA
  - 11 RAJAGOPURAM
  - 12 UDDYOGA MANDAPAM
  - 13 BHARAVA MANDAM
  - 14 PAKASALA
  - 15 SARLA MANDAPAM

Drawn by  
K. Shastaran (C.I.)  
G. Vishnu Murthy



PLATE 15 : Sixteen Pillared Mantapam on way to Upper Ahobilam





PLATE 16 : View of Sixteen Pillared Mantapam on way to Upper Ahobilam



PLATE 17 ; Another view of Sixteen Pillared Mantapam





PLATE 18 : Anjaneya Swamy in the Sixteen Pillared Mantapam

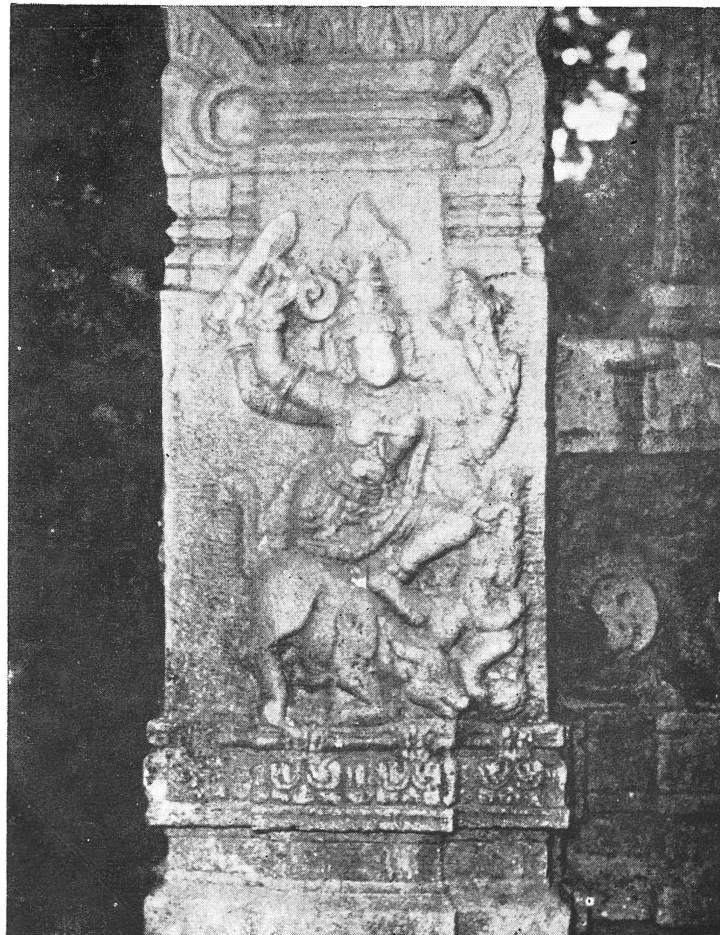


PLATE 19: Mahishasura Mardini in Sixteen Pillared Mantapam on way to U. A.

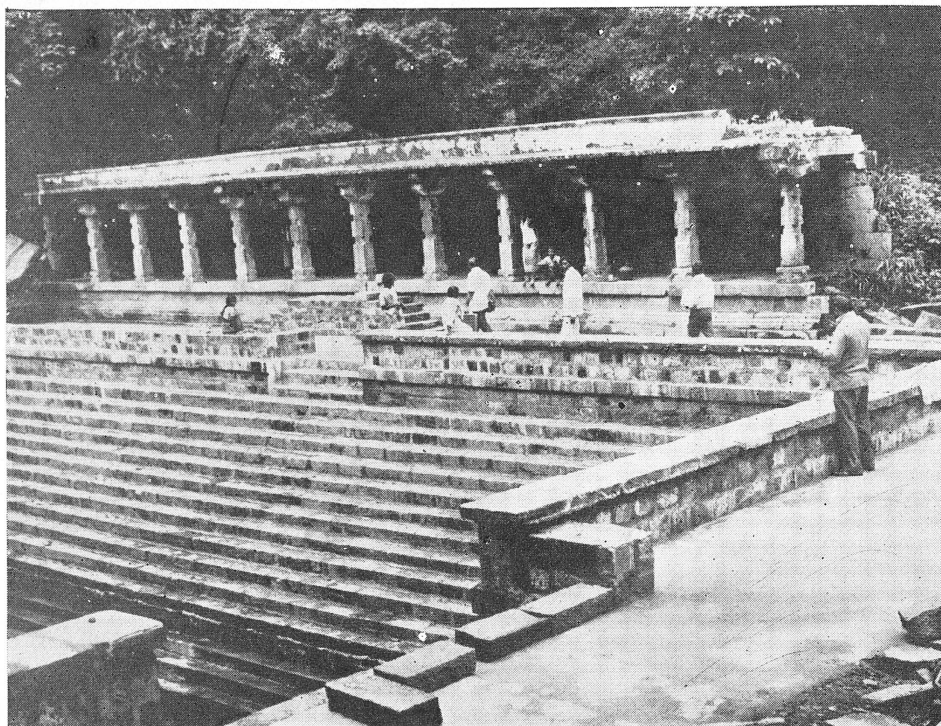


PLATE 20 : Bhairavahundam on way to Upper Ahobilam

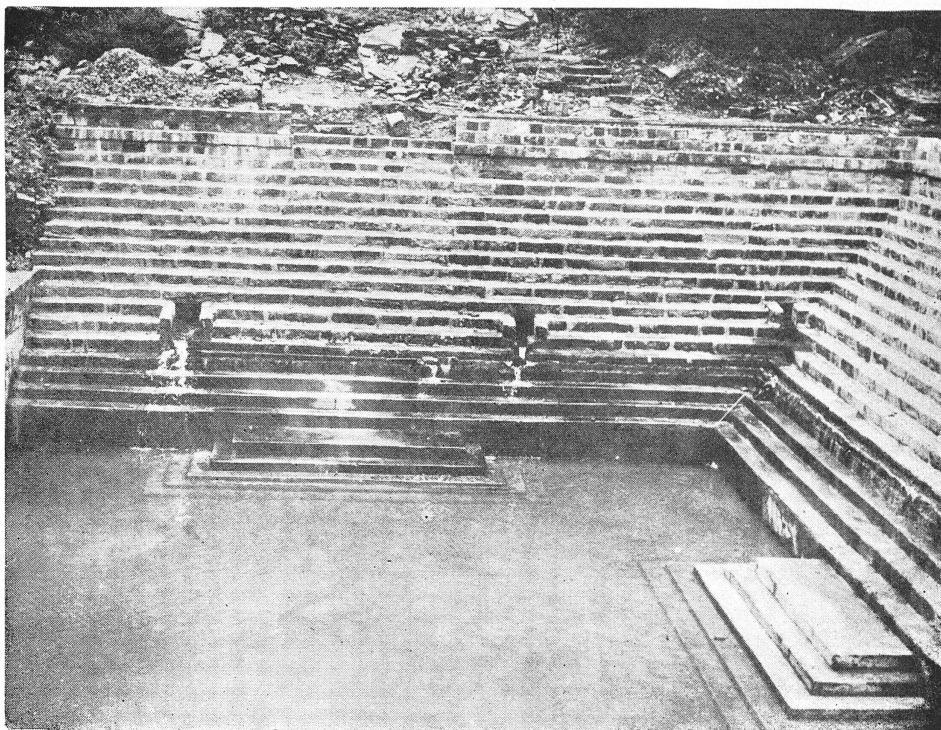


PLATE 21 : Another View of Bhairavahundam





PLATE 22: A Mantapam near Bhairavahundam



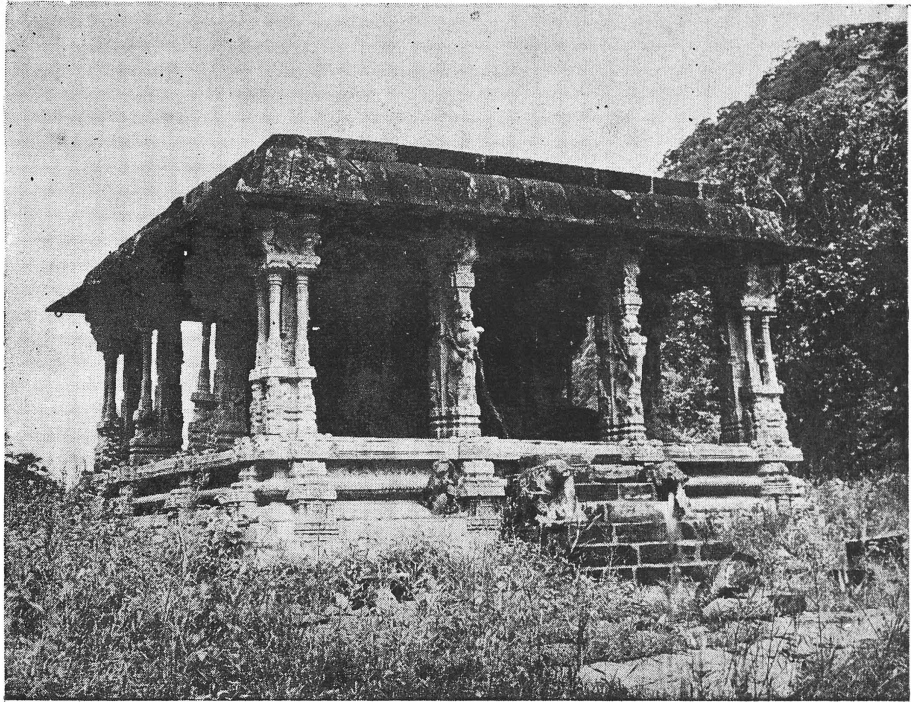


PLATE 23: Udyogamantapam on Upper Ahobilam ( Before renovation )



PLATE 24 : Udyogamantapam on Upper Ahobilam ( After renovation )

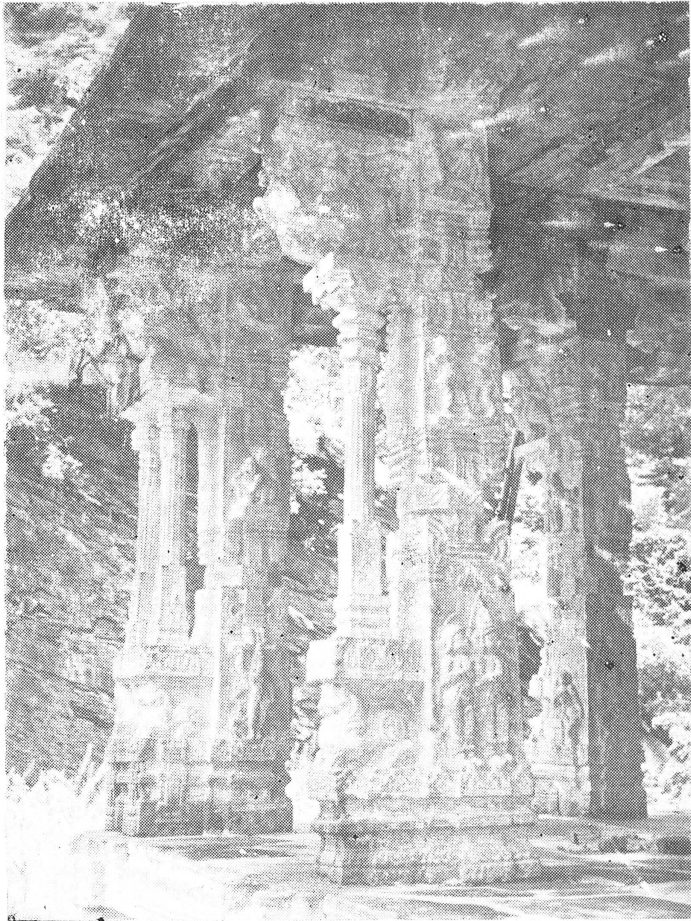


PLATE 25 : Closer view of Udyogamantapam on Upper Ahobilam





PLATE 26 : Another View of Udyogamantapam



PLATE 27 : Shepherd in Udyogamantapam in Upper Ahobilam



refers to Mahamandalesvara Kuncheti Timmaragin son of Vobulraju and grandson of Baichana Deva Choda Maharaj of Solar race Kasyapa gotra, *Asvalayana Sutra*, with a different Sakha. There is some doubt therefore about the real donor of the sixteen pillared mandapam pictured to in Plates 15, 16 and 17. The inscriptional slab perhaps refers to the sixteen pillared Udyogamantapam on Upper Ahobilam itself. This also is not certain. Plates 15, 16 and 17 give several views of this mantapam, with characteristic pillars belonging to Vijayanagar school of sculpture. The complex pillars, with shafts of sub-pillars on the lion figures are worth noticing. Such pillars with shafts standing on the heraldic lion – a continuation of the old Pallava sculptural tradition – are to be seen in the Tirumalai Sri Venkateswara temple also. The corbel with the characteristic pushpabodigai (not fully detached) may be seen in Plate 16 indicating that the mantapa belongs to the early Vijayanagara period.

The pillars of this mantapam exhibit beautiful bas reliefs worth noticing. There is a loose sculpture of a sthanaka Anjaneya Swamy in the mantapam (Plate 18) which is 3½' high with an abhaya hasta (right hand) and a gada in his left hand. Plate 19 shows a unique Mahishasura mardini bas-relief.

The bas reliefs in the granite mandapa show the Narasimha, standing Vishnu, Kodanda Rama, a swan etc. The pillars in this Vijayanagara period mantapa show the influence of Pallava sculpture in its corbels and also in the yali lions (heraldic lion) on the pillars.

The ghat road to Ahobilam leads from the West. As we go up the hill, we notice a waterfall on the left in the mountains and there is a tank (Structure No. 13) called Bhairava Hundam (Plates 20 and 21) collecting the waters from the mountains. The size of the tank is 20.00 × 25.5 metres. Opposite the Bhairava Kundam is a long corridor mandapa (24 metres × 2.40 metres) with twelve pillars, with several bas reliefs of Anjaneya. There are several bas reliefs of women here. Crude figures of Narasimhaswamy are also noticed. Plate 22 shows this mantapa on the way to Ahobilam.

Climbing up further a stone-stepped staircase about 4 metres wide, we arrive at a level ground between three mountains of the Ahobilam range of hills. On the western extreme (Structure No. 12) is the Udyoga Mantapam. This is a 16 pillared mantapam with a high adhistanam Plate 23. There is a smaller submantapam in its middle with four pillars. Each of these pillars is a complex pillar with one main and three sub-pillars.

Plate 24 shows the Udyoga mantapam and its pillars after the construction of a vimana on it. It is a typical mantapam of the Vijayanagar school of architecture and sculpture. The inner sub-mantapam is also visible in Plate 23. The corbels of the pillars are characteristic Vijayanagar school corbels, with prominent 'pushpabodigai', not completely detached. The elephants on the steps also deserve notice. Plate 25 shows a closer view of one of the pillars of the mantapam. The Yali lions at the base of the shaft of the sub-pillars also deserve notice. Plate 26 shows a pillar with the developed pushpabodigai (not fully detached) in this mantapam. The characteristic Yali lion with its hind feet on an elephant with a rider, characteristically found in Vijayanagar sculptures are noticed on

these pillars. A Lakshmi Narasimha Murthi bas relief is also seen near the corbel. Plate 27 shows a bas relief of a shepherd with a sheepdog of those days. Plate 27-A gives a close up of a pillar in this mandapam. Plate 27-B shows a beautiful Mother and Child bas relief.

The mantapam has beautiful bas reliefs of elephants. On the main pillared mandapam are also riders on lions (Yali lions) with elephants under their feet. A 'Dasakanta Ravana' bas relief and a teacher with his disciple, also are to be seen. The other sculptures on the pillars of the mantapam such as Lakshmi Narasimha are carved prettily in the hard granite material used for sculpturing.

#### **Rajagopuram :**

At the entrance to the upper Ahobilam Temple is the Rajagopuram of the temple (Plate 28). This is the Rajagopuram which was recently renovated, and for which Mahasamprokshanam was made on 30th June, 1978. The mukhadwaram base of the gopuram is the ancient Vijayanagar structure which has not been touched in the recent renovation. Plate 29 shows a picture of this gopura base and gopuram, before the renovation. The sculptures and basreliefs in the base of the structure belong to the Vijayanagar period. Notable among them are a 'mavati' riding an elephant, with uplifted Ankusa Plate 30 and scenes from the Ramayana Plate 31. *Other bas reliefs* : There is a beautiful bas relief of Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy. The soldier bas reliefs carry spears. There is a bas relief of Vishnu in the sthanaka with the chakra in his right upper hand, sankha in the left upper hand while the lower right hand is in the abhaya pose, the lower left hand is holding the 'gada'. There are two 'nachiyars' on both sides of the Vishnu. Some of the soldiers carved here are seen riding horses, holding royal emblems such as the umbrella. On one face of the wall again are bas reliefs of Sri Narasimhaswamy destroying Hiranyakasipa.

To one extreme side of the Rajagopura dwara is a small crude four pillared mantapam outside, with a cement top of recent origin. Plate 28 shows this crude mandapam.

#### **Gadwal Mandapam :**

Structure No. 8 in the upper Ahobilam temple is the Gadwal mandapa. The mantapa has several beautiful bas reliefs, belonging to Vijayanagar epoch of sculpture.

Plate 32 shows two beautiful bas reliefs of Narasimhaswamy and Venkateswara form of Vishnu on one of the pillars of this mantapam. The nagabandhas on the sthamba may be noticed.

Plate 33 shows two bas reliefs of Lakshmi Narasimhaswami and Vishnu in Gadwal Mantapa.

Plate 34 shows a beautiful standing Narasimha in the same mantapam.

#### **Garbha Gudi :**

The Garbhagudi or sanctum cella (No. 1) is actually the original cave in which Ahobila Narasimhaswamy manifested Himself. There is a small shrine for the consort of Lord Ahobila Nara-

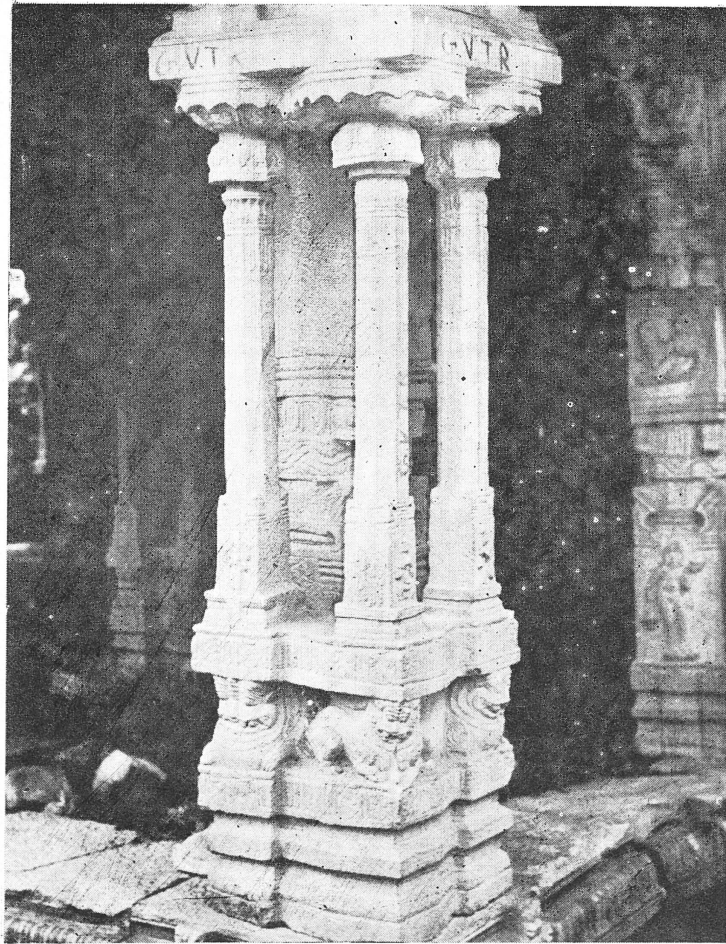


PLATE 27A : Close-up of Sixteen pillared Mantapam on Upper Ahobilam

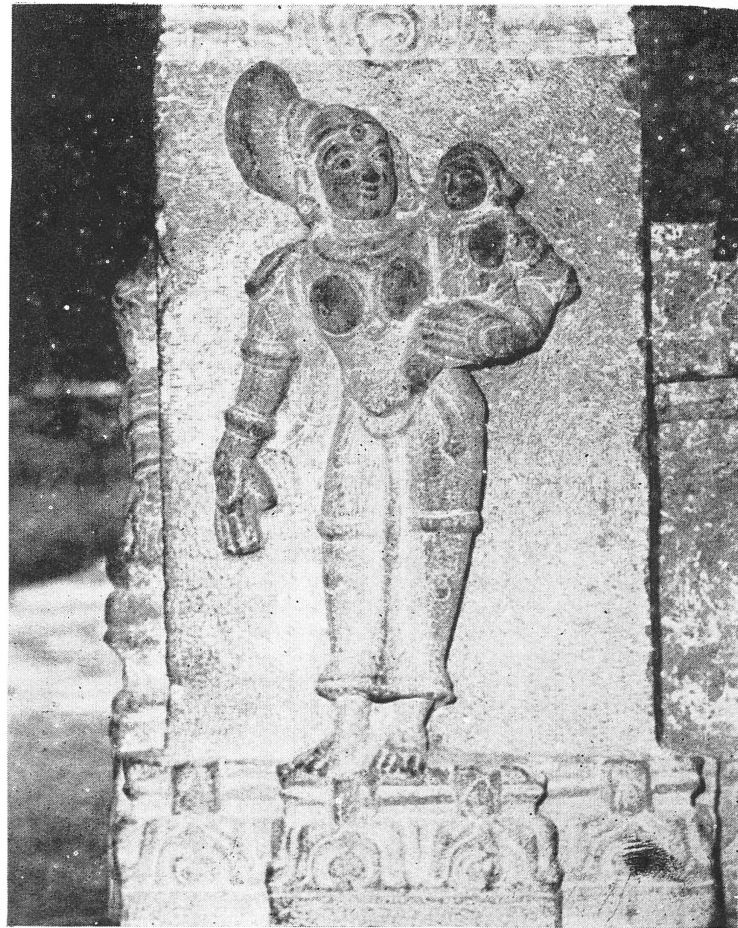


PLATE 27B : Beautiful Mother and Child Basrelief in Udyogamantapam



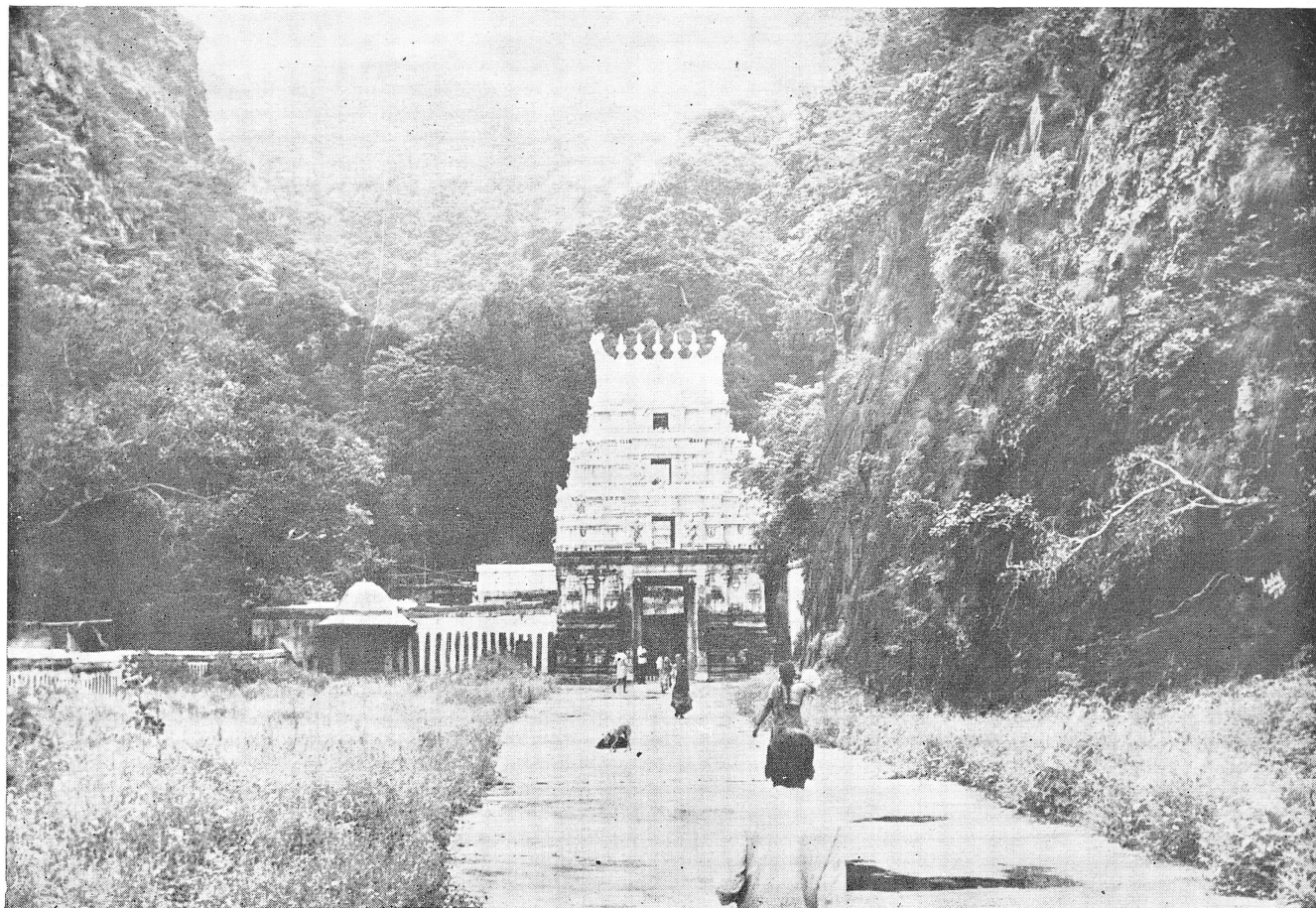


PLATE 28 : View of Raja gopuram in Upper Ahobilam





PLATE 29 : Rajagopuram ( before renovation )



PLATE 30 : Mavati riding an elephant



PLATE 31 : Bas-relief in Rajagopuram showing scenes from Ramayana

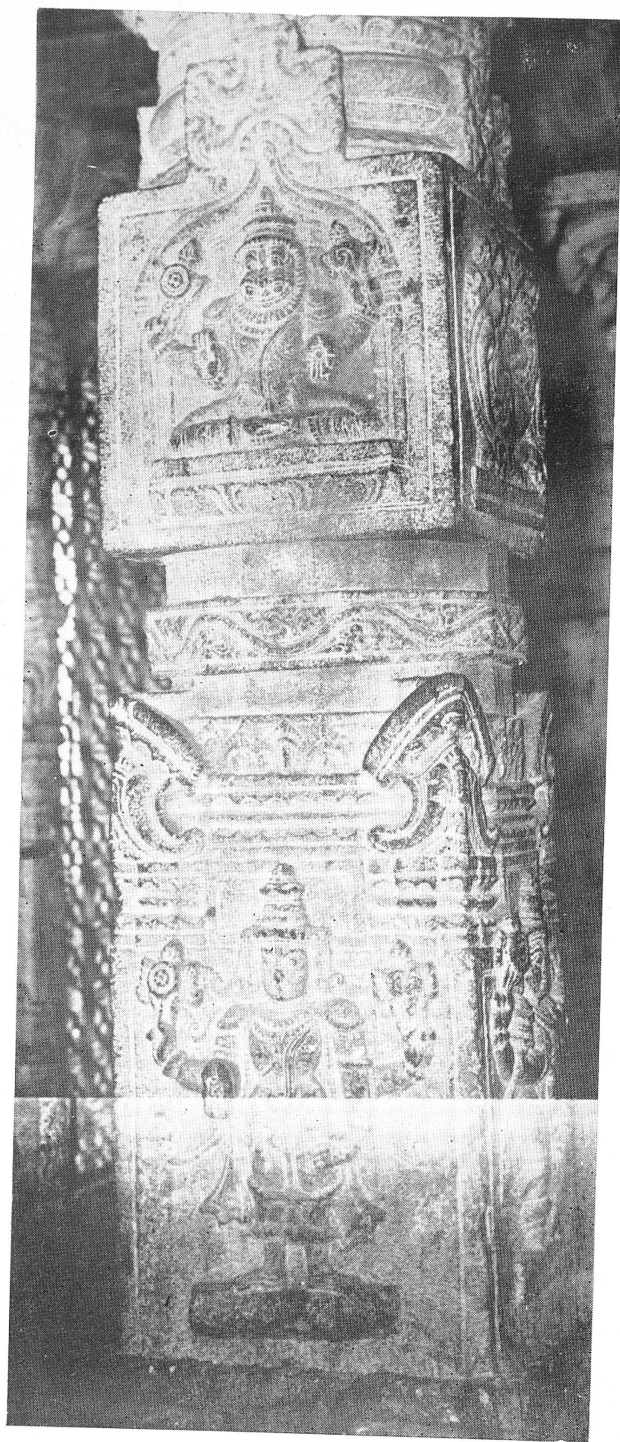


PLATE 32 : Narasimha Swamy and Vishnu basreliefs in Gadwal Mantapam



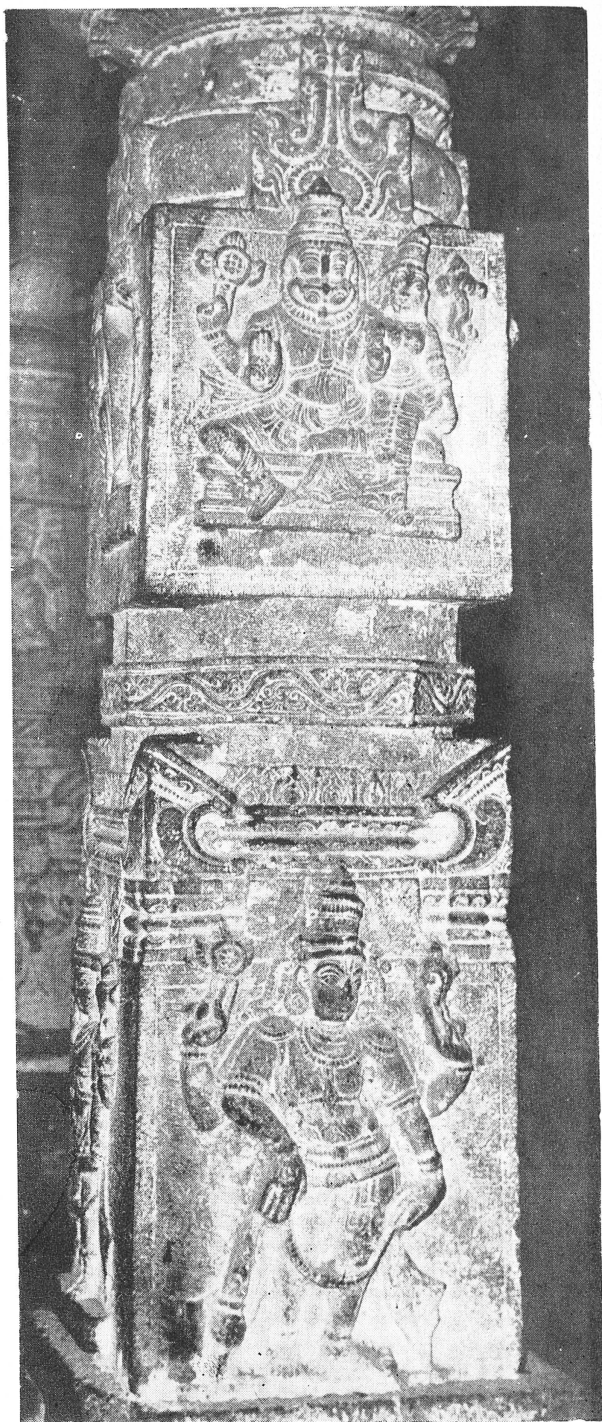


PLATE 33: Bas-relief of Lakshminarasimha Swamy and Vishnu in Gadwal Mantapam



PLATE 34 : Sthanaka Nārasimha in Gādwāl Mantapam



PLATE 35 : Chanchu Lakshmi Thayar in Upper Ahobilam



PLATE 36 : Narasimha Swamy image in a cave in Upper Ahobilam



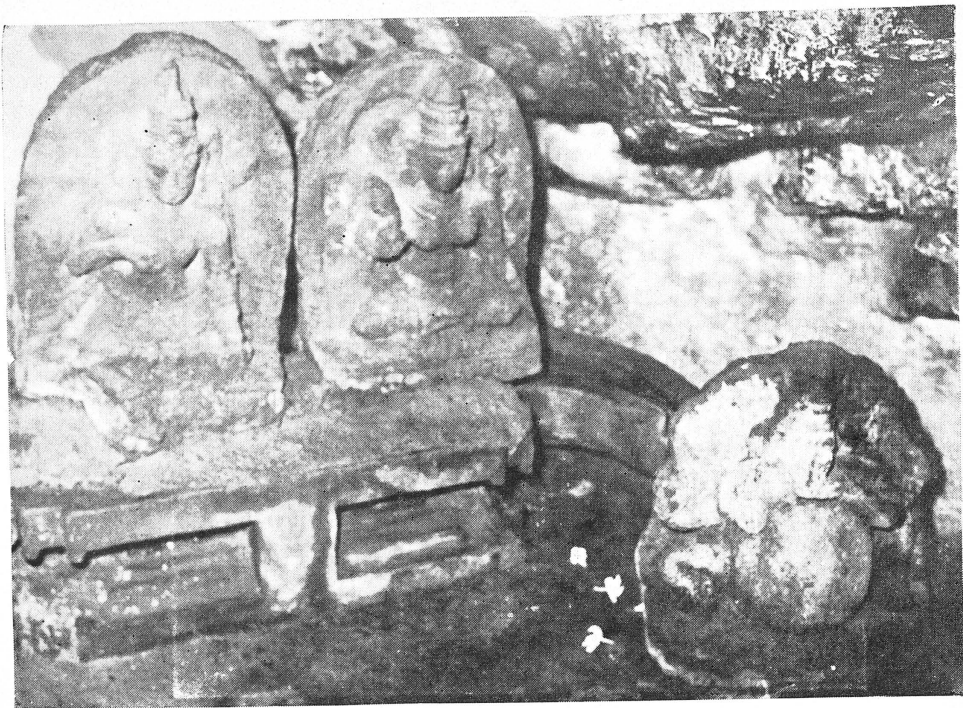


PLATE 37 : Several images in a cave in Narasimha Swamy Temple



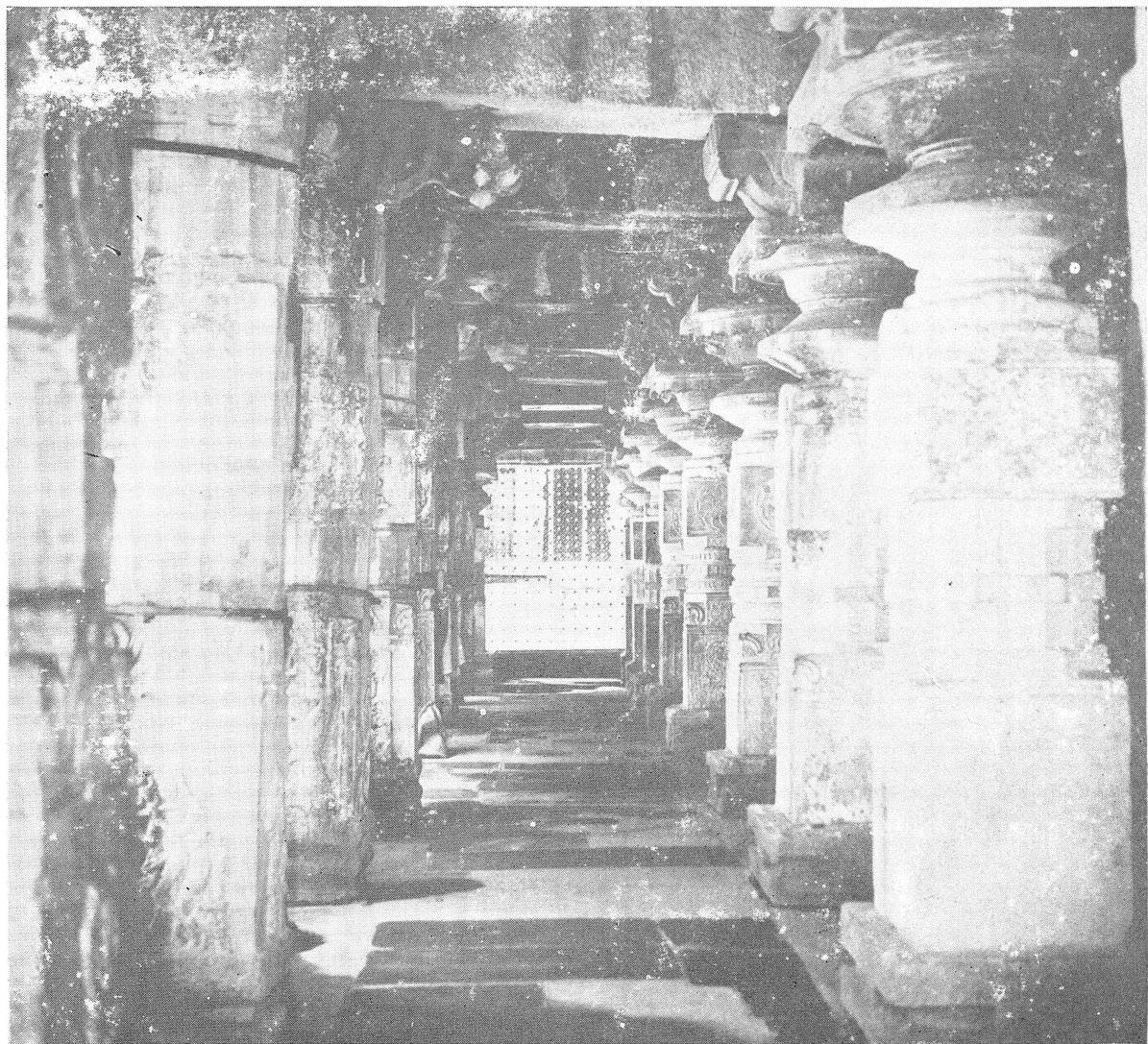


PLATE 38 : Pillars in Mahamantapam

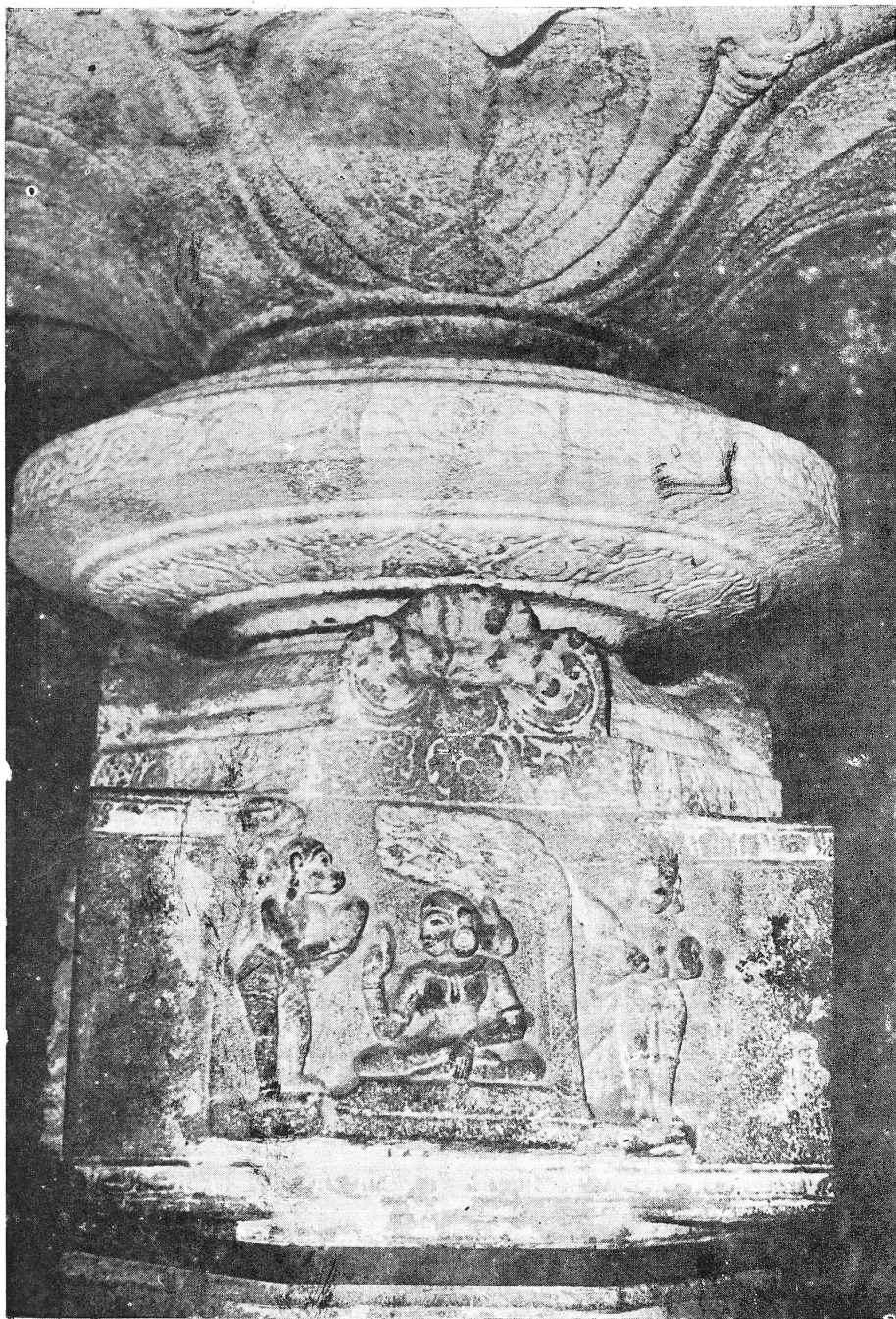
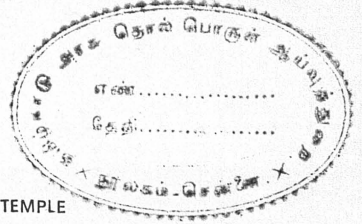


PLATE 39: Sita giving her ring to Anjaneya - Mahamantapam bas-relief



simha Swamy, Sri Chanchulakshmi Ammavaru here. The shrine for the Mother is to the east of the main Garbhagudi for Ahobila Narasimhaswamy. Plate 35 shows the Chenchulakshmi mulavaru in the Chenchulakshmi shrine in upper Ahobilam. The Mother here is a Padmasani with katakahastas (flowers buds in both upper hands) while the lower right is in the abhayahasta pose and the lower left in the varada hasta pose. The figure is made out of black-basaltic stone. The image is seated on a lotus medallion. The image is about 4½' high with a stone simhasana which also appears to be ancient. It is also worth noting that the katakas are held by the Mother in a very natural manner and not in the stylized manner which is generally seen after 11th century A. D. The image could safely be dated to belong to the 11th century A. D. It appears to be an early Kakatiya Nachchiar figure. The shrine itself for the Mother is however of recent origin and Samprokshana was done recently.

It is worth noting that there is another small shrine to the cave of Ahobila Narasimhaswamy and between the shrine for Chanchulakshmi. Actually one has to climb up a height of 6' to the east of the main cave shrine to enter this small shrine where the Sudarsana Yantra is installed. The small shrine for Chenchulakshmi is further to the west of this Sudarsana Yantra.

To the left of the cave shrine (to the East) is a smaller cave in which there are some images. It has an image of Narasimhaswamy. There is a Panavattam with a Sivalinga. Images of Vinayaka, Sri Rama and Mother Sita are also seen here. The Narasimhaswami image (Plate 36) has four hands; the upper right hand holds the chakra while the upper left hand holds the sankha. He is shown as destroying Hiranyakasipa with his two lower hands. This is a sthauna-Narasimha, who is seated in the Sukhasana pose with his right leg folded and the left leg dangling below. The image is 4½' high. Plate 37 shows other images here including a Ganesa.

#### **The Mahamandapa :**

The mahamandapa (Structure No. 3) is to the north of the main shrine. This pillared mandapam is a Vijayanagar structure. While the discovered and studied inscriptions in the temple do not throw any light on the King who is responsible for this mandapa, strangely enough there is report of an inscription on a mandapam in the shrine in the Mackenzie manuscript-Ahobila Kaifiyat, referring to the Saka year 1317 corresponding to 1395-1396 A.D. The mukha-mandapa referred to in Kaifiyat for Ahobilam may be the Mahamandapa as it is the main mandapa in the shrine. The King referred to in the Kaifiyat is Harihara Maharaya the II; portions of this mandapa atleast must have been constructed in the early years of the 14th century i.e., about in 1394-1396.

The bas reliefs on the walls and pillars of this mantapam are beautiful and described below.

Plate 38 shows a view of the pillars of this mandapam with characteristic Vijayanagar corbels. However, the sthambams show a strong influence of the Kakatiya school of sculpture though they are not as ornate and polished as the Kakatiya pillars in temples in Hanamakonda. It is possible some of these early pillars belong to the Kakatiya period. At any rate they were influenced by the Orugallu school of sculpture. Credence can be given to the hypothesis as tradition as well as accounts in Ahobilam



Kaifiyat mentions that Pratapa Rudra Deva did some work for the temple at Ahobilam. As pointed out above Harihara Maharaya II also is associated with this mantapa by tradition and in the Ahobilam Kaifiyat. The early Vijayanagar corbels on the top of the pillars would confirm this. Thus an overall assesment of the mandapa would indicate that the mandapam is basically a Vijayanagar structure with strong influence of the Orugallu school of sculpture on the sthambas.

Plate 39 shows a view of a top of a pillar in this Mahamandapam. It is seen that it has a simhamukha kudu in part. It is also worth noting that there is a beautiful bas relief of Sitadevi giving her ring to Anjaneya, sitting under the Ashoka tree. The figure of a demon is sculptured to her right.

This Mukhamandapa has several bas reliefs in stone, with picturisation of stories from the epics which are beautiful. It is unfortunate that most of these bas reliefs are covered with a thick coat of lime. Plate 40 shows a view of the bas relief on the walls of the Mahamandapam. There are figures of Anjaneya in this view. A figure of a Dwarapalaka is seen in the forefront. Plate 41 shows another view of the bas reliefs in the Mahamandapa. It is worth noting that there are some views of Mahabhagavatam in this Plate. The bas reliefs of women dancers of that age are also seen in this plate. Plate 42 shows a Devakosta figure with Vijayanagar school of architecture and Kudu at the top. A Gandharvamukha also is seen in this. Plate 43 is another view of the bas reliefs in the Mahamandapa which shows Chenchulakshmi sporting the bow and the arrows. There are bas reliefs of elephants, etc. The Vijayanagar corbel with bodigai may also be seen in this illustration. Plate 44 shows a more closer view of Chenchulakshmi. There is a bas relief of a Matsyagandhi Plate 44-A commonly appearing in Indian fairytales of this temple. Plate 45 shows secular scenes belonging to the period such as a deer being carried, etc. There are also some erotic sculptures in this illustration. It is worth while to note that there is a sculpture of the Lord Narasimha at Upper Ahobilam destroying Hiranyakasipa. Plate 46 gives one more view of a Devakosta with early Vijayanagar Kudu with Gandharvamukha inside. There is a very beautiful bas relief of Sri Lakshminarayana with Brahma seated on the lotus emanating from the navel of the Lord. There are also bas reliefs of Narasimha Swamy chasing Hiranyakasipa and destroying him. The carbels of the Vijayanagar school of sculpture are also seen at the top. Plate 47 shows a very clear view of the Vijayanagar corbels on the stambhas and the ceiling. The height of these pillars and the ceiling can be judged by a comparison by a man standing near the pillar who is 5' 6" high. Plate 48 shows the bas relief of a unique Vinayaka.

Plate 49 is another bas relief of chaturmukha Brahma seated in the Padmasana pose. It is very rare to see Brahma sculptures and this Brahma sculpture deserves special notice. His upper right hand holds the akshamala while his upper left hand holds a book. His lower right hand is in abhaya-pose. His lower left hand is in varada pose.

#### **Dwajastambam & Balipeetham :**

Plate 50 shows the Dwajastambham and Balipitham and the structure housing the Garuda before the Lord's shrine. The Mantapam behind the Dwajastambam is structure No. 6 i.e. Vahana



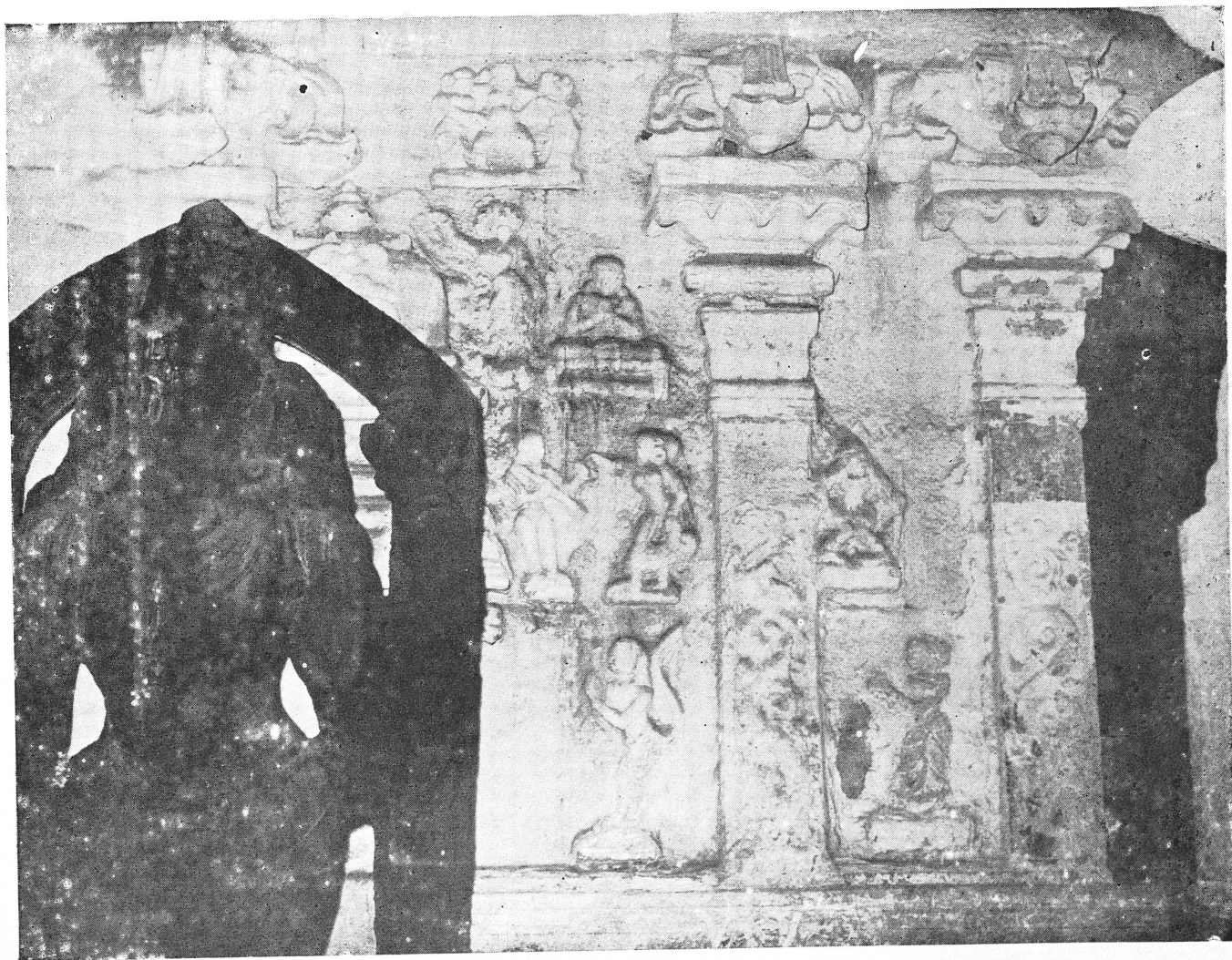


PLATE 49 : Eas-reliefs in Mahamantapam, Upper Ahobilam

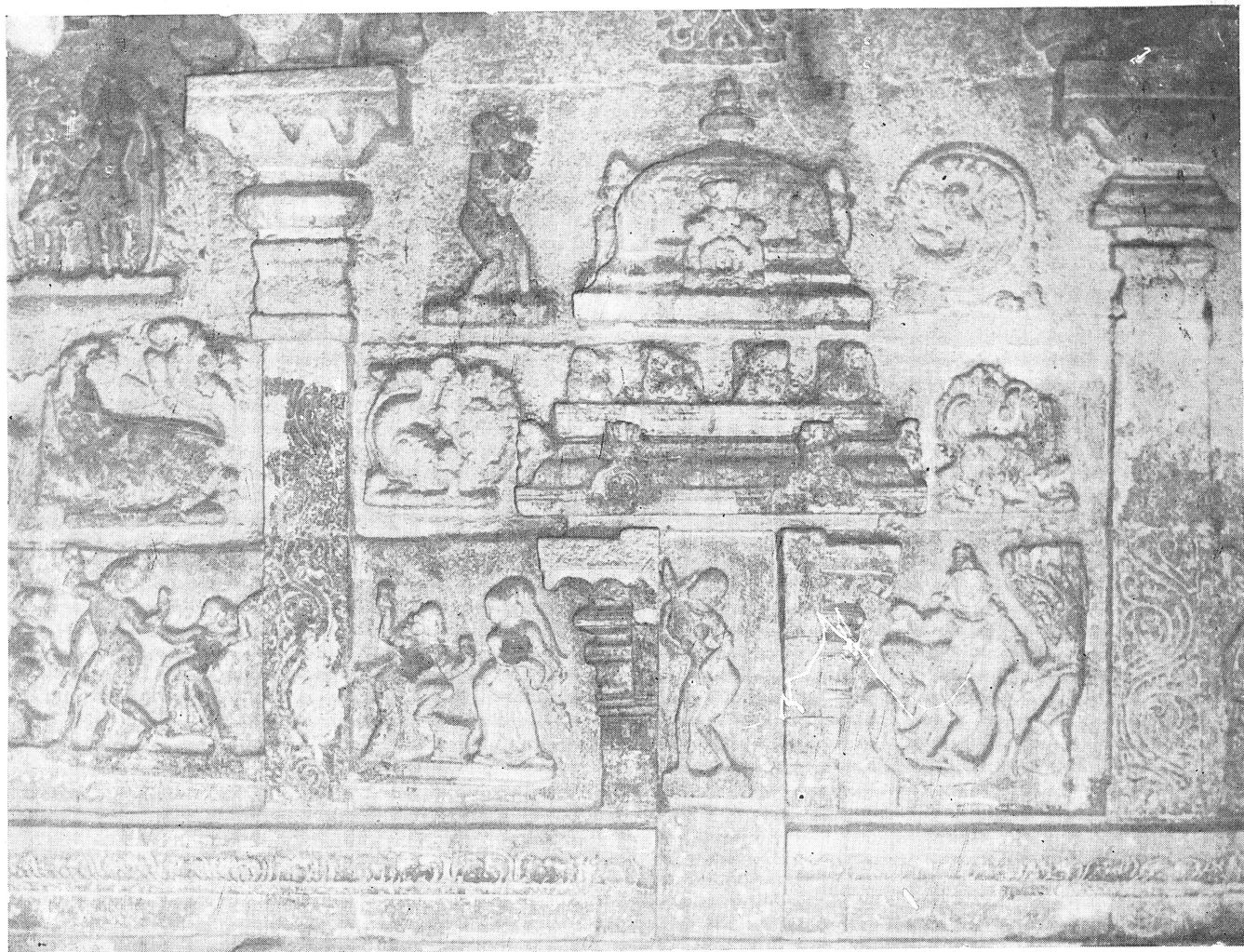


PLATE 41 : Bas-reliefs in Mahamantapam (stories from Bhagavatham and secular scenes)



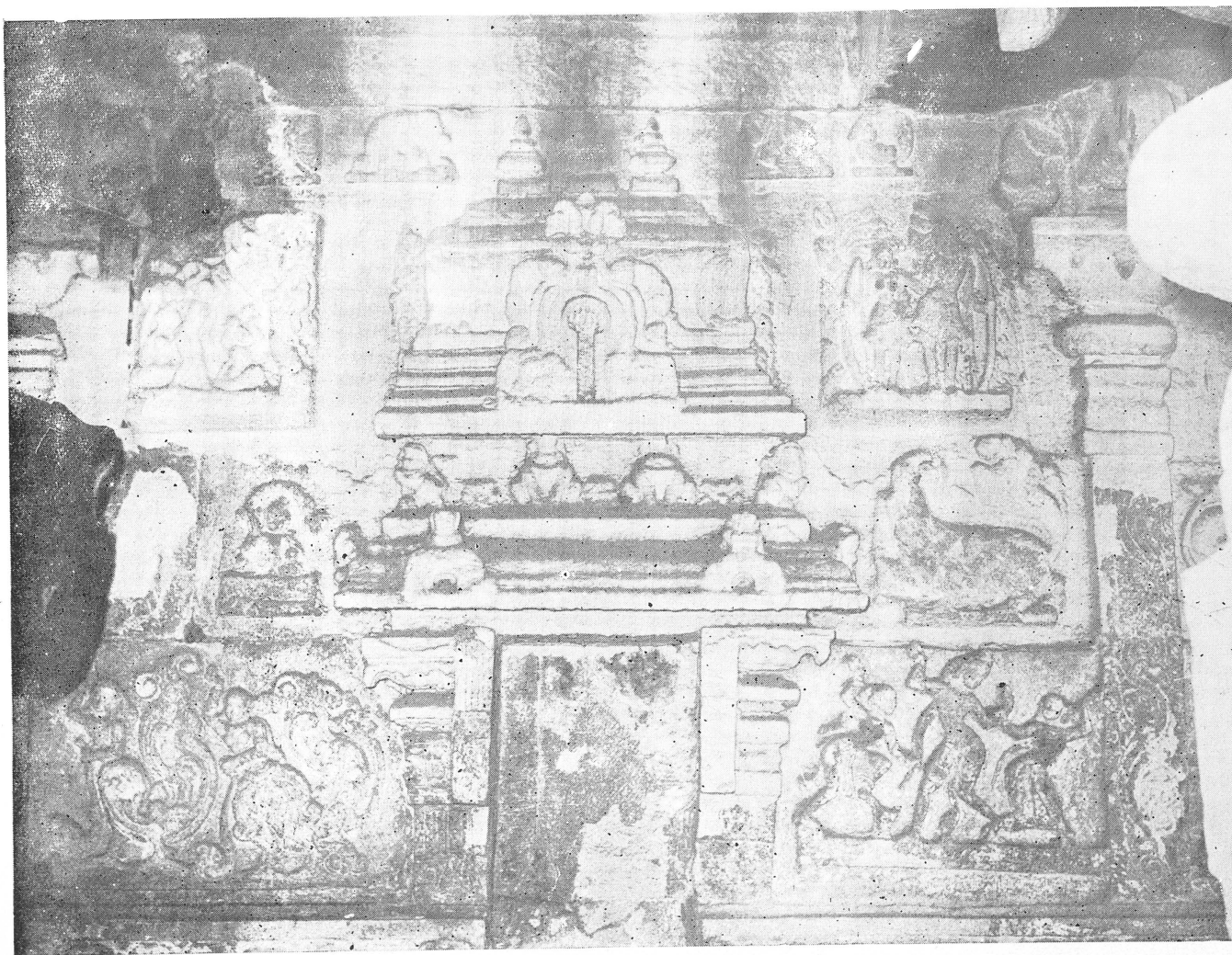


PLATE 42 : Bas-reliefs in Mahamantapam showing a Deva Koshta niche with Kudu

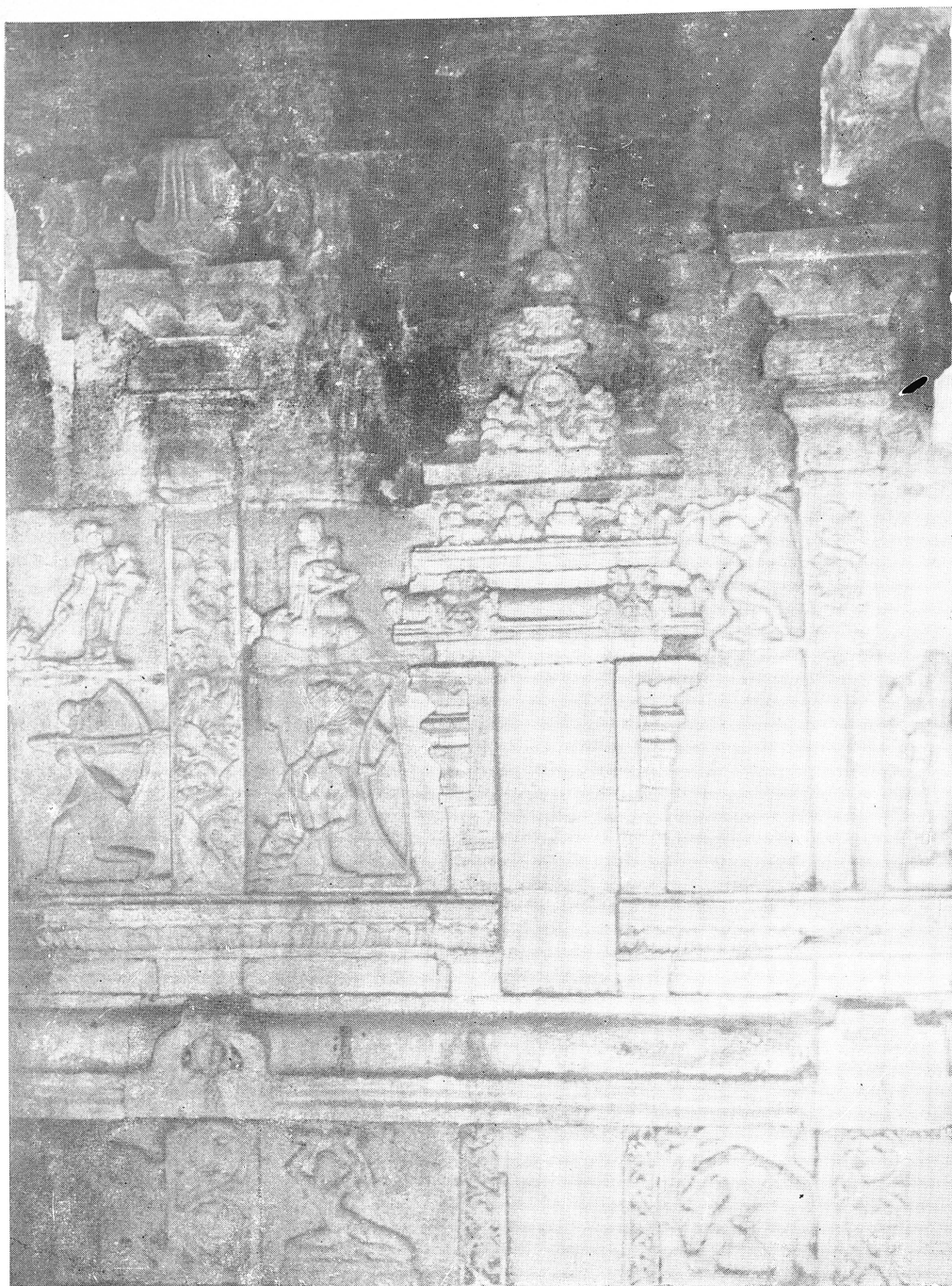


PLATE 43 : Bas-reliefs in Mahamantapam showing Chenchulakshmi sporting with bow and arrows



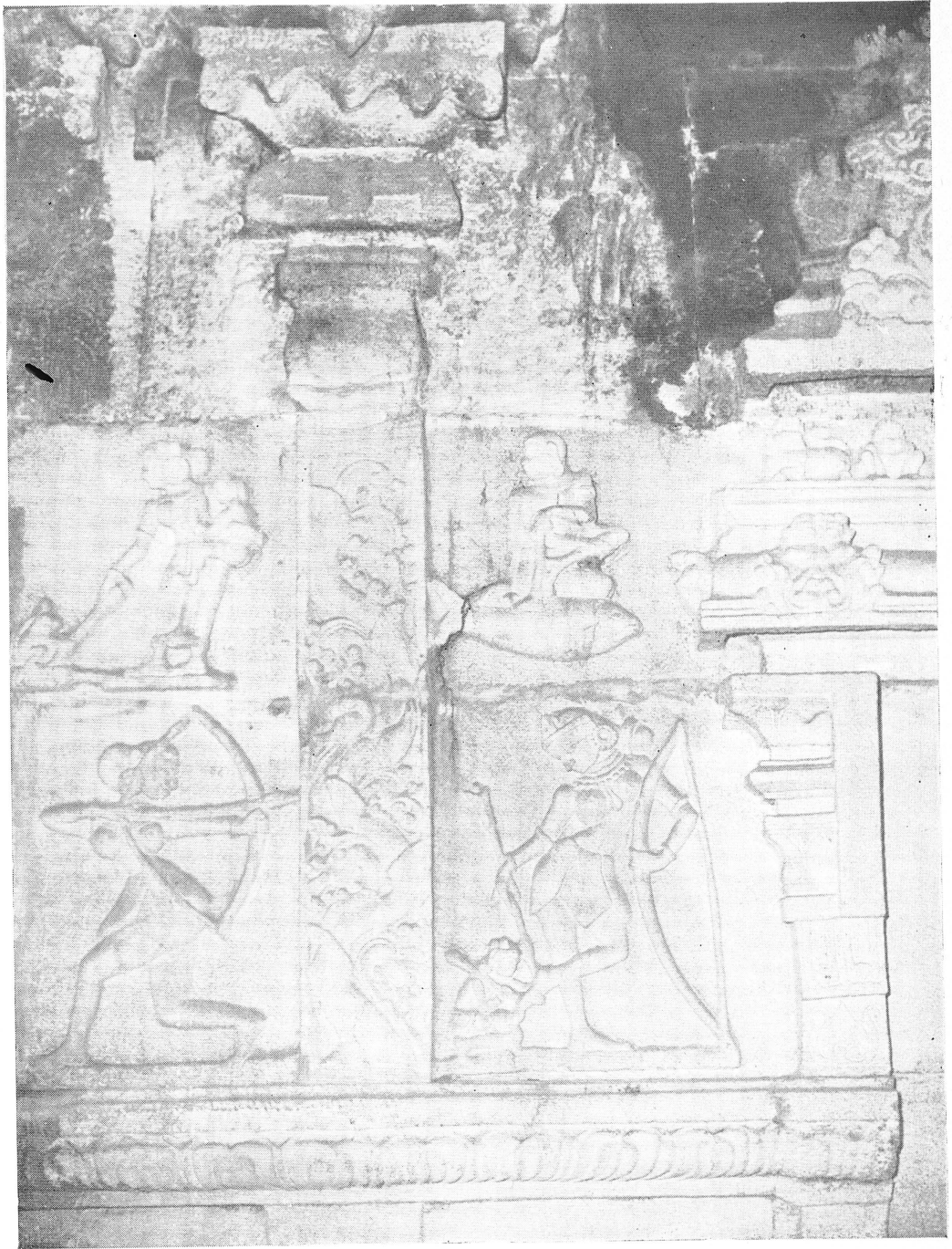


PLATE 44 : Chenchulakshmi bas-reliefs in Mahamantapam

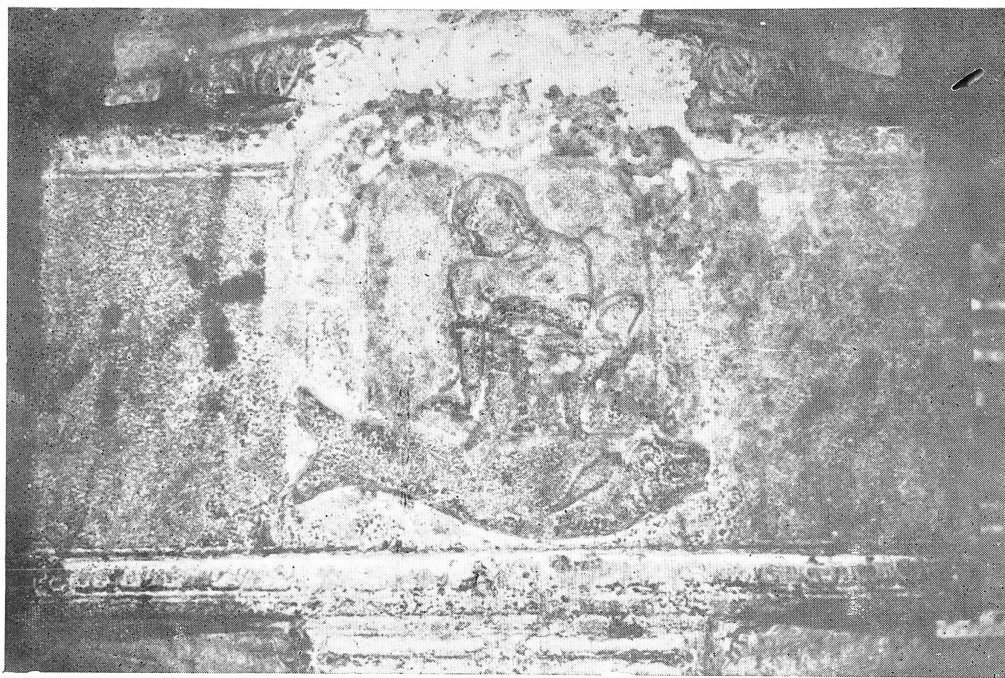


PLATE 44A : Matsyagandhi in Mahamantapam

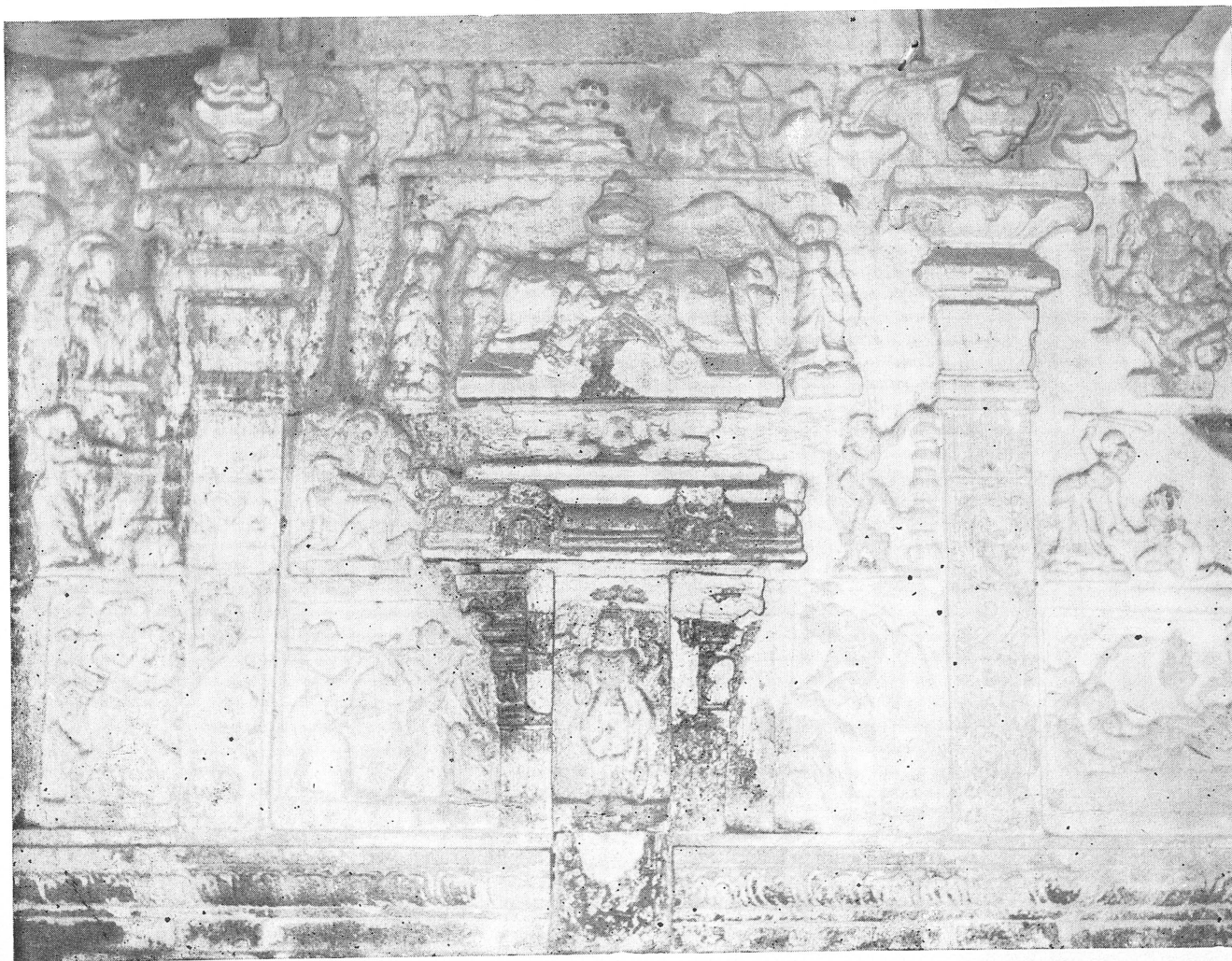


PLATE 45 : Secular scenes in Mahamantapam



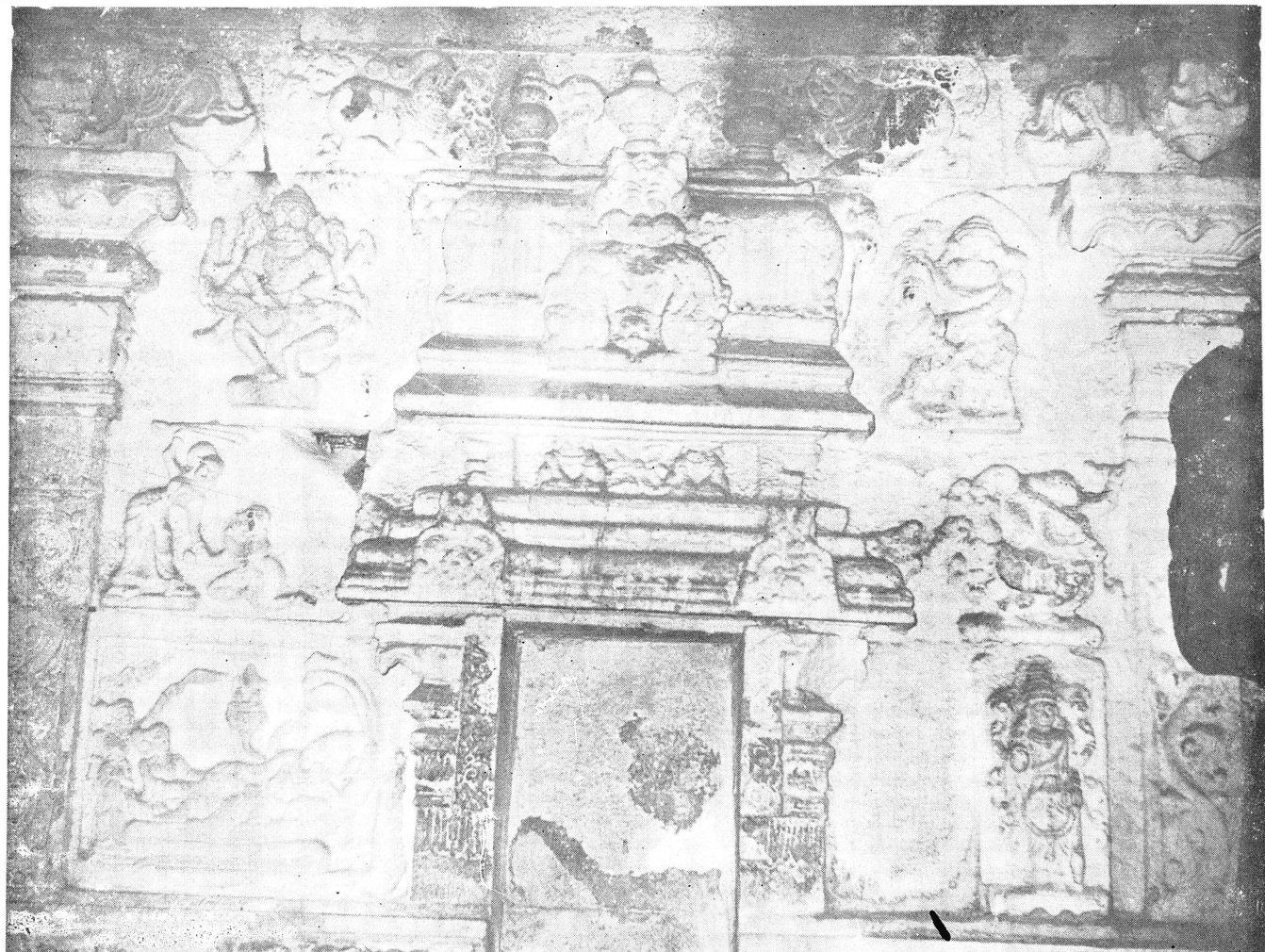


PLATE 46 : Devakoshta and Lakshminarayana bas-reliefs in Mahamantapam



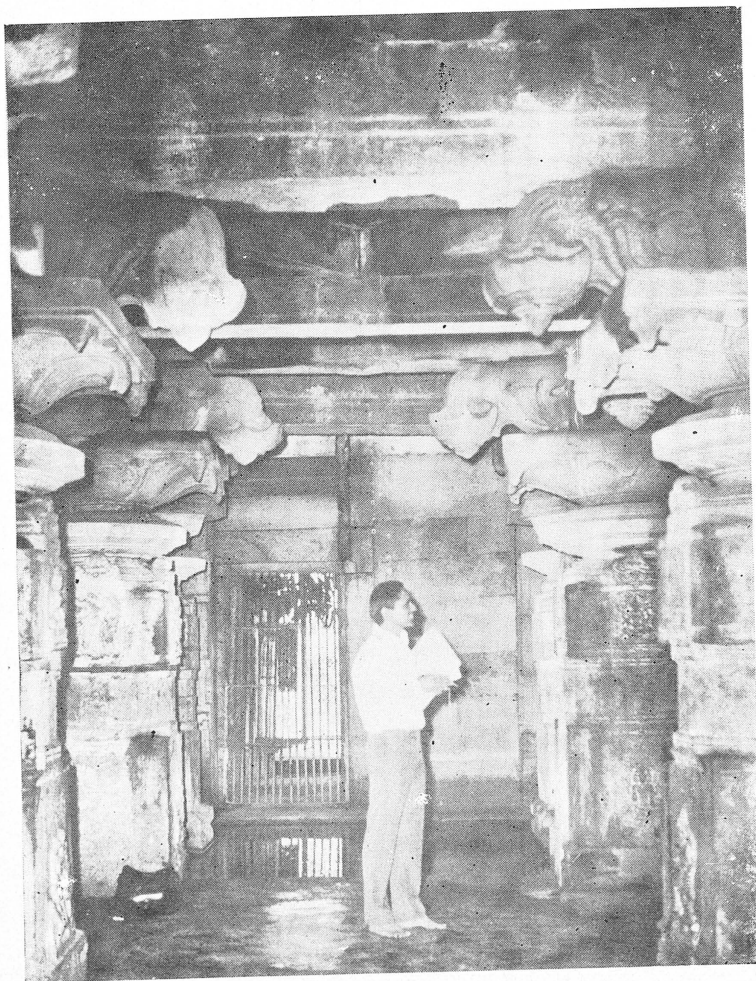


PLATE 47 : Pillars showing corbels of Vijayanagar School of Architecture (Mahamantapam, Upper Ahobilam)

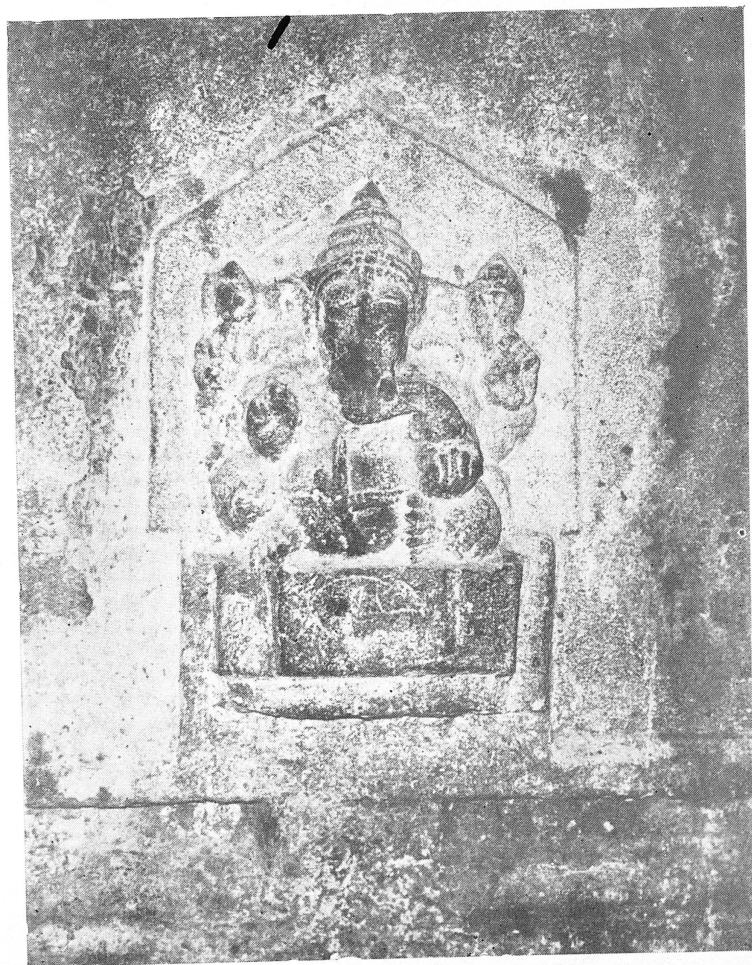


PLATE 48 : Vinayaka on a pillar in Mahamantapa



PLATE 49 : Unique Brahma bas-relief in Mahamantapam



PLATE 50 : Dhwaja stambham and Bali peetham





PLATE 51 : Garuda sculpture in Garuda shrine

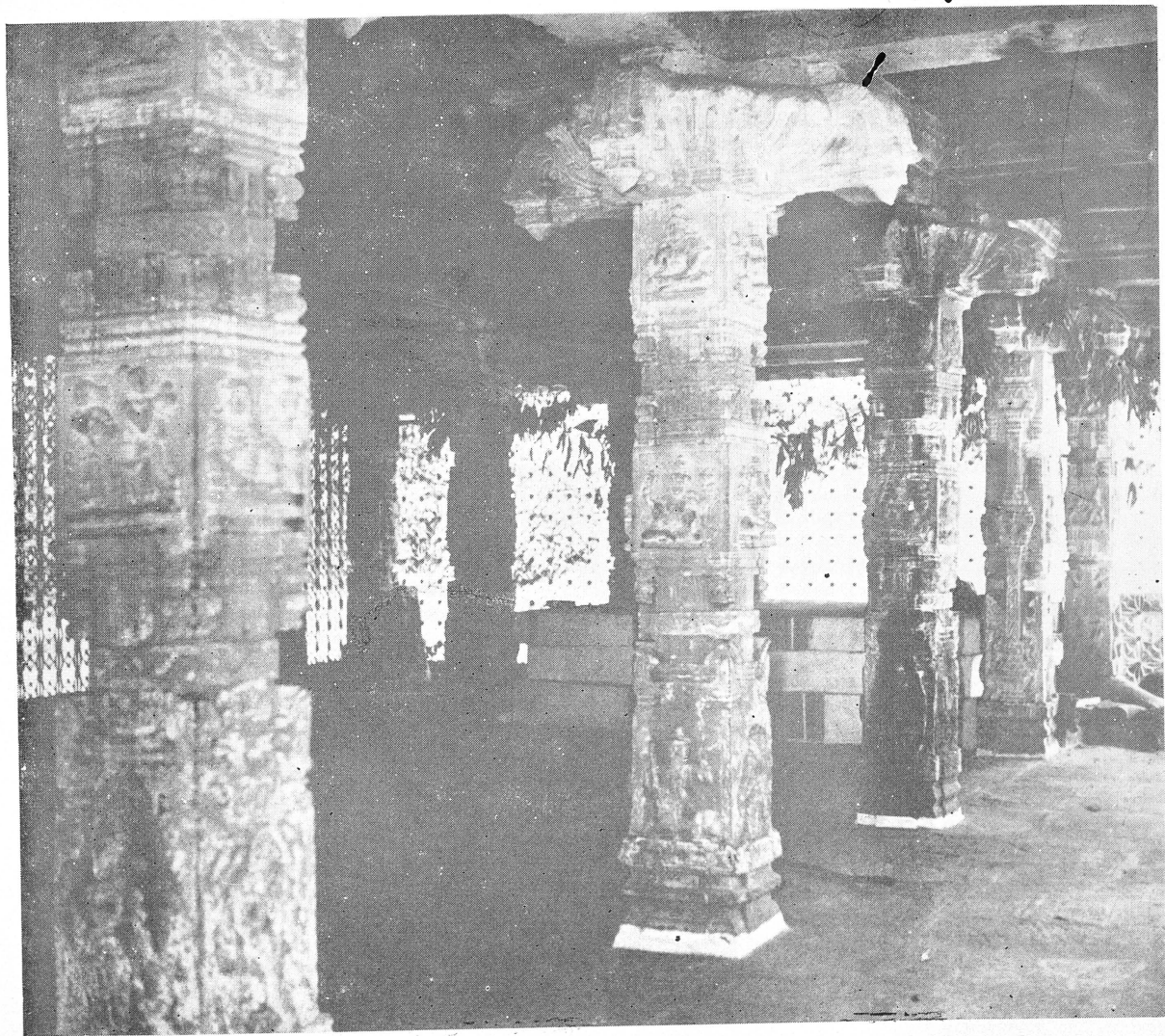


PLATE 52 : Kalyana Mantapam in Upper Ahobilam

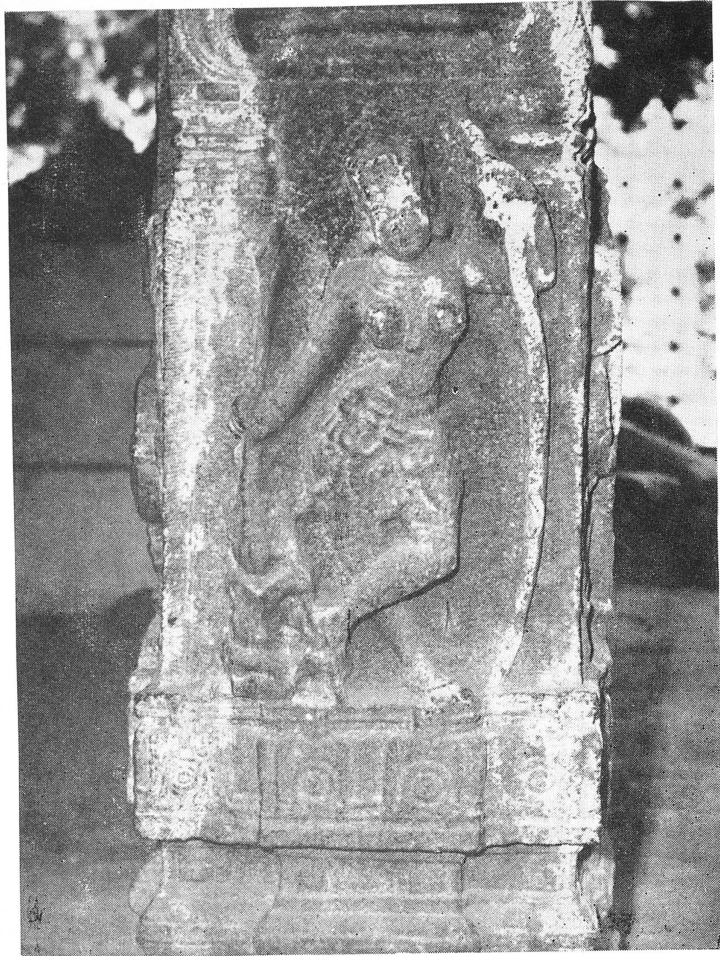


PLATE 52A : Bas-relief of Chenchulakshmi in Kalyana Mantapam





PLATE 53: Uyyala mantapam in Upper Ahobilam

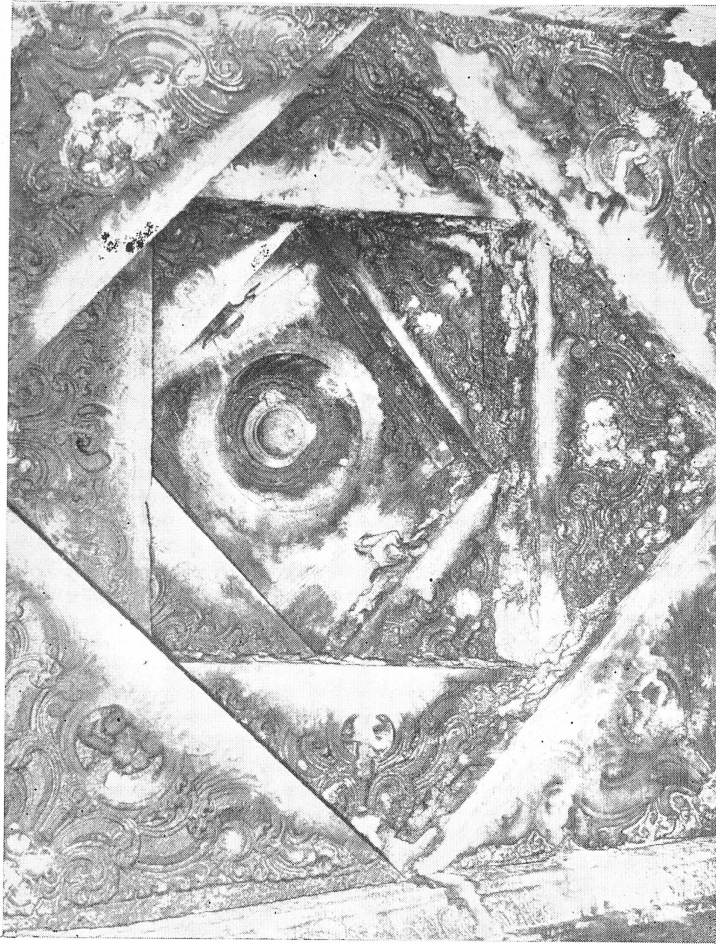


PLATE 54 : Ceiling of Uyyala Mantapam

mandapa in the site plan for Upper Ahobilam temple. Structure No. 9 in the site plan is the Dwajasthambam which is made up of wood installed on a small adistanam made of solid stone belonging to the Vijayanagar period. Similarly the Balipeetham is Structure No. 10 in the site plan and made of solid stone. This illustration also shows a view of Structure No. 5 Uyyalamandapa in the upper storey of the temple.

Plate 51 shows the Garuda in the Garudashrine before the Ugranarasimhaswamy temple at Upper Ahobilam. Garuda is in sthanka, samabhanga and sculptured in the anjalihasta pose as if he has just flown down from heavens to worship Lord Narasimha. The sculpture however is a late Vijayanagar piece and therefore not very sophisticated.

#### **Kalyana Mandapa :**

Structure No. 4 is the site plan in the Kalyana Mandapa of the temple. This Kalyana Mandapam which measures 12.5 metres  $\times$  8.8 metres has also a small mandapam at one end measuring 2.5 metres  $\times$  2.8 metres. It has got several pillars. The Kalyana mandapam exhibits the puranakalasa motifs on its pillars. There are several beautiful bas reliefs of Surya Bhagavan Anjaneya Swamy, Rama and Sita, Krishna holding a ball of Navanita or butter, Vishnu in the seated pose with Chakra, Sankha, an Abhaya hasta and Gada, Anjaneya Swamy with a Gada and Krishna dancing on the Kaliya serpent. The small four pillared mandapam has also similar bas reliefs. Plate 52 shows a view of the pillars in this mandapam which belongs to the Vijayanagar epoch of sculpture. The cruder sub-mandapam also is seen. Plate 52 shows a beautiful bas relief of Chenchulakshmi standing cross-legged holding a bow in her right hand while her left hand holds an arrow.

#### **Uyyala Mandapa :**

Structure No. 5 in the site plan is the Uyyala mandapa in the upper storey in Ahobilam temple. The mandapa was used in the good olden days for the Uyyala seva ceremony of the Lord. This is a typical Vijayanagar structure with Vijayanagar corbels and yali lions mounted over yali animals. Plate 53 gives a view of this Uyyalamandapa. Plate 54 gives a view of the ornate ceiling with a lotus motif for this mandapa. This is also a typical Vijayanagar structure.

#### **Alwar Shrine :**

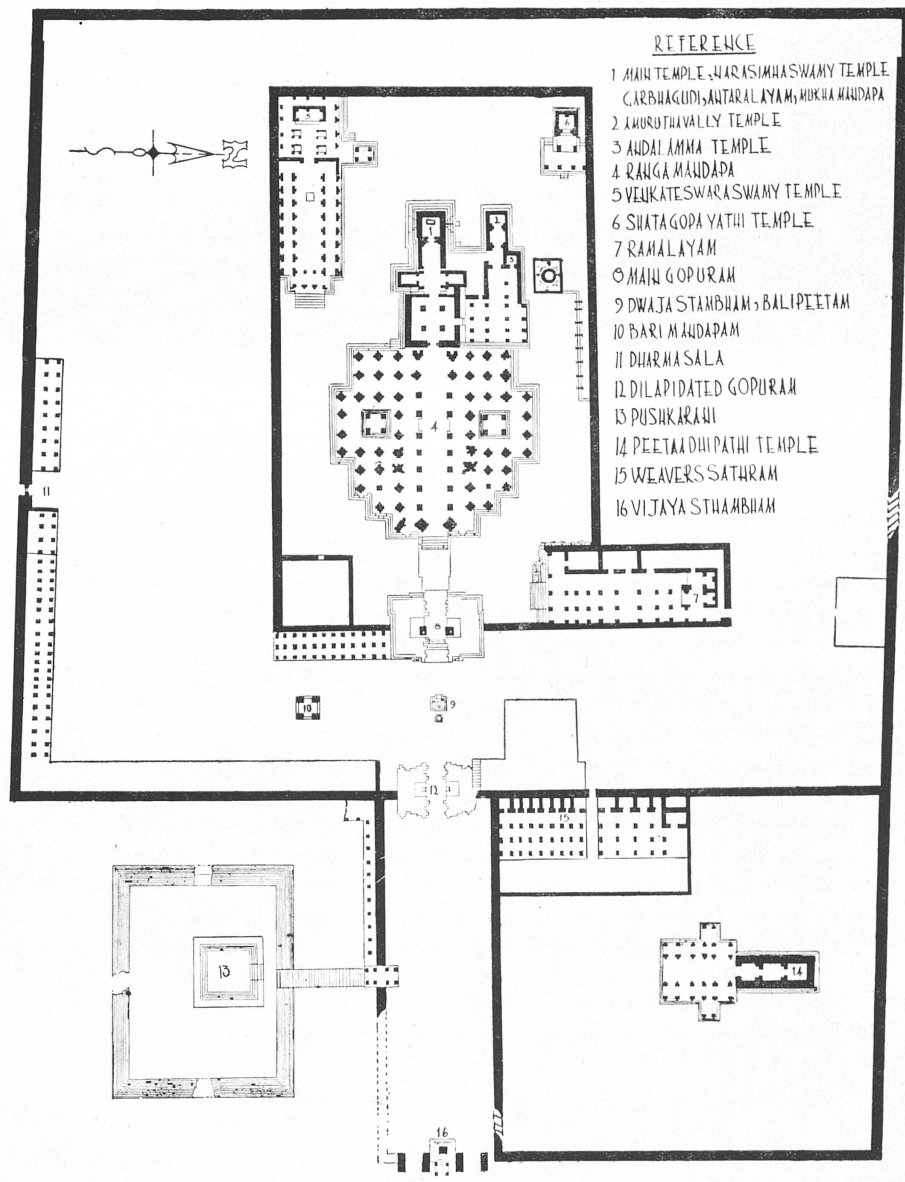
Structure No. 7 in the site plan is the Alwar shrine where the Mandapa is being partly used for the preparation of the prasadam. Images of the Alwar as well as the Udaivar are installed in this shrine. Plate 55 shows a view of the images in this shrine.



## CHAPTER VI

### ART & SCULPTURE IN SRI NARASIMHA SWAMY TEMPLE AT LOWER AHOBILAM (CHINNA AHOBILAM)

Figure III is the plan of the Lower Ahobilam temple for Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy at Chinna Ahobilam. As mentioned earlier this temple does not form part of the Nava Narasimha Kshetra, but is actually a tenth Lakshmi-Narasimhaswamy with a shrine which came up during the Vijayanagar period. When exactly the temple came up is not clear but, there is an inscription of Krishnadevaraya dated 1438 Saka year corresponding to 21st December, 1515 A. D. on a slab set up at the entrance in the Narasimha Swamy temple, (also known as the Prahladavarada temple at Chinna Ahobilam). This inscription however only mentions that Sri Krishnadevaraya visited Ahobilam and gifted necklaces and jewels to Sri Ahobaleswara; normally this reference should be deemed to be the reference for the Ahobaleswara on the top of the hill. If we assume that the temple had already been in existence down the hill, the Narasimhaswamy temple can be given the date indicated above. However, as this inscription is only on a loose slab and as there is no mention of the Narasimha Swamy down the hill, it may be uncalled for to draw such an inference. Unfortunately the writer of the Ahobilam kaifiyat also is silent on this aspect i.e., the date of construction of the temple at Lower Ahobilam. The earliest inscription which is found as an integral part around the base of the Central shrine of the Narasimha temple, is during the (time of Srimad Rajadhiraja Raja Parameswara Sri Vira Pratapa Sri Achyuta Devaraya and is dated) Saka 1463 Khara, Magha Suddha 15 corresponding to 22nd January, 1532, Monday. This inscription records that one Abbiraju son of Gubbaraju Thipparaju of Pormamilla belonging to Vasishta gotra Asvalayana sutra and Ruk sakha made certain gifts to Sri Ahobileswara at Diguva Ahobilam. Another inscription dated Saka 1458 Manmada Chaitra Suddha 16 corresponding to 19th March, 1535 also refers to Achutadeva Maharaya and mentions that the Jiyyar of the temple at that time was one Srimad Vedanta Pratistapanacharya Paramahansa Parivrajakacharya Sri Purushottama Jiyangar. His agent at Ahobilam was one Chinna Tirumalarajayya. This inscription also deals with some grants but, what is relevant to us for the discussion is *that it is also around the base of the Central shrine of the Narasimha Swamy temple*. Even if we assume that the base of the Central shrine did not have an inscription in original at the time of construction and these inscriptions could have been recorded later during the years mentioned in them, it would still perhaps be logical to assume that the Central shrine atleast must have come into existence on or before the dates of inscription. As these are the earliest inscriptions, belonging, epigraphically, to the period indicated by a study of the language, (while there are others on the walls of the shrines) it would be logical for us to assume that the main shrine of the Narasimha Swamy Temple must have come into existence round about 1532 A.D. This will mean that the temple can be given roughly the date of middle of the 16th century. The temple is a true representative temple belonging to the Vijayanagar school of architecture, and sculpture, and the date given



REFERENCE

- 1 MAIN TEMPLE, NARASIMHASWAMY TEMPLE
- 2 CARBUAGUDI, ANTARALAYAM, MUKHA MANDAPA
- 3 AMRUTHAVALLY TEMPLE
- 4 ANDAL AMMA TEMPLE
- 5 RANGA MANDAPA
- 6 VENKATESWARASWAMY TEMPLE
- 7 SHATAGODA YATHI TEMPLE
- 8 RAMALAYAM
- 9 MAHA GOPURAM
- 10 DWAJA STAMBHAM, BALIPEETAM
- 11 BARI MANDAPAM
- 12 DHARMA SALA
- 13 DILAPIDATED GOPURAM
- 14 PUSHKARATHI
- 15 PEETAADHIPATHI TEMPLE
- 16 WEAVERS SATHRAM
- 17 VIJAYA STAMBHAM

PLAN OF  
LAXMYNARASIMHA SWAMY TEMPLE

AT AHOBILAM

SCALE 1CM = 3M

Drawn By  
S. Bhaskaran  
(Conservationist)  
G. Vishnu Murthy  
(Draftsman)



PLATE 55 : Alvars in shrine in Upper Ahobilam



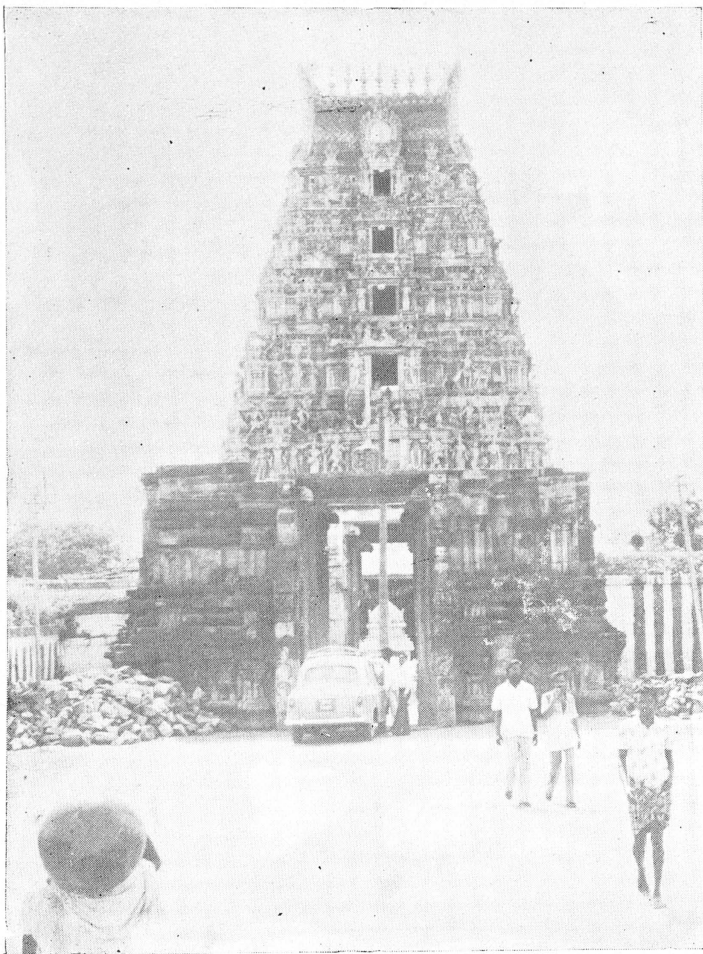


PLATE 56 : Outer view of Chinna Ahobilam Temple

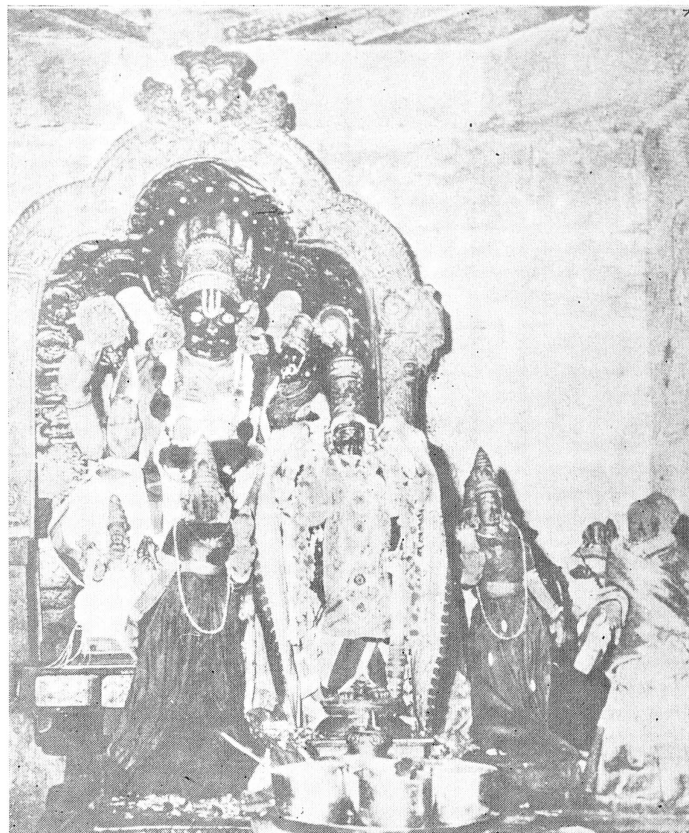


PLATE 57 : Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy along with other Utsavamurthis

above would be acceptable also from the point of view of the internal evidence of sculpture and architecture in the temple.

The Rangamantapam in Chinna Ahobilam Sri Narasimhaswami vari temple is a work of beauty. The Mantapam is also a joy for ever. The Mantapam is the unique contribution of the Vijayanagar school of Sculpture in India. And the Ranga Mantapam at chinna Ahobilam which is a work of beauty is a joy for ever. In its pristine beauty and perfection of sculpture of the pillars, and its basreliefs, it is unexcelled. The glory of the Andhra sculptor (of this Rayalaseema region in particular) of the sixteenth century can be seen here, and words can not describe the perfection of the sculptural beauty of the art of those anonymous 'silpis' who have given us this exquisitely carved Ranga Mantapam which is actually a beautiful poem in stone.

This temple is a treasurehouse of sculptures and bas reliefs belonging to the Vijayanagar school of sculpture. The Vijayanagar school of sculpture is perhaps best studied in the Ranga Mantapam at Chinna Ahobilam. Another place where Vijayanagar sculptures in its pristine form can be studied is Tadipatri, the temples of which also are representative of the Vijayanagar epoch. The Vijayanagar sculpture in its purest glory can be seen in the temple bas-reliefs of the pillared mantapam which is known locally as the Ranga Mantapam. The name perhaps has some association with Sri Rangau I of Penukonda. Sri Ranga-I also played a historical role in the release of the Ahobilam temple from muslim domination, as pointed out earlier.

The plan referred to shows all the important structures in the Narasimhaswamy temple at Chinna Ahobilam. The important structures are 1(a) Sri Lakshminarasimhaswamy temple—Garbhagudi, Antarala mandapam, Mukhamandapam 2. The shrine for the consorts Sri Amrutavalli with Garbagudi, Antarala mandapam and mukha mandapam 3. Shrine for Sri Andal. 4. The famous Ranga Mandapam which is the treasurehouse of unique sculptures and bas reliefs and portraits of donors connected with the temple. 5. Sri Venkateswara swamy temple and Kalyana mandapam. 6. A shrine for Satagopayati 7. Ramalayam with mandapam structures 8. The main gopuram for the temple 9. The Dwajastambham outside the main gopuram. 10. Bali pitham. 11. Bari mandapam. 12. Long pillared hall 13. A Mondigopuram of the temple. 14. Pushkarini or water tank. 15. Pitadhipadhi shrine and mandapam. 16. Weavers' Satram. 17. Vijaya stambham or Victory tower which celebrates the release from muslim occupation during Sri Ranga's time, already referred to.

#### **Main temple :**

The main temple has Sri Lakshmi-Narasimha Swamy as the Presiding Deity. Plate No. 56 shows an outer view of its temple with its Rajagopurams. Plate 57 shows the Mulavirat Sri Lakshminarasimhaswamy along with the processional Deities - bronzes of Sri Prahladaavaradaswamy with Sridevi Bhudevi and Godadevi. Plate 58 shows the Utsava murtis of Lord Prahlada Varada with Sridevi and Bhudevi. Plate 59 shows the bronze Varada with Sridevi and Bhudevi. Plate 59 shows the bronze (Utsava Murtis) of the Divine couple Sri Chenchu Lakshmi and Sri Narasimha Swamy of Upper Ahobila.

Obviously these are kept in the lower temple. Plate 60 shows the Utsava Vighraha of Amrutavalli Thayar at Lower Ahobilam. As we enter the Garbhalayam after passing through mukha mnadapam and antaram, we notice a small inner shrine on the right where the alwars are housed in addition to a bronze figure of Anjaneya Swamy. All the 12 alwars along with Vishwakshena are to be found here. Passing further through a four-pillared structure on the top of which the Vijayanagar lotus motifs are to be seen, the Lord's divyamurti gives darshan to us inside the Garbhagriha at Cainna Ahobalam.

Lord Sri Lakshminarasimha Swamy is in the sukhasana pose with the left leg folded while the right leg is dangling free. Lakshmi is seated on his left thigh. He has four arms, the right upper arm holding the chakra, while the left upper arm holds the conch or 'sankham'. The lower right hand is in abhaya hasta mudra while the lower left hand is around Lakshmi (who has the katakahasta, as seen in all Lakshminarasimha Swamy figures). There is a simha tornam on the Lord. This is a very beautiful image of Sri Lakshminarasimha Swamy. He is a graceful blessing-bestowing Lord to Prahlada and to all devotees who surrender to him and hence he is Prahladavarada Murti. Actually the utsavamurti figure with two Nachchiars is the Prahladavarada Swamy, while the Mulavirat is called Sri Lakshminarasimha Swamy. The Prahladavarada Murti bronze is a sthanaka figure about 3' high on a pedestal of 9". The upper right hand holds the Chakra while the lower left hand exhibits the Sankha or conch. The lower right hand is in the Abhayahasta chinmudra pose; the lower left hand holds the Gada or mace. The two Nachchiars on both sides of the Lord are Sri Devi and Bhudevi in Katakahasta and Prasrita Dakshinahasta poses. In addition, the utsavamurti of the Eguva Ahobilam Lord and the Jwalanarasimha Murti bronzes are in the 'Garbhagudi'. There is a bronze of Godadevi also in the stanaka pose. The Jwalanarasimha Swamy of upper Ahobilam has ten hands has already been described elsewhere. The Lakshmi Narasimha Murty bronze - i. e. the Pavana Utsava Murti bronze is also in the Garbhalayam (not shown in the photograph). This figure holds the chakra and conch (upper hands) while the lower right hand is in the abhaya hasta pose and the lower left hand around Lakshmi. Other bronzes here are the Chenchulakshmi, Chakratilwar and a bronze of Navanitakrishna. The utsavamurti used for abhishekam, a portrait of the first mathadhipathi and the bronzes for Amrutavalli are also to be found.

#### **Shrine for the Mother Amrutavalli Thayar :**

The Amrutavalli shrine has a small garbha griha where the Mother gives darshan to her devotees. The mother is in the Padmasana pose holding a kataka in her upper hands, while the lower right hand is in the abhaya hasta and the lower left hand is in the varada hasta pose. There are also utsavamurtis of Amrutavalli ammavaru and Chenchulakshmi. Plate 60 shows the Utsava vighraha of the Mother Amrutavalli Thayar at Lower Ahobilam. It is seen that the murti is in the usual Padmasana pose with kataka or flowers in the upper arms. The lower right hand is in the abhaya hasta pose while the lower left hand is in the varada hasta pose. The utsavamurti of Chenchulakshmi in the shrine is also very beautiful and deserves to be noticed. The priest of the temple is Sri S. Kesava Iyengar (who is working here since 3 years) mentioned that the Nachchair shrine was consecrated recently (1980) while the Nachchair herself is an ancient Deity.

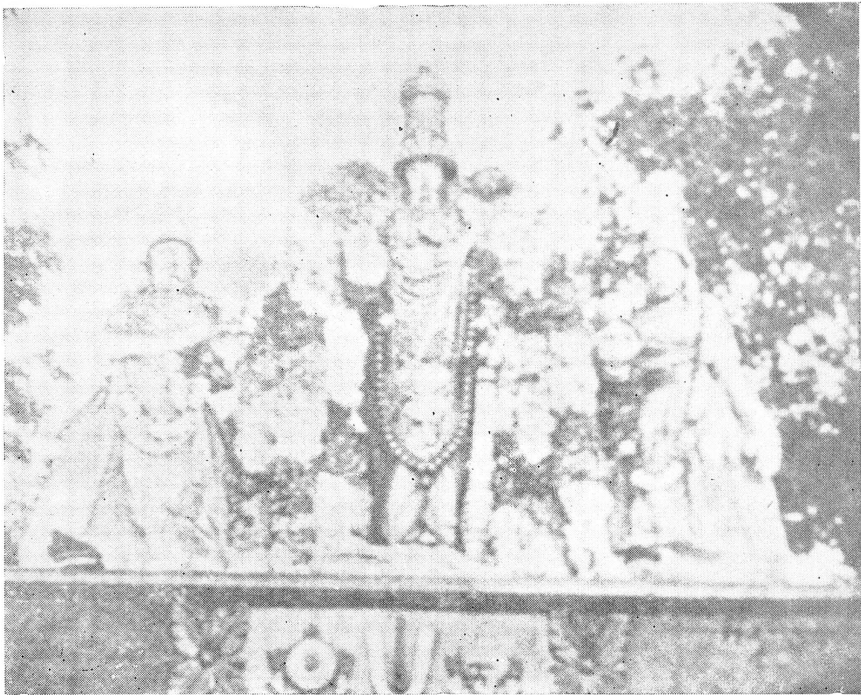


PLATE 58: Sri Lord Prahlada Varada with Sri Devi and Bhudevi



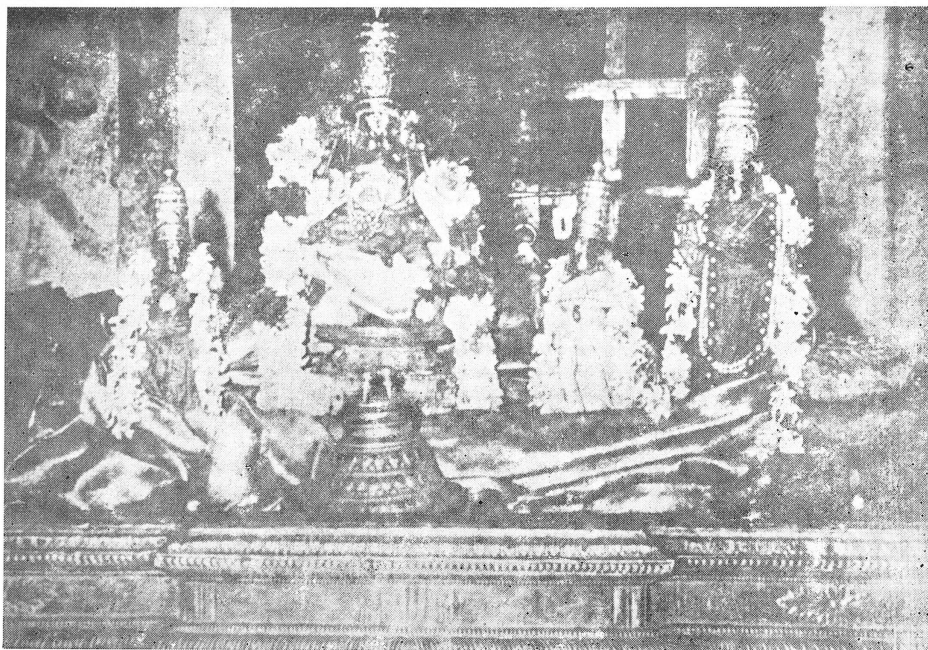


PLATE 59 : Bronzes of the Divine Couple, Upper Ahobilam



PLATE 60: Sri Amarithavalli Thayar, Lower Ahobilam

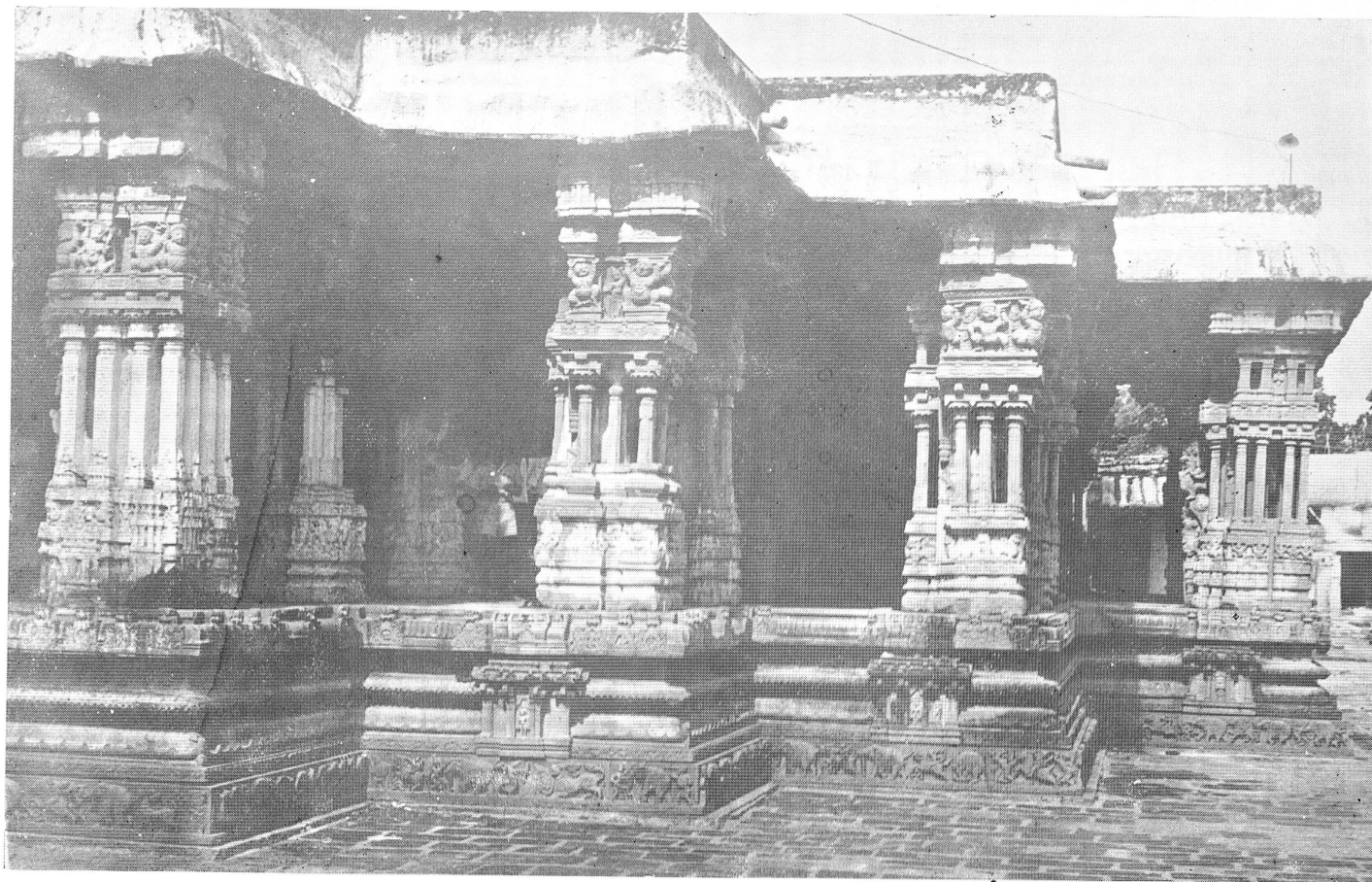


PLATE 61 : View of Ranga Mantapam - Characteristic of Vijayanagar school of sculpture



PLATE 62: Close-up view of Yakshas in Ranga Mantapam



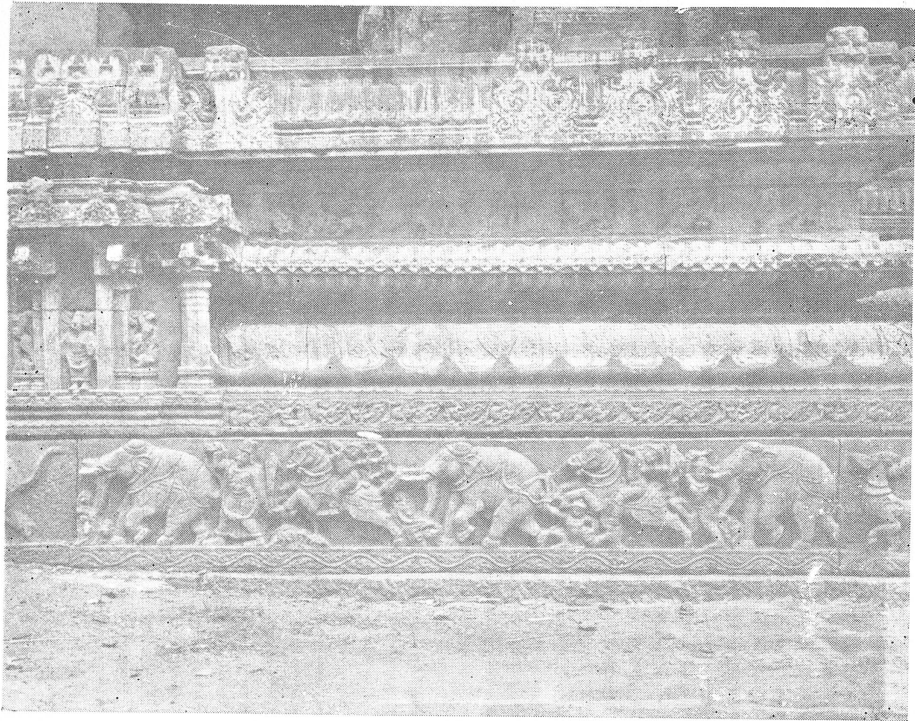


PLATE 63 : Adhishthana view of Ranga Mantapam

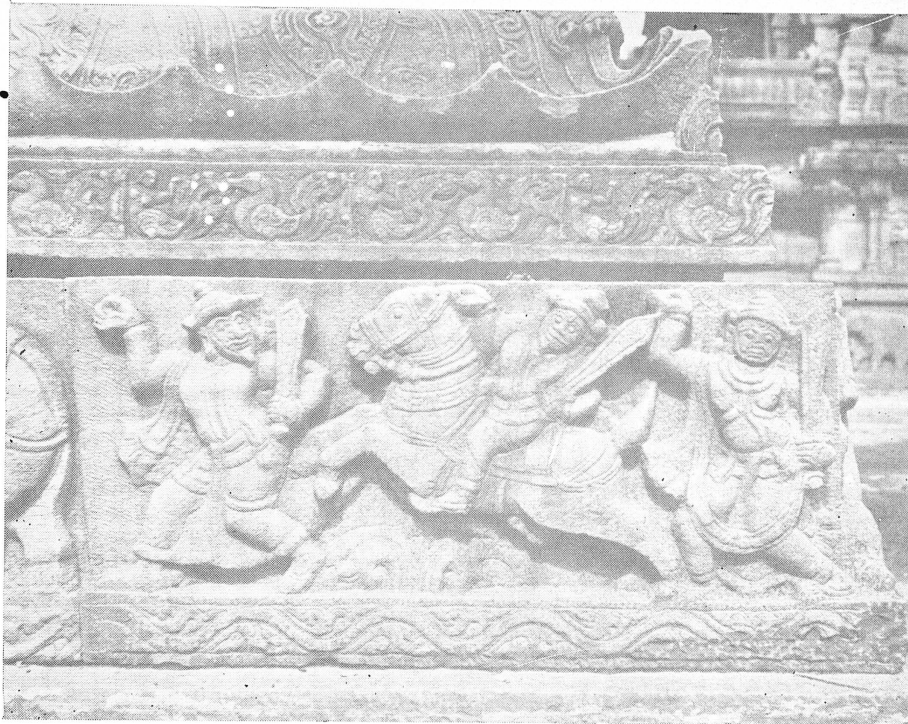


PLATE 64 : Closer view of Adhishthanam of Ranga mantapam



PLATE 65 : Vijayanagar pillars with corbels and well developed 'Pushpa bodigais'

There is a small shrine for Andal (structure No. 3 in site plan).

### **Sculptures and bas reliefs in Rangamandapam :**

As has been mentioned earlier the Rangamandapam in the temple is a treasure house of exquisitely carved sculptures and bas reliefs belonging to the Vijayanagar school of sculpture and architecture.

The Rangamandapam is actually a unique structure which is neither square nor rectangular, but but a many-sided structure. The total length of the mantapa at the longest point is 30.5 metres and the width at the widest point is 31.10 metres; The mandapa has a central pillared pathway of about 3.75 metres leading to the shrine of Shri Lakshmi-Narasimha Swamy. The Lord is facing East, and the Rangamandapa has two clearly demarcated Northern and southern portions, both of which have uniquely sculptured sub-mantapams. The sub-mantapams in these portions are square in shape with a side of 4.25 metres. Plate No. 61 shows a view of the Rangamantapam with the characteristic Vijayanagar ceiling or Kodungeil, pillars with corbels having well developed pushpabodigai (not fully detached) characteristic of the Vijayanagar school of sculpture, and also a beautiful adhistanam sculptured with bas reliefs of elephants. This exquisitely carved adishtanam deserves notice. The complex pillars with yaksha figures on the top may be seen.

Plate 62 gives a close up of the yaksha figures on the top of the pillars.

Plate 63 gives a close up view of the solidly sculptured stone adhishtanam, of the Rangamantapam. At the lowest level we see elephants and riders on horses on the upapitham. The riders obviously are the soldiers of Vijayanagar days who wear head gear and carry bows and arrows, broad swords etc. The next Upanam layer which shows sculptures of swans, deserves notice. There are other layers, the Padmam, the Kumudam, the Kandam and the toplayer akrapattayal. Niches also are sculptured on the adhistanam with images of the Lord. These miniature devakosthas on the adhishtanam with representations of full pillars and mantapam with kudus, and kudu representations with Gandharva mukhas on the akrapathiyal layer are also worth noticing. The elaborate sculpturing and the fineness developed in the sculpturing of the adhishtanam is admirable. The gandharva mukhas and the fully developed Vijayanagar kudu with simha mukhas on the akrapathiyal of the adhishtanam are also worth noting. The adhishtanam is an excellent representative model of the Vijayanagar epoch of sculpture.

Plate 64 shows an enlargement of the bas-reliefs at the base of the adishtanam. It is interesting to see that 'ferangis' or foreign soldiers are mounted on horses, and also moving by foot; they carry broad swords and wear a large gown in moghulai tradition. The rider on the horse is also wearing the kabuli type of shoes. The Vijayanagar kingdom had intimate trade contacts with Portuguese in Goa and horses were being purchased from them, in those days.



Plate 65 shows the characteristic Vijayanagar pillars with corbels and well developed pushabodigai and pillars standing on the adhishtanam. These pillars also are exquisitely sculptured. The nagabandas on main pillars may be noticed. The Narasimhaswamy destroying Hiranyakasipa to the extreme right which is a replica of the ugra Narsimhaswami with ten hands and Hiranyakasipa on his lap, is worth seeing. The garuda bas-relief at the bottom of the Narasimha sculpture and the bas relief of Prahalada in the Anjali hasta pose may be noted. The corbels are also profusely sculptured with figures of yakshs and riders on yali lions etc. The pushabodigai (not fully detached) in the corbels at the top indicating early Vijayanagar sculpture belonging to the 16th century is also worth noticing.

Plate 66 shows another view of a complex pillar of the Rangamantapam on the stone Adhishtanam or base. The pillar shows floral motifs, well developed kudu figures with Gandharva-mukhas and the characteristic yali lions with riders. The yali lions have their hind feet on yali figures such as elephants, makaras etc. The intricate and detailed sculpturing on the pillars are worth noting.

Plate 67 shows another view of the pillar of the Rangamandapam showing the characteristic rider on the horse with its hind feet mounted on a makara or a crocodile; the pillar also shows a bas relief of Lord Narasimha pursuing Hiranya Kasipa to kill him. This sculpture is described in detail separately. It is also worth noting that the pillar exhibits an erotic sculpture at the extreme top left. A man is taking his pleasure from his woman in the Bull and cow posture.

Plate 68 is another view of a pillar on the southern side of the Rangamandapam. The yali lions and the yakshas who are in a joyous mood may be noted. The corbels with fully developed pushabodigai (not fully detached) may also be noted.

Plate 69 shows another view of a pillar of the Rangamandapam showing the characteristic riders on the yali lions, yakshas, and the characteristic corbels with pushabodigais; figure of an Anjaneya on the stone pillar may also be noticed.

Plate 70 shows one of the damaged pillars in the Rangamandapam. There is a bas relief of Venkatesvara on the left with varda and Kati hastas.

#### **Unique Sculptures on the pillars of Rangamandapa**

The Rangamandapa has very beautiful and unique sculptures of dancing figures, musicians, and dieties, carved very beautifully out of solid granite. Some of the more important sculptures are described below.

Plate 71 is a beautiful figure of a man playing on the mridangam. There is a figure of a Yaksha in ecstatic joy under this (not shown).

Plate 72 similarly is a figure of a man about 3 feet high holding cymbals in his hand in the pose of participating in a bhajan. The sculpture also shows the period – dress and ornaments of the

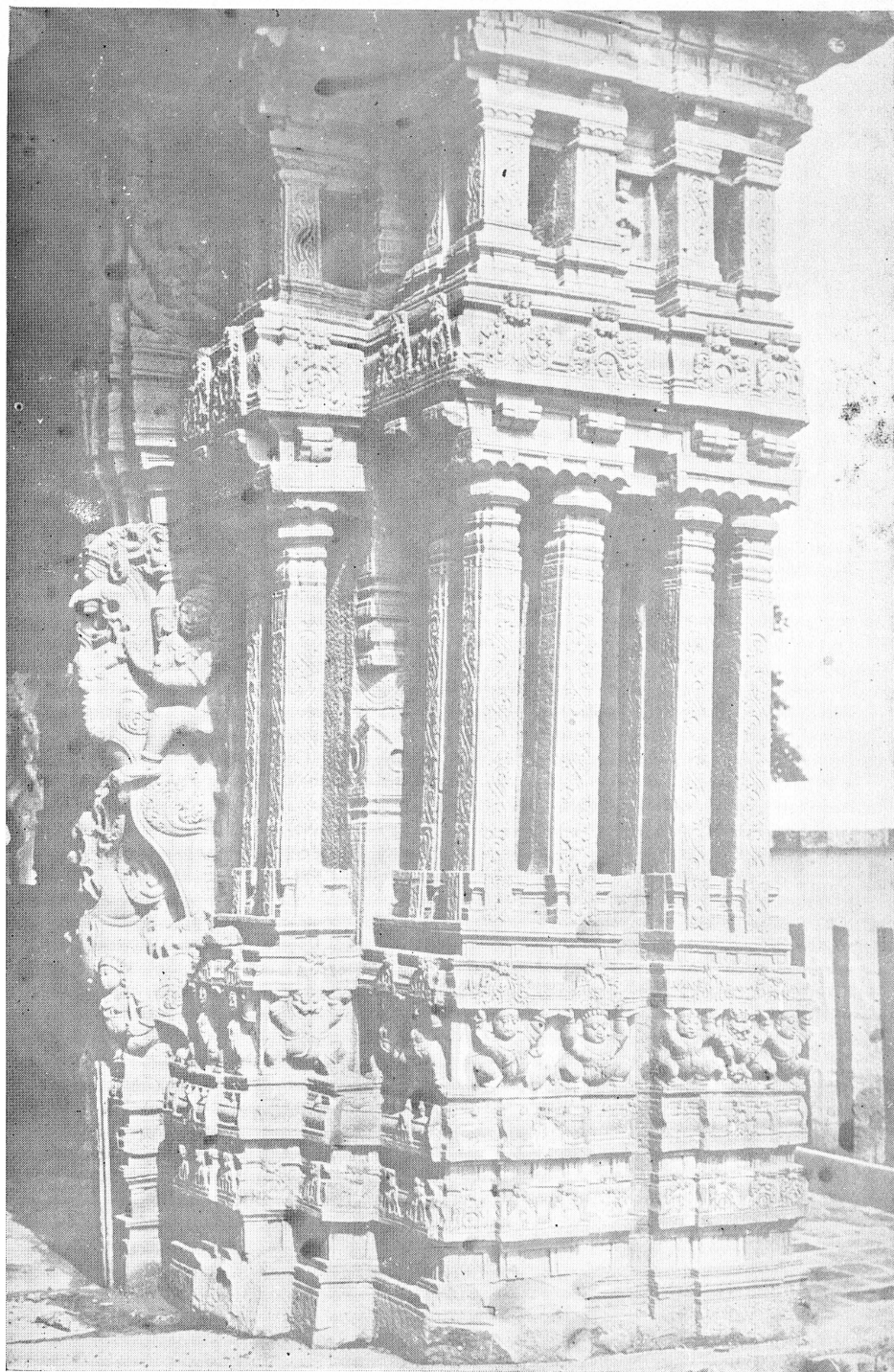


PLATE 66 : A complex pillar— Northern Ranga Mantapam in Chinna Ahobilam.



PLATE 67 : Pillar of Northern Ranga Mantapam - Erotic sculpture (View from East)



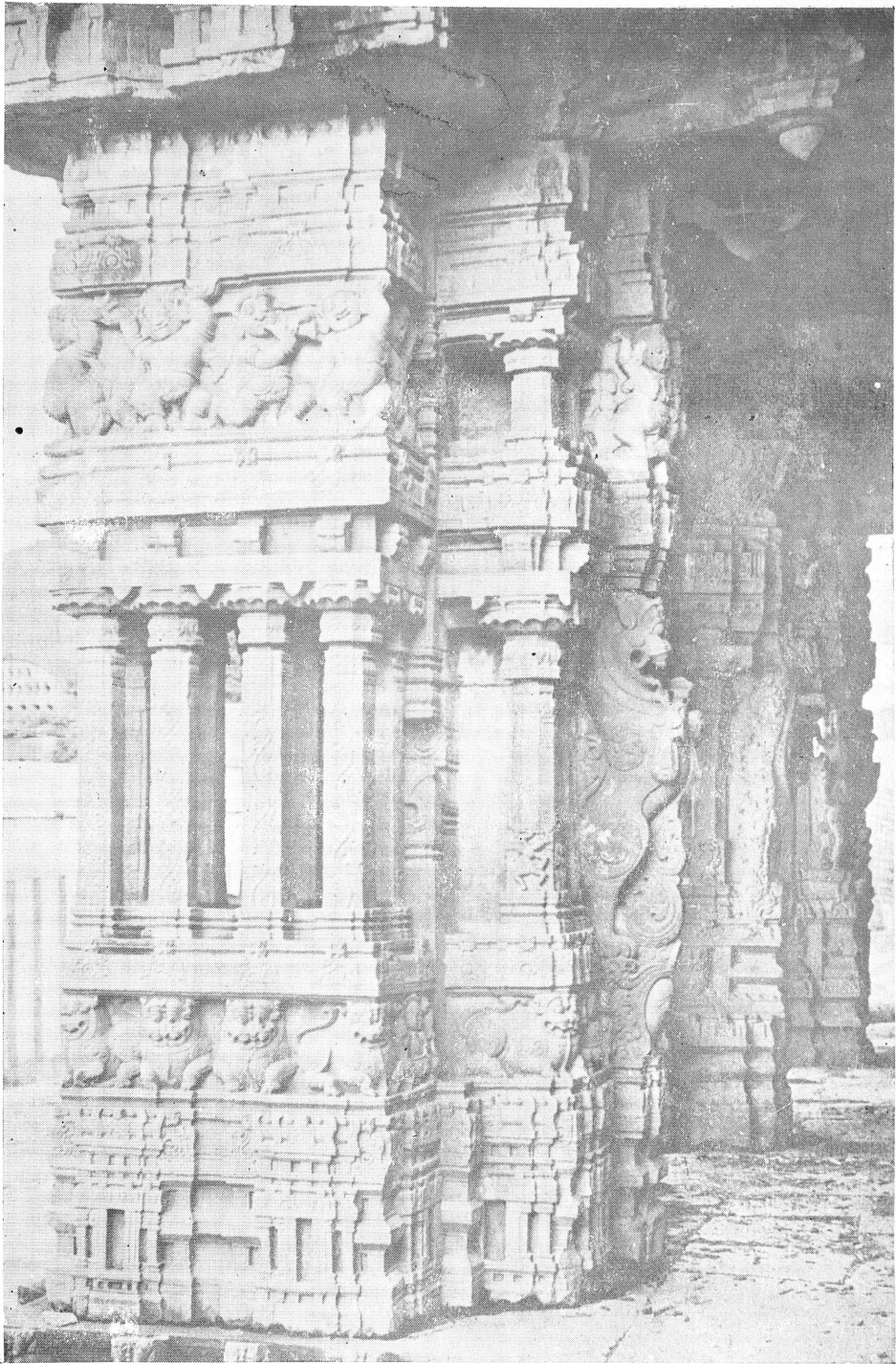


PLATE 68 : Another view of pillar in Ranga Mantapam - Yakshas in joyful mood



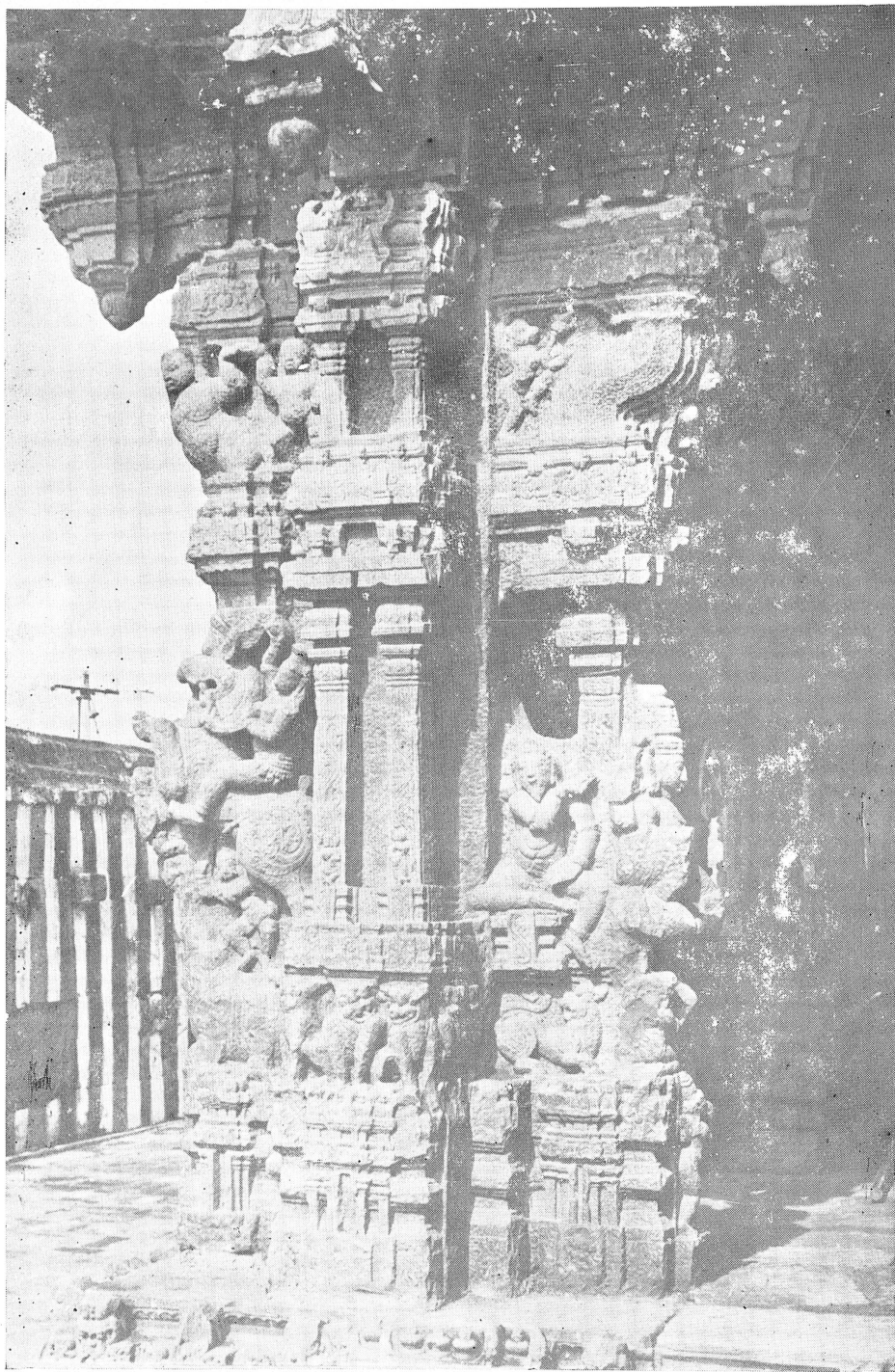


PLATE 69 : Another view of a complex pillar in Ranga Mantapam

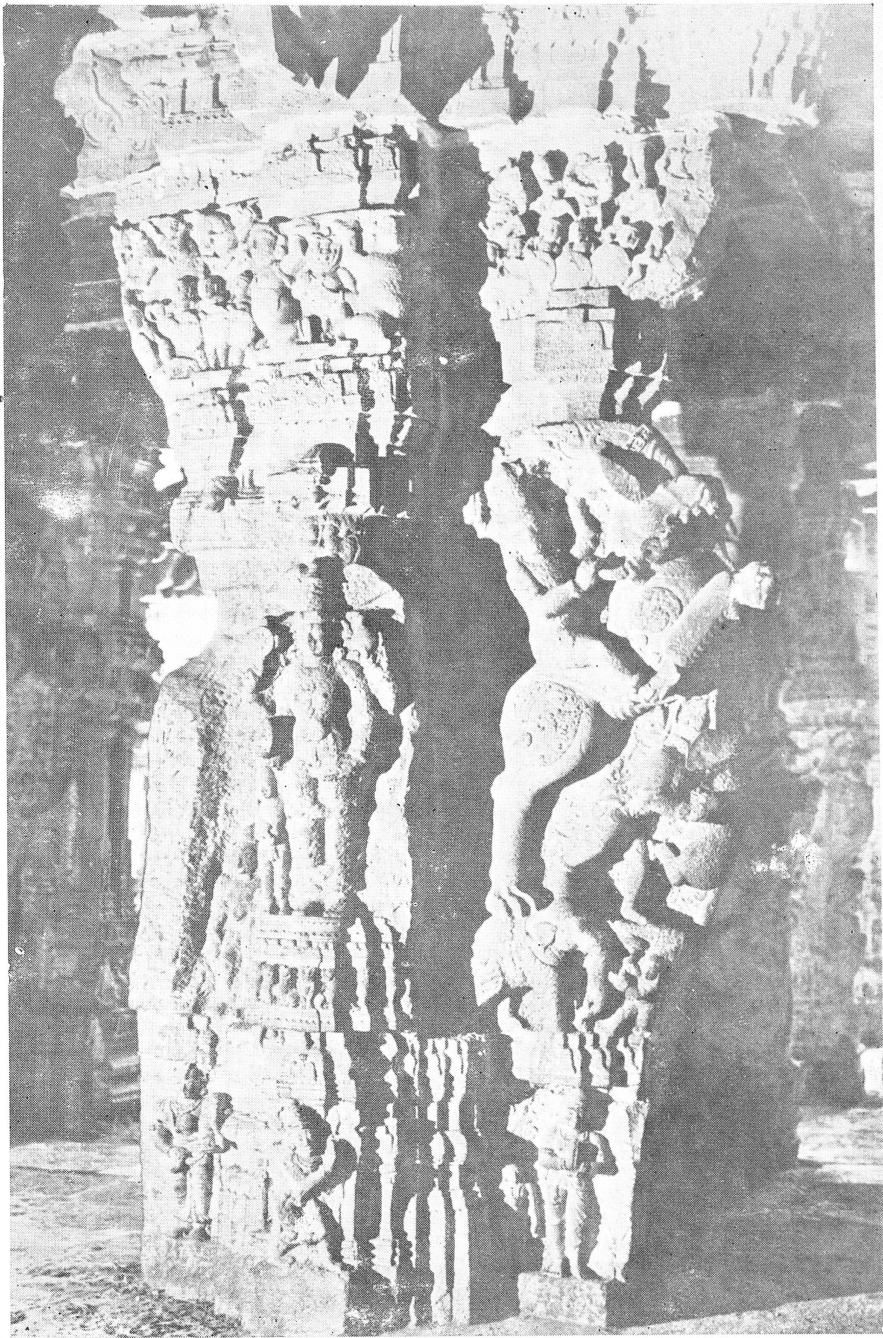


PLATE 70 : Damaged pillar of Ranga Mantapam (Note Sri Venkateswara bas-relief on the pillar)

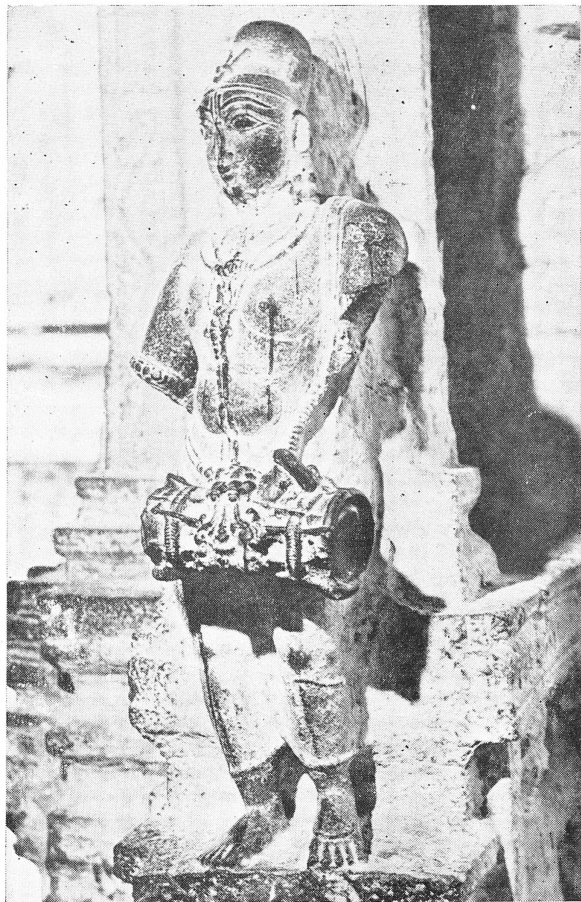


PLATE 71 : Man playing the Mridangam, Chinna Ahobilam



PLATE 72 : Man with cymbals, Chinna Ahobilam





PLATE 73 : Common minstrel, Chinna Ahobilam

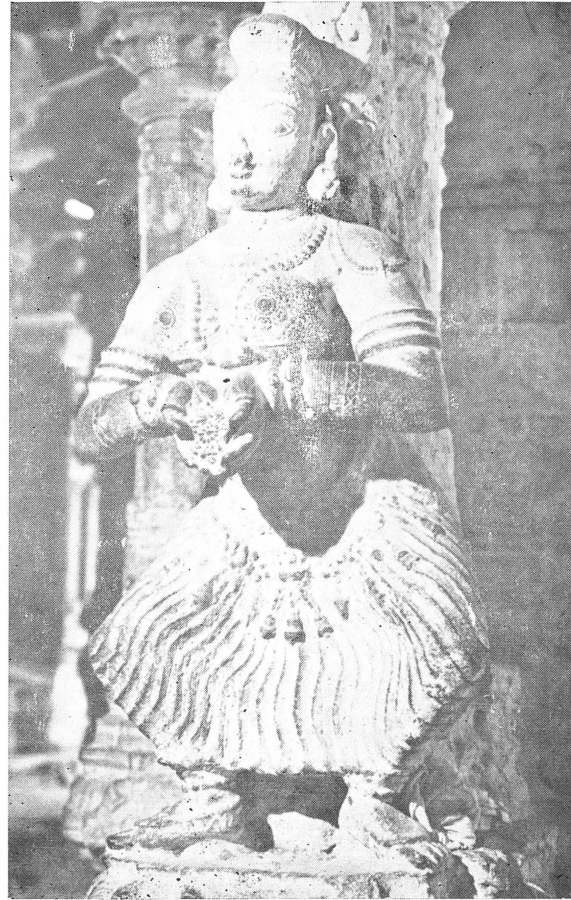


PLATE 74 : Danseuse, Chinna Ahobilam





PLATE 75 : Another Dancer, Chinna Ahobilam

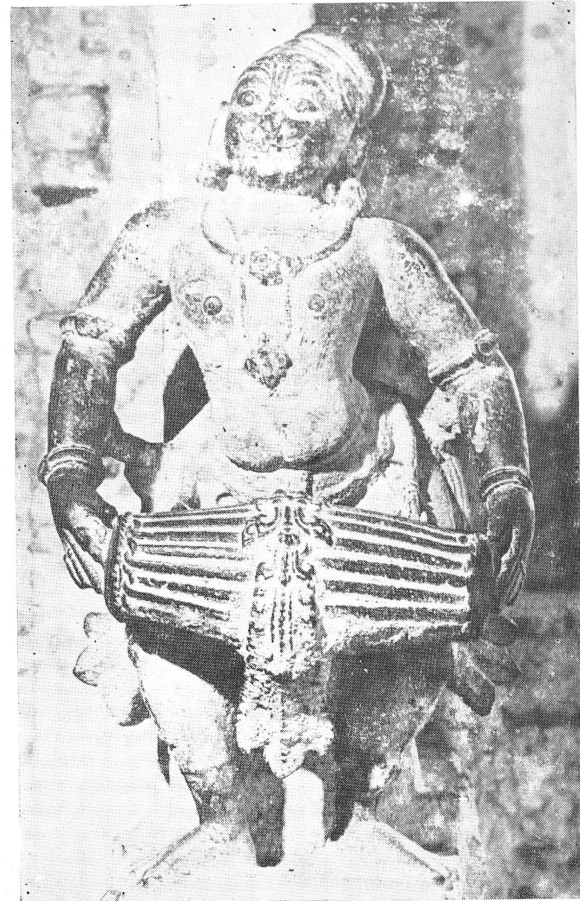


PLATE 76 : Man playing on Mridanga



PLATE 77 : Rama in Anjali-hastha pose



PLATE 78 : Anjaneya in Anjali-hastha pose, Chinna Ahobilam



PLATE 79: Devi feeding a parrot, Chinna Ahobilam

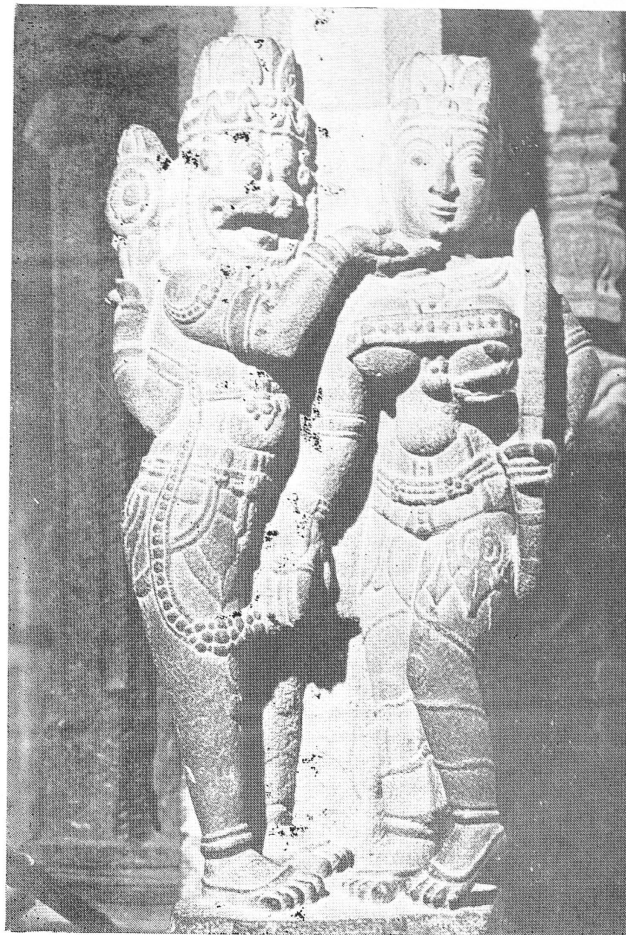


PLATE 80: Lord Narasimha wooing Chenchu Lakshmi



common man in those days. The man has bare feet, wears a dhoti and his chest is bare. He is wearing 'Kadyalu' on his hands. There is a kantabharana, necklace and also ornaments on his arms. He is also wearing ear rings. The head dress is unique showing that he has tied his long hair and ornamented it with a cobra-band. There is an anga vastra tied around on the top of the dhoti (perhaps because of the bhajan participation).

Plate 73 is another figure of a common minstrel of those days. This is a very beautiful figure of a Vaishnavite dasa holding a tambura. His dress and ornaments also show the customs and manners of people of those olden days. The dhoti seems to have been the common dress in those days. The Vaishnavite minstrels of those days were perhaps travelling in the country-side singing bhajans, entertaining people and eking out their livelihood. The figure is 3 feet high.

Plate 74 is a figure of a danseur 3 feet high. She must have been a court dancer or a ganika of those days. She has two flowers in her ears as ornaments. She is wearing a tight blouse which also shows her prominent, pointed, well developed breasts. She has a fanned out pavadaï or skirt commonly used by dancers. She is shown in the pose of offering flowers. The numerous bangles, necklaces and the special 'kondai' type of hair-do she is sporting is also worth noticing.

Plate 75 is another figure of a danseur with Pavadaï. This figure is having several 'gajjalû' on her ankles which are worth noting. Her tight blouse and sleek body are also well sculptured.

Plate 76 is a bracket figure of a man playing on the mridanga. The figure is very beautifully carved and we feel as if we are in the presence of a live drummer who is playing on the drum. The expression of joy on his face is also worth noting.

Plate 77 is a beautiful bracket figure of a Dhanurdari in the Anjali hasta pose. There is a tradition of Raghava or Sri Rama worshipping Lord Ahobilesvara. This figure therefore is obviously the portrait of Sri Rama in the Anjalihasta pose holding the bow. The expression of devotion has been very successfully sculptured in stone by the Andhra sculptors of those days. The Kiritamakuta worn by the divine devotee is also worth noting.

Plate 78 is a sculpture of Anjaneya which sculpture also shows devotion on the face. The sculpture is slightly damaged.

#### **Seated Minakshi – Beauty Personified**

Plate 79 shows a very unique sculpture of a Devi, perhaps the most beautiful sculpture in this temple, in the Sukhasana pose, holding a flower in her right hand. The left hand holds a fruit, and a parrot perched on her right foot is carved as pecking away at the fruit. This is obviously a very rare form of a seated Minakshi figure, where the parrot sported by her is fed by the Devi herself. The left foot of the Devi rests on a lotus pedestal. The sculpture is really Beauty personified.





### **The Lord wooing the Mother chenchu Lakshmi**

Plate 80 is another unique sculpture of Lord Narasimha wooing Chenchulakshmi. After Hiranyakasipa's destruction, the Ugra murthi became a Santha murthi, only when he fell in love with the Chenchu maiden, Lakshmi. This sculpture shows the Chenchu maiden holding a bow; and Lord Narasimha is making advances of love to his consort. His two upper hands hold the Chakra and conch while the lower right hand is petting the chin of the consort. The lower left hand is holding a breast of the Chenchu maiden. This is obviously a mithun sculpture, but a rare sculpture (in the Narasimha cult tradition\* in which Lord Narasimha is shown as a joyous Narasimha holding his consort in embrace. One remembers the famous Tyagaraja's Telugu Krithi 'Enthajuchina, Entha Nerchina, Entha Varaiyna Kantha Dasule --

Whatever the learning  
 Whatever the wisdom  
 Whatever the greatness,  
 In spite of all these,  
 Man is slave to woman,  
 Until he is a slave  
 To thoughts that lead  
 To Srikantha, the Lord of Lakshmi.

Here is Srikantha, the Lord of Lakshmi herself transforming himself from a Ugra Narasimha into a Abhaya, Ananda murthi sporting with his consort.

### **Lord Narasimha pursuing Hiranyakasipa**

Plate 81 is a figure of Lord Narasimha pursuing Hiranya Kasipa after emerging out of a pillar. The ugra on the face of the Lord Narasimha and the bhiti or fear in the face of Hiranyakasipa have been well brought out in this sculpture. This is also a very unique sculpture in the Rangamandapam of Narasimha Swamy temple. The sword and shield of the demon, and the taloned hand of Narasimha deserve notice.

### **Lakshmi Narasimha Murthy**

Plate 82 is another unique sculpture in the northern Ranga Mandapam showing the Lakshmi Narasimha murti. The chakra is shown in the right upper hand, while the conch is shown in the left upper hand; The Abhaya-hasta is seen (lower right hand). Lakshmi is shown seated on his left thigh in the sukhasana pose. The Lakshmi figure has a kataka in her right hand and she is seen holding the left hand on the thigh of the Lord. This is one of the very very unique sculptures of this temple.

\* The Narasimha Cult as has already been indicated is as ancient, cult. Its origins are connected with the yearning of man to be virile. Obviously the lion's virility is sought to be aspired.

### **Lakshmi Varahamurthi**

Plate 83 is another unique figure of Lakshmi varaha with the Chakra and Conch in the upper hands. The Lord is exhibiting abhaya-hasta in his right hand while his left hand is embracing the Lakshmi seated on his thigh. She is having a flower in her right hand. There is also one of the well carved out images of Lakshmi Varaha Swamy.

### **Lakshmi Yoga Narasimha Murthy**

Plate 84 is very very unique bracket figure of Yoga Narasimha Swamy with the Yoga patta around his legs, with Lakshmi seated on his thigh. This is a unique figure of Yoga Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy, as Yoga figure are normally sculptured singly, without the consort. Obviously yoga and the Lakshmi (Bhoga) also can go together only in the case of the Supreme Lord, The Yoga Narasimha Swamy is exhibiting the abhaya-hasta. The Lakshmi on his thigh is holding a Kataka in her right hand while the left hand is in the prasrita dakshina-hasta pose. One left hand of Narasimha is shown as wielding bows and arrows. His lower left hand is embracing the Lakshmi. The right upper hand is missing.

### **Yoga Narasimha Swamy**

Plate 85 is again another unique figure of Yoga Narasimha Swamy with the yoga patta around his knees. The figure has four arms, the right upper arm should be holding the chakra which is missing. The left upper arm is holding the Sankha while the two lower hands are placed over the knees in the Yoga pose. This is one of the pretty figures of the Chinna Ahobilam temple. The 'Swamy' is like the Yoga Narasimha Swamy in the Alagaianger shrine at TIRUMALAI.

Plates 86 and 87 are two bracket figures of nobles carrying the whisk and the chamara for the Lord. They are very well carved and deserve notice.

### **Portrait figures of Chinna Ahobila Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Temple**

#### **Shri Narasimha Swamy as teacher**

Plate 88 is a unique figure of Narasimha Swamy shown as the teacher. The smaller figure to the left of the Swamiji is the Satagopajiyar. The lord is holding the Kalasa full of nectar. This could also be described as the Satagopam. The disciple is traditionally recognised as the first Matadhipati jiyangar of Ahobilam (who is reported to have obtained the swarna or golden Narasimha from Pratapa Rudra). If this view is correct, his portrait (the smaller one) should be recognised as the portrait of Adivan Satagopa Yatindra Maha desikan. He is receiving Sanyasa from the Lord.

Plates 88, 89 and 90 represent portraits of three nobles whose images are shown in the temple, The image of devotee in Plate 90 is damaged, but even this figure should have originally

been in the Anjalihasta pose as in the case of other two stone pannels. All the three figures are in the tradition of Vijayanagara kings. Such figures are seen in the Sri Venkatesvara Swamy Temple at Tirumalai where portraits Sri Krishnadevaraya with his two consorts, Sri Achyutarayadeva Maharaya with his queen and Sri Venkatapatiraya are to be seen. While these figures represent Vijayanagara kings or nobles they cannot be identified clearly as there is no inscription whatsoever. However, it is possible that the figure in Plate 88 is the figure of Sri Rangaraya I of Penukonda who sent his nobles Sri Koda Raju Venkata Raju and Sri Tirumala Raju telugu choda Chiefs to release Ahobilam which was then under the control of the Muslim forces under Ibrahim Qutb Shah. This figure appears to be that of a royal figure with a crown and costume which can be recognised as following the traditional sculpting of kings in the devotional pose. The two other figures appear to be only nobles and it is possible that these two nobles are Venkata Raju and Tirumala Raju who have been given special honours and rights by the Satagopa Yati of Ahobilam on their releasing Ahobilam from Muslim domination.

Plate 91 shows a couple identified as Mukunda Deva Raju.

### **Main Gopuram**

Structure No. 8 in the plan of Ahobilam is the main gopuram. This is shown in Plate 92. The Gopuram over the Mukhadwara is a modern structure. The base or adhistanam of this Gopuram is however a Vijayanagar structure. Similarly Plate 93 shows (structure-13) the Mondi gopuram at the outer entrance of the temple. This gopuram belonging to the Vijayanagar school of architecture was never completed. Four inscriptional slabs are also seen in the picture. There are some sculptures of Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy and others near these gopurams.



PLATE 81: Pursuing Hiranyakasipu

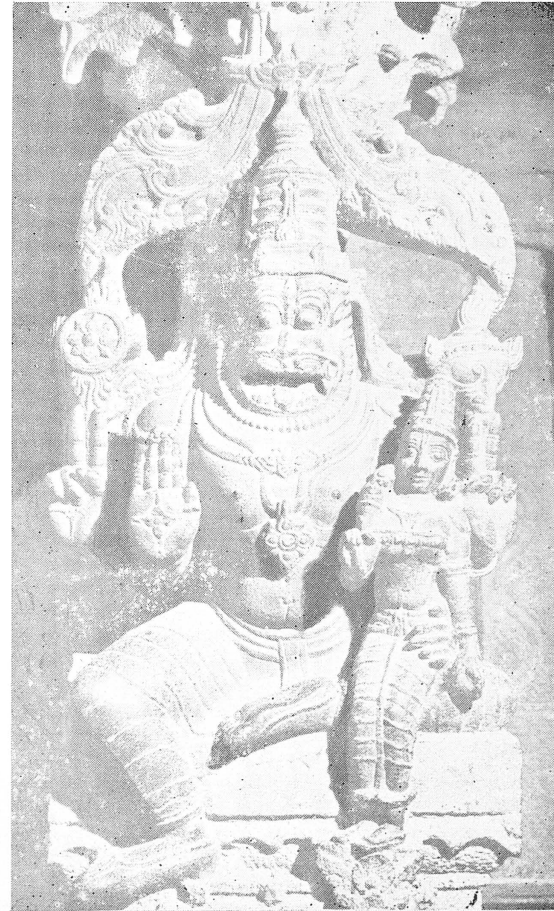


PLATE 82 : Lakshmi Narasimha



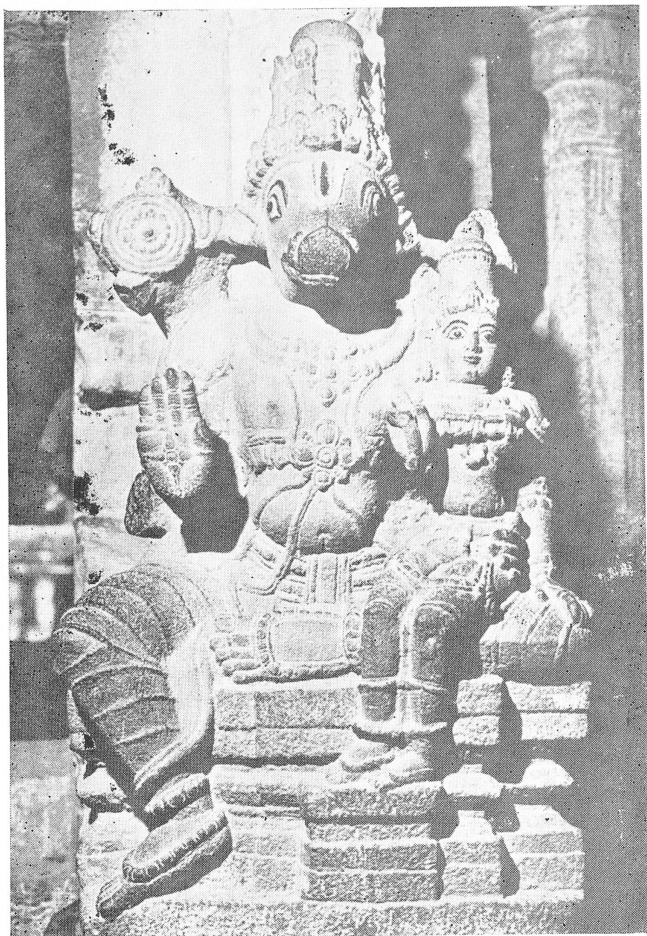


PLATE 83 : Lakshmi Varaha Narasimha, Chinna Ahobilam

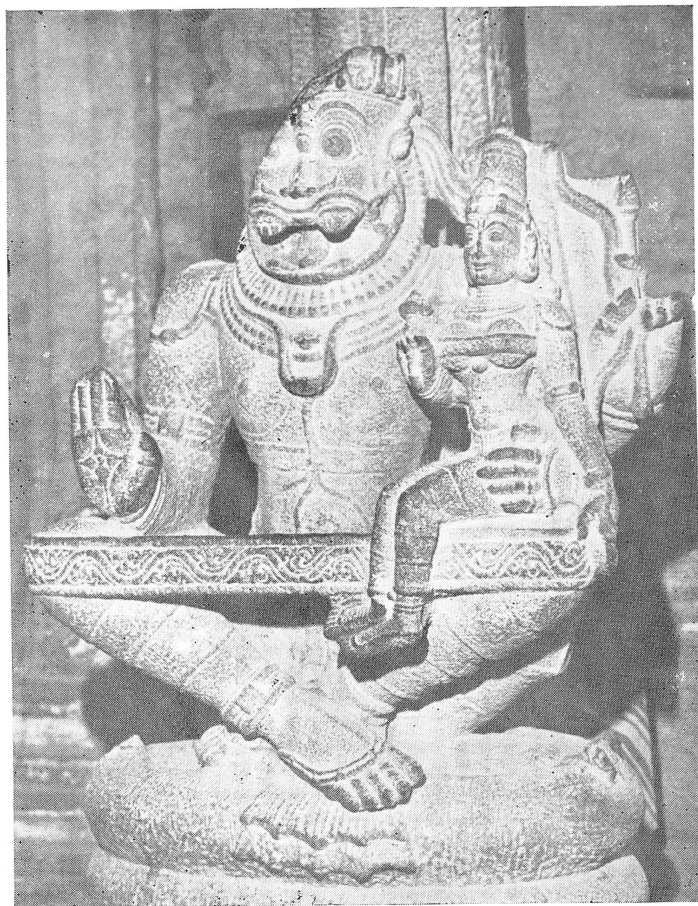


PLATE 84 : Yoga Narasimha with Lakshmi



PLATE 85 : Yoga Narasimha Murthi, Chinna Ahobilam

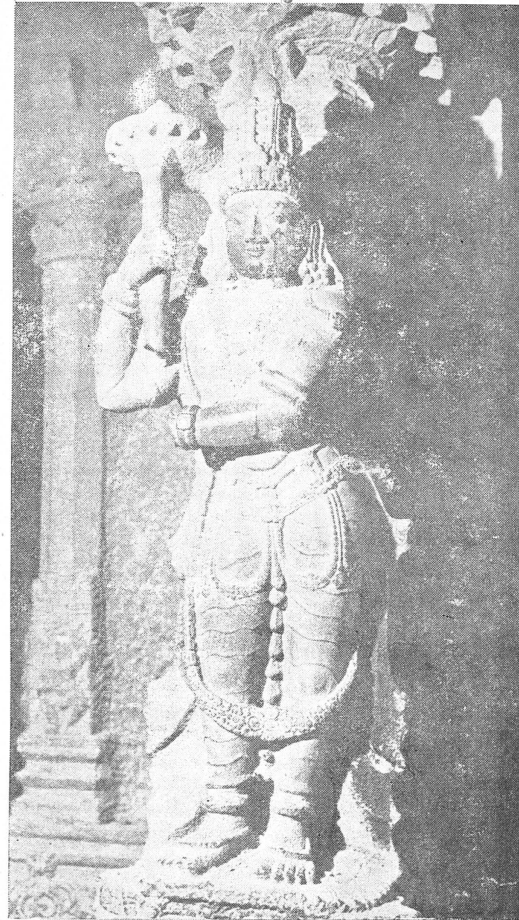


PLATE 86: Noble carrying Chamara



PLATE 87 : Noble carrying whisk



PLATE 88 : Portrait of Narasimha Swamy as teacher





PLATE 88A : Portrait of Vijayanagara King (Sri Ranga?)

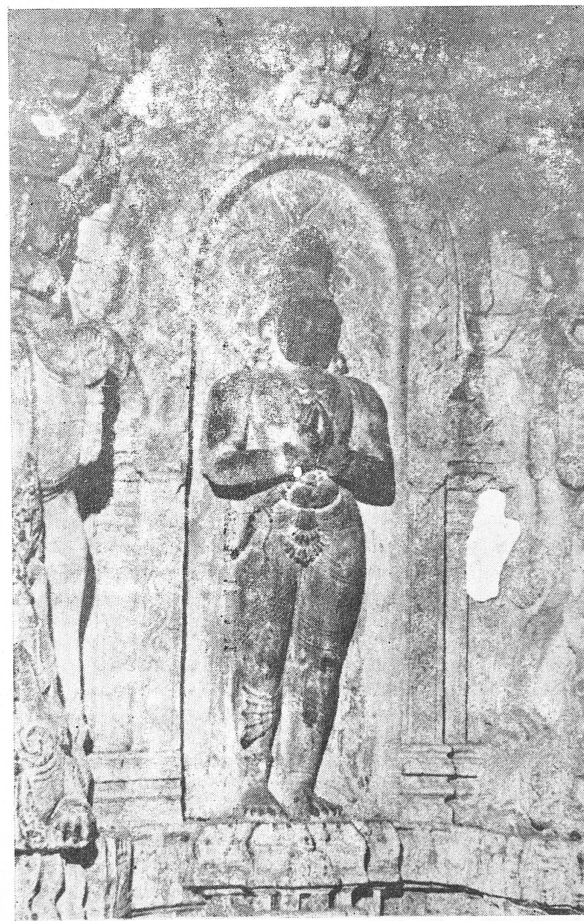


PLATE 89 : Portrait of a Noble



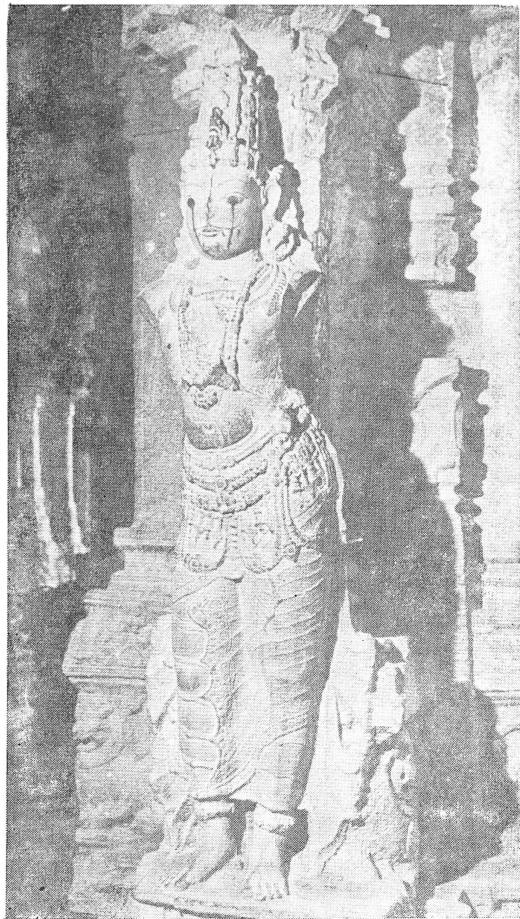


PLATE 90: Portrait of a Noble



PLATE 91: Portrait of a local Noble with his wife

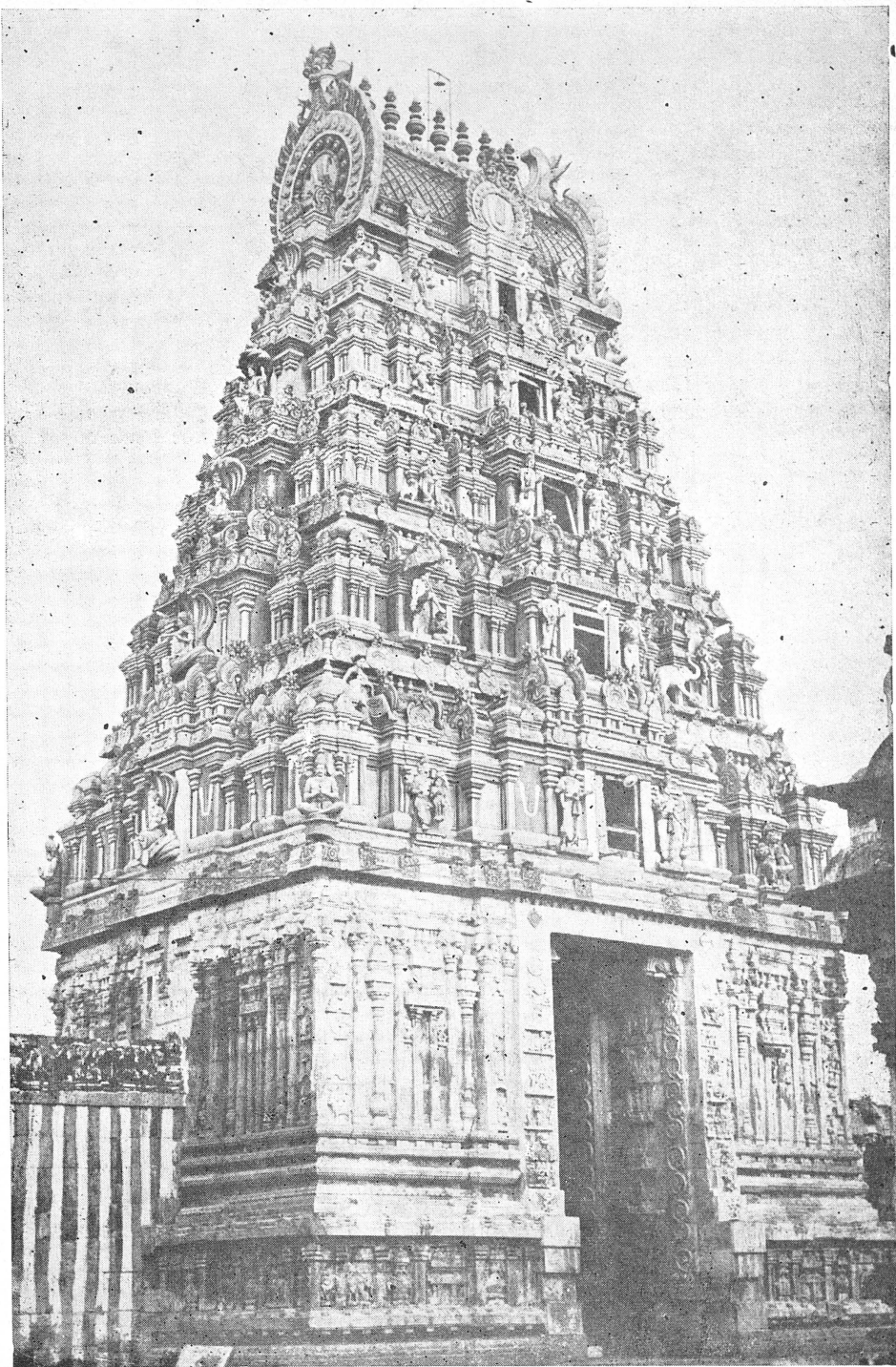


PLATE 92 : Gali gopuram, Chinna Ahobilam

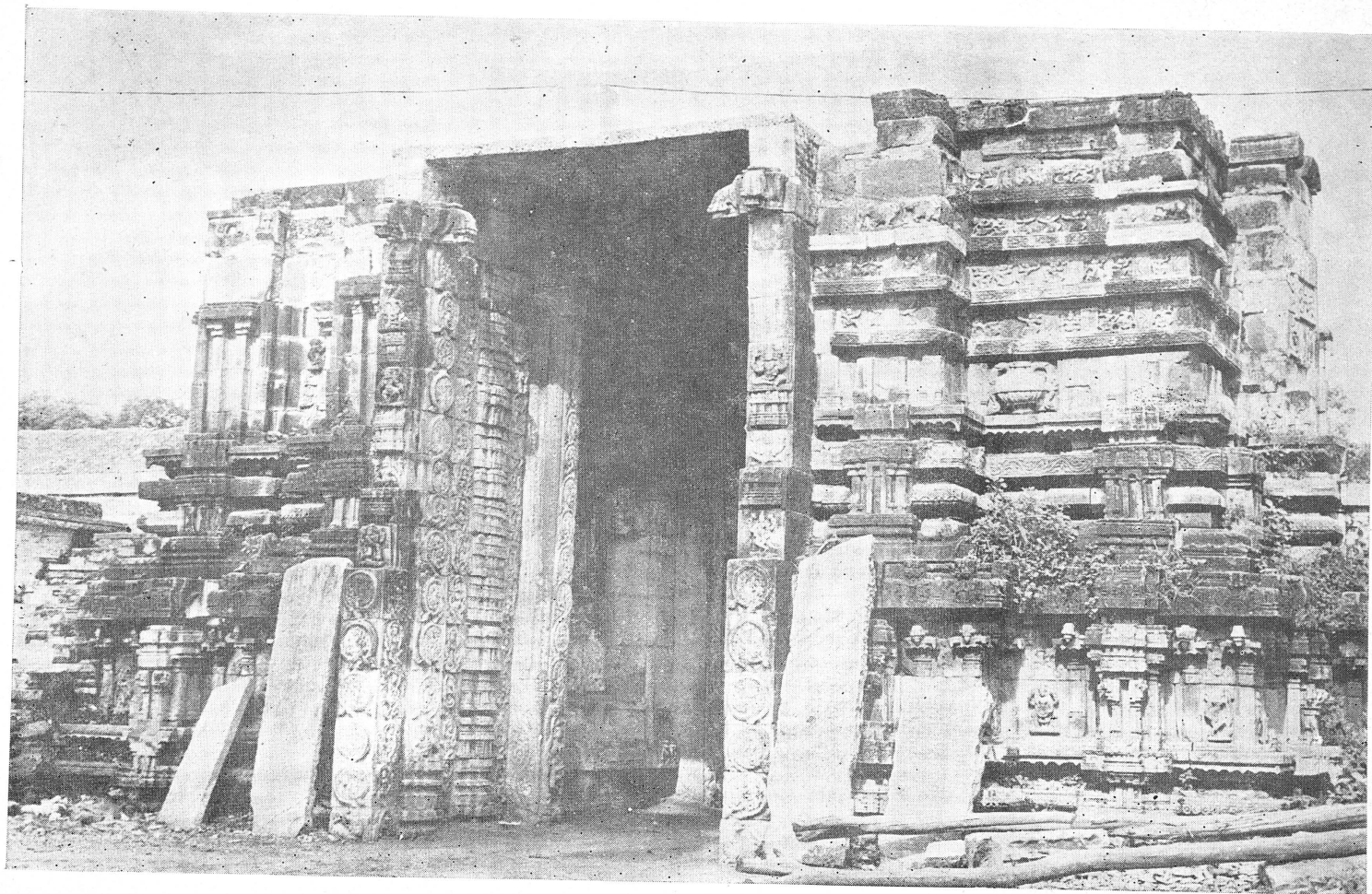
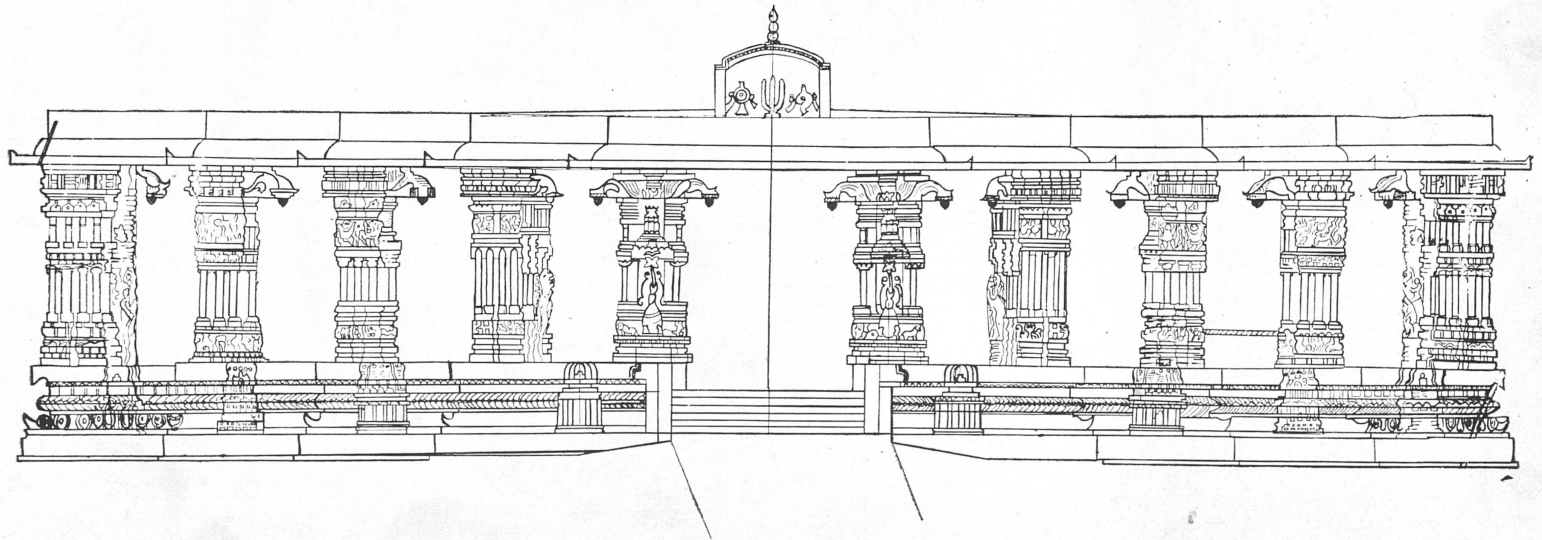


PLATE 93 : Mondri Gopuram (View from inside near dhvajastambha)



FRONT ELEVATION OF  
RANGA MANDAPAM  
AT LOWER AHOBILAM

SCALE 2 CM=1M





## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The author acknowledges with thanks the stenographic assistance given by Sri R. S. P. Anjaneya Sarma, and Sri Syed Habeebuddin in the preparation of this monograph. Parts of the monograph were written in longhand to dictation by my two daughters and youngest son, Chi. Dr. Miss P. Jyothi sitapati, Chi. Miss P. Vani and Chi. P. Gopikrishna.

Sri V. Yellaiah, Senior Photographer of the Archaeology department has done excellent service in taking all the photographs in this monograph. I am specially grateful to him.

My thanks are also due to M/s K. Bhaskaran, Conservation Assistant and Vishnu Murthy who have prepared the site plans of Ahobilam temple, under my supervision.

I am grateful to His Holiness Sri Vedanta Desika Yatindra Maha Desikulu, the Jeeyangar of Ahobila mutt (the reigning 44th pontiff of Ahobila Mutt) for several rare photographs connected with the temple furnished by the Mutt.

## APPENDIX A

Srisailem, Kurnool District  
In the Veerasaiva Mantapam

### Part of the inscription

- 1 స్వస్తిశ్రీ [శకవరుషంబులు] ౧౨౯౯పిం
- 2 గళ సంవత్సర మాఘ ...
- 3 .... శుద్ధ ౭ [బుధ] వాగమునన || స్వస్తి
- 4 శ్రీమదనవేమయ. ... బిరుదాపశి స్వస్తి
- 5 సమస్త గుణాలంకార । చంచుమలయచూ
- 6 రకార । విశ్వగ్రణవిశ్వ [ం] బరాభరణదక్షదక్షి
- 7 ణభుజాదండ । జగన్మోక్షగండ । అనయ
- 8 మండశీకరగండ । రాయచేకోలుగండ । అద్వైత
- 9 త్యద్విఠా హేమాద్రి దానవిరత । ప్రజావరిపాలన
- 10 .... తహరణభరణ । రూపనారాయణ
- 11 ం నారాయణ । భుజబలభీమ । అవరిమిత భూ
- 12 దానవరకురామ అనేక నగరోపకంఠ ప్రతిష్ఠా
- 13 విలబహువిధా
- 14 రామ । సంగడిరక్ష
- 15 పాల । జగరక్షపాల
- 16 జగదగోపాల । గు
- 17 జరితట్టివిభాళ
- 18 రాచూరి దుగ్గ విభా
- 19 శ । కరవాళవై నతేయ
- 20 ఖండితవినుత వ్యాళ
- 21 దివిజలదుగ్గ విభాళ
- 22 అనవరతదత్తానేకా
- 23 గ్రహార భూదేవకారి
- 24 తనోమపాన । శ్రీ

- 25 వవఁతావఱోబలనిమి [ఁ]  
 26 తసోపాన । వంచారా  
 27 మప్రతిష్ఠత । గజఘం  
 28 టానినాద । వఱతకిలవ  
 29 ందినాధ । కుండినదీ [కృ]

\*

\*

\*

- 1 భిక్షావయ్యన్యవి ? రామనాథన్యత్ర  
 2 యోమల్లయ సామాధమ్మ న్యోన్య  
 3 వికారయితా||౧౭||శ్రీపవ [ఁ] త న  
 4 లిచేటవగు శ్రీ వట్టికాఱునస్వామి [గృ]  
 5 హంగణమున|| మహాసీయగు వీ  
 6 రమంట్టిపల [బు] అనేక వ్రవినితంబగు పు  
 7 ణ్యన్యత [ల] లనొప్ప కట్టించి జగనొబ్బగండ  
 8 న్నవేమ భూవిభుని శాశ్వ [త] ధమ్మవిభవ  
 9 కీర్తిఁ । నకల నిక్కుల నిండి సాంద్రమై ఆచం  
 10 గ్రతారకన్యస్థితిసవిత్తనరం చేశి । శాంకరాగ  
 11 మ మంత్రదీక్షావిభూతి । దంచితాచారం  
 12 డగుచున్న ఫంచభిక్షంరామనను [తు]  
 13 ం డంసిమఁ ఎఱుండ మల్లనా ఖ్యుండ  
 14 శివభక్తమాగ [ఁ] రతుండు||అన్నయరెడ్డిం  
 15 గారికి వుణ్యముగాను శ్రీ [ద]ం.....యగా  
 16 రి ధమ్మము శ్రీ.



## APPENDIX B

- 1 శుభమస్తు॥ఎతత్పురానుధీశమౌళిశ్రేణివిరాజితం । అహోబ
- 2 లన్యసింహ్యన్యదేవదేవన్యశాననం ॥ న్నన్తీశ్రీశకవషణ్ములు ౧౩౩ [౨]అగునె
- 3 ంటి వికృతినంవత్సరమాగేశరబ ౧౩౪ వారాననుశ్రీఅహోబలదేవరసి
- 4 నిత్యఅవనరానకు కొమరగిరిరెడ్డింగారినుకృతముగాను కాటమరె
- 5 డ్డిప్రేమరెడ్డింగారు కలువచెలికొమరగిరిపురమనిధారవోసి
- 6 [న్]మప్రణామేన॥ నప్రాకాటయ శౌరేషౌత్రోమారన్యకాట
- 7 న్యవనూనః॥ పీరాన్యవోతన్యవరేణామాతాజయతివేమభూపాలః॥ కొ
- 8 మరగిరయ్యంగారిని పరమహితుండై నకాటమరెడ్డివేమారెడ్డింగారు త
- 9 నకుస్వామిఅక్షనకొమరగిరయ్యంగారిన్ని వారిదేవులై నఅమ్మంగారు
- 10 లకున్న అక్షయనుకృతముగాను దేవ[ర]కున్నబ్రాహ్మలకున్నధారవో
- 11 శిష్యునికొమరగిరిమండలం॥పెదకొమరగిరిపురం । అమలపురం ।
- 12 శ్రీవారణాసివిశ్వేశ్వరదేవరకొమరగిరిపురం । శ్రీవర్వతనాతనిరుమర
- 13 గిరిపురం ! వండులూరిపవతయంగారికొమరగిరిపురము । వంరులూరిభీ
- 14 మణయంగారికొమరగిరిపురం । శ్రీవట్టరయంగారికొమరగిరిపురం । కందాళయ
- 15 ంగారికొమరగిరిపురం । శ్రీంగారాయకొమరగిరిపురం ! శ్రీనవ్వువరపు భావ
- 16 య్యకొమరగిరిపురం । మృకంఠేశ్వరదేవరకొమరగిరిపురం ! శైవు ? లకొమరగిరిపురం । సా
- 17 త్వికులకొమరగిరిపురం । హళ్లవారికొమరగిరిపురం । సామవేదులకొమరగిరిపురం । జా
- 18 మాణిక్యలకొమరగిరిపురం । స్థానావతివల్లభస్సకొమరగిరిపురం । శ్రీనల్గ[?]నారుఅబ్బనకొ
- 19 మరగిరిపురం । బ్రహ్మయ్యశ్రీపాదులకొమరగిరిపురం ! ఆ[?]డామూజుకొమరగిరిపురం । తొ
- 20 గరపుమాచిరాజుగారికొమరగిరిపురం । మహాదేవయ్యంగారికొమరగిరిపురం । వెమసా ....
- 21 గారిసింగనసోమయాజులకొమరగిరిపురం । జతనమువద్దిరాజువారికొమరగిరిపురం । మండ
- 22 మురామనాధసోమయాజులవారిరుద్రభట్టుమారుభట్లకొమరగిరిపురం । ఉ ? మాశ్రీధులకొమర
- 23 గిరిపురం । అవధానం అపుభళయంగారిరామనంగారికొమరగిరిపురం । వలనవలిఅపుభళభట్ల
- 24 కొమరగిరిపురం । అగ్రహారంపీరపు-శ్రీకనం ? కరిగె ? వరనాథకట.....కొమరగిరిపురం ।
- 25 -నిడశ.....కామ్యాలర్ల ? కొమరగిరిపురం చిటిబాలరాజువారికొమరగిరిపురం । వరాయ ?.....
- 26 చిన ? కొమరగిరిపురం । పుండ్రాజువారితల్లాలగడకొమరగిరిపురం । వడ్డాది-నరసిహ్వదేవర
- 27 కొమరగిరిపురం । కూటా ? రాజుతిప్పనంగారికుమరగిరిపురం । ఆరాధ్యులమల్లనంగారికొమ
- 28 రగిరిపురం । చెయిటిశ్రీకేశవనాథకొమరగిరిపురం । కాకొండశ్రీనరసిహ్వదేవర కొ

- 29 మరగిరిపురం । యెఱవోతునిద్దవగారికొమరగిరిపురం । తామూరిసోమయాజులవారి  
 30 మల్లభట్లకొమరగిరిపురం । శింగాయపండితులవారి విశ్వనాథవ ? మృనకొమరగిరిపురం । శి  
 31 దాయపండితులవారిఅన్నాపండితులకొమరగిరిపురం । వంగులూరిశ్రీగిరయంగారి  
 32 దేవులై నమల్లాయంమంగారివనపుకిచ్చినకొమరగిరిపురం । మైలారదేవరకొమరగిరిపురం ।  
 33 మూలంగూరంమ్మకొమరగిరిపురం । శింగాయపండితులఅనవో.....మతమావ  
 34 ండితులవారిఅన్న వెంవరము । ఆకుల.....లపెద్దిభట్లవారిమారముండ్లమారవరము  
 35 కా.లుమరెడ్డివెంవరం । దవన్నో ?యంగారిప్రతాపఅన్నపరము । మండమురామనాథసో  
 36 మయాజులవారిపెద్దవరం । నంవెవ్వపు కేశవదేవర వెంవరం । పిన్నవరంపీరవరం । ప్రసన్నగిరి  
 37 శ్రీపాదాలశ్రీలక్ష్మీనరసింహ పురం । కాటమరెడ్డివేమారెడ్డింగారిఅర్ధాంగలక్ష్మీఅ  
 38 .ఆకొరగిరయ్యంగారెక్కొమగిరయ్యంగార-అవతరించినఇక్కామ ?  
 39 మరయ్యంగారితల్లింగారై నతల్లసానంమంగారు-కుమరగిరయ్యంగారికి  
 40 కాటమరెడ్డివేమారెడ్డిగారికిన్ని సుకృతముగాన శ్రీగౌతమీతీరమందున్న వే  
 41 దాద్రీనరసింహదేవరకున్న ఆచంద్రాకముప్రతిసంవత్సరతిరునాళమహో  
 42 త్సవానకుధారవోసినమప్పకాణసేసినవెలుచూరితల్లవరము । [కాటమ]  
 43 రెడ్డివేమారెడ్డిగారిఅధాకంగలక్ష్మీఅభినవల్లసానంమంగారు [ఈ?ధమ]  
 44 .డి.....రిన్నిస్వామి అభిన కొమరగిరయ్యంగారిన్నివారిదేవు  
 45 లై నఅమంగారలకున్న అక్షయసుకృతముఇతి.....మకరసం  
 46 [క్రాంతి ?]పుణ్యకాలమందురాజమహేంద్రవరాననుశ్రీగౌతమీతీ  
 47 రమందుమార్కండేశ్వరదేవరకువహిడి-గుడికట్టించిమా.....  
 48 ....దేవరకునీత్యఅవసరానకునిచ్చినమల్లవరము ।

## APPENDIX C

Lower Ahobalam, Allagadda taluq, Kurnool District  
Slab set-up at the entrance of the  
Narasimhaswami shrine

- 1    ం శుభమస్తు । ఎతత్సురాసురాధీశ మౌళి మారోసవాలితం
- 2    ఆహోబల నృసింహస్య దేవదేవస్య శాసనం॥ న్యస్తీశ్రీమర్మ
- 3    హారాజాధి రాజరాజ వరమేశ్వర మురురాయల గండ అరి
- 4    రాయవిభాడ అష్టదిక్పరాయ మనో భయంకర పూవ
- 5    దక్షిణ పశ్చిమ సముద్రాధీశ్వర యవనరాజ్య స్థాపనాచా
- 6    ర్యగజవతి దళ విభాడ శ్రీ వీరవ్రతావ శ్రీ కృష్ణదేవ
- 7    మహారాయలు పూవ దిగ్విజయాత్రకు విచ్చేసి పుదయ
- 8    గిరి దుర్గమును సాధించి తిరుమల శాతరాయమహా
- 9    పాత్రునిం బట్టుకొని వినుకొండ బెల్లంకొండ నాగాజుని
- 10    కొండ అదంకి అంమనబోలు తంగడ కేతవరం మొ
- 11    దలయిన గిరిదుర్గ స్థలదుర్గాలను ఎకధాడినికై కొని కొం
- 12    డ పీటికి విచ్చేసి దుర్గంచుటు వారుకొని నడ చప్పరాలు వెటి
- 13    కోట వడదోయించి నాలుగు దిక్కులాను లగ్గులు విడిపించి దు
- 14    గ్గమును తీసుకొని దుర్గం మీదనున్న వ్రతాపరుద్ర గజవతిమ
- 15    హారాయల కొమారుండు వీరభద్రరాయండు కొమారహంవి
- 16    ర పాత్రుని కొడుకు నరహరిదేవు శ్రీనాథరాజు రామరాజుకొడు
- 17    కు లక్ష్మీవతిరాజు రామారి మలువ భానుండు పుద్గండ భాం
- 18    నుండు జన్మాపుల కనవా పాత్రుండు పశ్చిమ బాలచంద్ర మ
- 19    హా పాత్రుండు వీరుమొదలయిన పాత్రసామంతు లానమ
- 20    నవారిని జీవగ్రాహంగాం బట్టుకొని వారికి అభయదానము
- 21    స్తు యిచ్చి ధరణి కోటకు విచ్చేసి అమరేశ్వర మహాదేవుని నందినితు
- 22    లా పురుష మహాదానమును సేయనవధరించి తవదేవుళ చెతా
- 23    ను మహాదానాలు సేయించ నవధరించి తిరిగి విజయనగరాన
- 24    కు విచ్చేసి రత్నసింహాస్థాననస్తుండై సామ్రాజ్యం నెస్తున్న

- 25 మరిన్ని కళింగ దేశ దిగ్విజయాధిమై విచ్చేస్తుం  
 26 న్ను అహోబిలానకు విచ్చేసి దేవుని దళింబి స్వస్తిశ్రీజ  
 27 యాభ్యుదయ శాలివాహన శకవరుషంబులు  
 28 ౧౪౩౮ అగునేటి యువ సంవత్సర పుష్యశుద్ధ ౧౫ శు  
 29 క్రవారాన శ్రీ అహోబిలేశ్వర దేవునికి కంఠమాల ౧వ  
 30 చ్చ వెట్టిన వజ్రమాణిక్యాల పదకం ౧ మాణిక్యాల  
 31 వి కడియాలతోడు ౧ వైండివశ్యం ౧ కానికవె  
 32 యి వరహాటుంసు తమదేవులు సమవీంచిన పదకం  
 33 ౧ ఇంత వటుంసు సమవీంచి దేవరకు అమృత వడినై వేద్య  
 34 అంగరంగ భోగ్యాలకు చాంగల మరిసీమలో మదూ  
 35 రు అనె గ్రామమును సమవీంచిరి యీసేవ ఆచంద్రాక  
 36 స్థాయి ఆయివడవం వలనని యిచ్చిన ధమ్మేశాననం  
 37 మంగళంమహా శ్రీశ్రీశ్రీ.



## APPENDIX D

### అహోబలము

ఆల్లగడ్డ తాలూకా, కర్నూలు జిల్లా

• శుభమును ॥ దేవశ్రేణి శిరోరత్నం చైత్యద్వివముటకుశంజయతు శ్రీ నరసింహశ్యా దేవదేవస్య శాననం । స్వస్తిశ్రీ [జ]  
యాభ్యుదయ శాలివాహన శకవషణ్ములు ౧౪౮౬ అగునెటి రుధిరోద్ధారి నంవత్సర మామ శు ౧౫ లు శ్రీ మద్రాజాధి రాజరాజ  
వరమేశ్వర శ్రీ పీఠప్రతాప శ్రీ పీఠసదాశివదేవ మహారాయలు విద్యానదర మందు వ్రజసింహననారూఢుడై వృద్ధి సాంబాజ్య  
శయించుండగాను శ్రీమతే రామానుజాయనమః శ్రీ మద్దేవమాగ్ ప్రతిష్ఠాచార్య వరమహంస వరివ్రాజకాచార్య నవ తంత్ర  
స్వతంత్ర పుభయ వదంతా చార్యులైన శ్రీ వరాంకుశ శ్రీమత్ శతకోవజ్యయంగారు అఖిలాండకోటి బ్రహ్మాండ నాయకులైన  
వేదవేదాంత వద్మలైన పురాణపురుషోనములైన చతుర్దశ భువనాధీశ్వరులైన శ్రీ అహోబలేశ్వరల దివ్య శ్రీ చరణారవిందంబులకు  
అనంతములయిన దండములు నమస్కేచయచిన సీలాశాసన క్రమమెట్లన్నను బాగవం త్రోవను వాము కటించిన కొనెటి వదను చయిత్ర  
మాసాన తొంపు తిరునాళ ఆరగింపు. పొలిపుటుకు విడిచిన శ్మేత్ర వివరం ఘండికొట సీమలోని లింగం దివను నంబెల తింమరాజుంగారు  
నరనయకు దొరవొసి యిచిన దినరనయ జియ్యం గాఠికి నమస్కేచయచిన చను ౪ ౦౧౨ అక్షరాలను చను పన్నిదుముకు గుతచన్య ౧కి  
వగ ౧౨ లెఖను వగ ౮ ను రాయన కొండ్రజు యిచిన చను ౪౦౧ అక్షరాలను యెందుము చెలికిగుచెను ౭౧కి వగ ౧ లెఖను వగ ౫  
పుభయ వగ ౧౩కు విడిచెదవనం తొంపు తిరుణళ చరుపు ౧కి బియం ౪౧ కువగ ౩॥ దధ్యానబియ్యం॥ కిర్ ౨ తిరివిసాము బియ్య ౮  
కిర్ ౧ పెనలు మ ౧ కిర్ పెరుగు ౮౨ కిర్ ౧ నెయి మ ౧ కిర్ ౨॥ పాల్కు॥ కిర్ ౨ పంచదారప ౫ కిర్॥ అరంటికాయలు ౫౦  
కిర్....వండు౨౦ కిర్ । పుపుమ॥ కిర్ ౦= మిరియాలు మ=కిర్ । శాంతి౨౦ కిర్= వదళకుర్ ౧౫ తిరువళికి అమరు మ॥ కిర్ ౧  
అప్పవ వడికిలు ౮॥ కిర్ ౨ నె ఇమ ౧॥ కిర్ ౩బెలవి౨॥ కిర్ ౧ వినియోగం పొంకలు ౧౦౦౦ కిర్=॥ అకు ౧౦౦౦ కిర్ గంధవ౨ కిర్  
[౮?] పెనరు బెళ్ళు - ౦కిర్ ౪ పానక బెలంవి ౧౨ కిగ॥ న్యఇం పాకులకుర్ ౧॥ విండిర [వ?] లుర్ ౧॥ తిరుమ జనగాని కిర్ ౧  
కుమరవారి కిర్ ౧ మేదరవారి కిర్ ౧ మేళాలు కిర్ ౩ (?) శ్మేత్రవాసుర్ ౧ కానికర్ ౧దగ (?) న౨కుర్ చవరం హరి వసులకు గ౧॥  
....ర్॥ అనగ౮॥....౧....౧౮౮ ఆరగించిన చెటపుడు ఆరగించి వడ. వడి ౧కి పెళిను బెల్ల కిర్ ౧న ఇమ ౧ కిర్ ౨॥ పుపుమ ౧కిర్=  
జిలకరమ=కిర్. బిలరనెర్=ఆర్ ౪ (?) పుభయం.....ర్ - యిమరియాదను పెరుమాళ్ళు ఆరగించిన మీదటను స్వామ్యాల వివరం  
ప్రసాదం విడవక (?) నిదాలు వొకపాలు క్రయాను వొకపాలు వినియోగం రెండుపాళ్ళ అప్పాలు జాకివిటవ, విడాలు ౩౮ క్రయాన  
[వ౧౮?] వినియోగానికి వడలు....లువవిడాలు ౧౮ క్రయం ౧౮ వినియో.....ఇథంమ= ఆచందాక= స్థాయిగాను....మీ పారం  
వర్యగాను నడవగలవారం ఇశా (?) శ్రీవరాంకుశ శ్రీమత్ శతకోవజ్యయంగారు [గారు]

## APPENDIX E

- 1 కుభమస్తు॥ దేవశ్రేణి శిరోరత్నం । బైత్యద్వివ ఘటాంకుకం । జయ
- 2 తు శ్రీ సృశింహస్య । దేవదేవస్య శాసనం ॥ స్వస్తీ శ్రీ జయాభ్యుదయ
- 3 శాలివాహన శక వరుషంబులు ౧౫౦౬ ఆగునేటి తారణ సంవ
- 4 త్వరవై శాఖ కు ౧౪ లు శ్రీ మద్రాజాది రాజరాజ వరమేశ్వర
- 5 శ్రీ వీర ప్రతాప శ్రీ వీర శ్రీరంగరాయ దేవమహా - రాయల [య్య]
- 6 ం గారు పెనుగొండ నగరమందు వజ్ర శింహాసనారూఢుండై వృ
- 7 ధివి సాంమాజ్యం నెయ్యచుండగాను శ్రీమతే రామానుజాయ
- 8 నమః శ్రీమద్వేద మార్గ ప్రతిష్ఠాపనాచార్య వరమహంస వరి
- 9 వ్రాజకాచార్య సర్వతంత్ర స్వతంత్ర పుభయ వేదాంతా చార్యులై
- 10 న శ్రీ శతాది శ్రీవంశ (శ) తగోవ జియగారి శ్రీ కార్యకర్తలును నవకు
- 11 శా భరణం జియ్యగాదున్నుశ్రీమద్రాజాది రాజరాజ వరమేశ్వర
- 12 శ్రీ వీర ప్రతాప శ్రీ వీర శ్రీరంగరాయ దేవమహారాయల అయ్య వా
- 13 రి కార్యకర్తలయిన శ్రీరావప్పగారున్న శ్రీ అహోబిళం స్థానం వారున్న
- 14 కాశ్యపగోత్ర ఆపస్తంభ సూత్ర యజుశాఖాధ్యాయులైన శూర్యవం
- 15 శోద్ధపులైన మూరు రాయర బసవ శంఖర గుతిహం నిబ్బర గండయర
- 16 యూరి పురవరా ధీశ్వరులైన శ్రీమన్ మహామండలేశ్వర కొండ్రాజు తిం
- 17 మ రాజుగారి పపుత్తులైన తిమ్మంనూగారి పుత్తులైన వెంకట్రాజు దేవ
- 18 చోడ మహారాజులుంగారికి ఇచ్చిన శిలాశాసన క్రమ మెట్లంన్నాను
- 19 ప్రాకు బహుధాన్య సంవత్సరాన విభురాము వారు హండెవారిని కూ
- 20 ండు కొని శిమంతా చరాచారా పట్టి అహోబిళ స్తకానకు వచ్చి
- 21 అహోబిళం అంతా పాడుసేసి అహోబిళ స్తకం అయిదు ఆరు యె
- 22 ండ్లు తమ వరంసేనుక ఆక్రమించినడు సావుంన్న (?) సమిత్వం శ్రీ ఆ
- 23 హోబిళశ్వరులు కంన్నూ నంప్రసాదంస (?) ఆ - దిమ మయినవం శ్రీ శతగో
- 24 వ జియ్యరు గారికి యేడోతరమై శ్రీ పురుషోత్తమ ఆకువారు
- 25 ం ప్రతిష్ఠసేసి ముకుందదేవు చేత పూజగొని రామానుజ దశానో
- 26 డ్దం - కుం - శ్రీ వరాంకుశ మహాముని శిష్యులైన యివంటి శ్రీ వంశత
- 27 గోవస్వామి వారు స్తకం యీతీరున అయిన సమిత్వం శ్రీరంగరాయ

- 28 (దేవమహా) రాయల సముఖానకు తాము విచ్చేళి మీరు యీతీరున  
 29 (సింహా)ననా రూఢులై వుండిన్ని మీకలస్వామి అయిన అహోబ  
 38 (శేష్యుల స్తనం) తుగష్కాక్రంతం అయి వునది వారిని బోగొట్టి ఆప్రా  
 31 (ంతం) అంతాను సాధించి అహోబళం జీనోదారణం సేయ  
 32 .....రాయలవారితోను ఆనతియ్యంగాను రాయలవారు తా  
 33 .....వచ్చి శిమ సాధించి యిచ్చెమని వయిన (?) సంన్యాహము కాంగా  
 34 .....దాకు (?) అయ్యవారు ఆనతిచిన వివరం వొక విభురాము వారిని  
 35 .....మీరు రావదు శ్రీ అహోబళేశ్వరులు స్వప్నముఖాంత్రానను తమ  
 36 నిజ దానులైన మింబ అట్టి అయిదు మాడ (?) కొండ్రాజు వెంకట్రాజుగారు తిరుమల  
 37 రాజుగారు వునారు వారి చేతనే యీ కయింకర్యాలు అంత వట్టుంన్నుకొ  
 38 ననవ ధరించెము అని శ్రీ అహోబళేశ్వరులు మాతో ఆనతిచ్చినారు వారికి మీ  
 39 రాయసాలు అంపితేను వారి చేతనే సకళ కయింకర్యాలుంన్ను శేయించుకో  
 40 నెము అని రాయలవారితో ఆనతియ్యంగాను రాయలవారు అటువంటి నిజ  
 41 దానులుగా అని సంతుష్టచిత్తులై రాయనముంను పల్లకించి కుండ కాశాంబి  
 42 కనక పదకాలయినటువంటి దివ్యాభరణాలుంన్ను తమ ముద్ర మనుష్యుల చేతను అ  
 43 య్యవారి వెంట అంపంగాను ఆ వెంకట్రాజు తిరుమల రాజుగారు యెదురుగా వచ్చి  
 44 అవి అంత నటుంన్ను శిరసా ప్రతి గ్రహించుకొని ఆ శ్మణమఁచె రథగజతురగ పదా  
 45 తులు మొదలయిన చతురంగ బలాలన గూడుకొని అయ్యవారిని ముందు బెటుకతా  
 46 ము అహోబళానకు కదలి వచ్చి ఆ విభురాము వారికి సహాయం అయిన  
 47 హం రెవారు మొదలైన వారిని అందరినెంచివిరుగ గొట్టి ఆశిమ అంత క ?  
 48 టించి అహోబలం జీనోదారణ శేళి అయ్యవారిని అహోబళ స్తనాన  
 49 నిలిపి అహోబళ స్తనం పూర్వానకంబె నుమ సేసె నిషిత్యమై అయ్యవారు అ  
 50 తి [సంతుష్ట?] చిత్తులై యీ మహోవకారం సెన్నివారికి ప్రత్యుపకారం మరియేమిశేయలెమె  
 51 క అహోబళేశ్వరులకు మీరు నిజదానులు గనక మీకు అహోబలేబ్బరులు తిరు వా  
 52 ధులు వెంచెనె టవుడు మీకు పరియవటమున్ను తీధముంన్ను ప్రసాదముంన్ను శర  
 53 గోవముంన్ను తలిమెందు ప్రసాదమున్ను వగకు వొక తిరువంన్నెరముంన్ను....చానుమా  
 54 ..... గంధముంన్ను మీ పుత్ర పౌత్ర పారంపర్యంగాను నడవవలెనని రాయ  
 55 ల వారి అనుమతిని స్త్రానాల వారిని కూడుకొని వెంకట్రాజుగారికి  
 56 ప్రసాదించినారు గనక యీ పరియవటం మొదలైన స్వామ్యం మీ పుత్ర  
 57 పౌత్ర పారంపర్యమై ఆచంద్రాకాస్థాయియై యనభవింప గలవారని  
 58 ప్రసాదించి శిలాశాసనం వెయింన్తిమి గనక ఆ ప్రకారననే మీ

- 59 పుత్ర పౌత్ర పారంవర్యమై అచంద్రాకృత స్త్రాయై త్రివాచకంగా  
 60 ను అనుభవించ గలవారు యీ స్వామ్యం మీరు అనుభవించి  
 61 ఓనంత కాలము అనుభవించెరెకా మీ పుత్ర పౌత్రాదులలో  
 62 లోను యెవరై నా మోకతిక (?) నమస్కరించవలెనని బుధిగలిగినా అది మతాన  
 63 తె నమస్కరించ గలవారు మీ కులంలోను అహోబిళేశ్వరులకు లక్షాం  
 64 త్రాల కయింకర్యాలు యెమిసెసినాను అది మత ఆధీనమయ్యె శాయ  
 65 గలవారు యిలు నియచిన బహుమానాది ధర్మశాననం । శ్రీశ్రీశ్రీ॥  
 66 స్వదత్తం వరదత్తం వాయోహరేతి వసుంధరా ! వష్టివక్తరు  
 67 షసహస్రాణి విష్ణాయాం జాయతేక్రిమి ॥ దానపాలన యోమృద్యే  
 68 దానాతేనయోను పాలనందానా స్వగృమవాహ్నితి పాలనా మదమ్య  
 69 తం వదం॥ మంగళమహా శ్రీశ్రీశ్రీంజేయునూ







