Chapter 6

Ideology and the State under the Early Medieval Pallavas and Cōḷas: Purāṇic Religion and Bhakti

R. CHAMPAKALAKSHMI

The role of ideology in the emergence of state societies in India has been a major concern in recent studies, especially on the processes of expansion and diversification of economy, and restructuring of society and thereby of the political structure.[1] The south Indian state rested upon symbolic and cosmological structures, but such structures cannot be separated from the social and economic infrastructures for they were mutually supportive.

The major ideological base for the pre-modern State in India was provided by the Brāhmaṇical tradition, bringing together several strands—Vedic, Purāṇic-Itihāsic religions—into a composite amalgam.[2] With the *Brahmadeya* and the temple, as their institutional expression of this ideology, numerous Brāhmaṇical polities arose in the period from the fourth to the sixth centuries AD in the Deccan and Andhra, while the Pallavas of Kāñcī, the Pāṇḍyas of Madurai (in Tamilakam), mark the rise of important sub-regional states culminating in the emergence of the largest regional state under the Colas of Tanjāvūr in south India (sixth to the thirteenth centuries AD).

1. The Purāṇic Tradition: Genealogy as Ideology

Genealogies are a significant part of the Purāṇic/Brāhmaṇical tradition marking changes in political and social relations in south India. The Pallava copper-plate records covering a span of 600 years, i.e. AD 250 to AD 850 mark significant changes in

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[1] Thapar 1984; Eschmann et al. 1978. For Early Sri Lanka, see Gunavardana 1982. The need for evolving theoretical frameworks and universal analytical categories for studying such societies is emphasised by Susanne Hoeber Rudolph, in her Presidential Address: Rudolph 1987: 731-774.

[2] Champakalakshmi 2011: 'Introduction: The Making of a Religious Tradition: Perspectives from Pre-Colonial South India'.

the formulae of their *praśasti*s, interpreted mainly as a change from *yajña* (sacrifice) to *vaṃśa* (lineage). The Prākrit and Sanskrit records (250-550) show that the gift (of land) was an integral part of the sacrificial world-view, in which kingship was constituted by virtue of sacrifice, with the Pallavas in search of legitimation through the constitutive *yajña*, in a fluid state of war and conquest looking for a territorial base [Champakalakshmi 1982: Introduction]. No fabricated lineage connections and great antiquity are claimed except for the consistent *gotra* affiliation with Bharadvāja. The absence of a genealogy claiming divine descent or tracing descent from the Sūrya or Candra *vaṃśa* may point to a chiefly family (or families) yet to become a territorially significant power with monarchy as the chief institution. A conspicuous shift from the Vedic to the Itihāsa-Purāṇic tradition is made by the fifth-sixth centuries AD, although the performance of Vedic sacrifices either by the donor or by his ancestors is also an additional claim for political legitimacy.

The emphasis on the Kali Yuga Doṣa and the Pallavas as the destroyers of this evil appears in the Sanskrit copper-plates of the fifth-sixth centuries AD, a feature they share with all the Deccan and Andhra polities of the same period. The king's equation with the fifth Lokapāla, i.e. Indra, is linked to this claim. The Pallavas themselves are praised as *parama brahmaṇya* and as *rājariṣi*s. In the bilingual records, the Brahmā-Kṣatriya status is assigned to the Pallavas as seen in Nandivarman II's eighth-century copper plates [Subramanian 1966].

With the bilingual copper plate grants issued by the Pallavas of the Simhaviṣṇu line (AD 550 to 850), the format of the *praśasti* changed significantly, marking a major shift from *yajña* to *vaṃśa*, which is now relegated to a secondary status. The sacrifice by an ancestor is now used more in cross-generational legitimation. The bilingual copper plates also mark the transformation of a pastoral chief into a monarch and the Pallavas into a regional power, i.e. of a pre-state to a state society, drawing upon a composite package of Vedic, Itihāsa-Purāṇic and Dharmaśāstric traditions for its legitimating *praśasti*, presenting a well structured amalgam of the three strands of Brāhmaṇical tradition [Champakalakshmi 2011: Introduction].

In the bilingual charters of the later period (AD 550-850), the gift (*dāna*) provides a new conceptual and expansive basis of sovereignty. Here, the gift emanates from sovereignty, as also its scale and capacity for incorporating new and lesser chiefs into an expanding political system, the new chiefs acting as *vijñapti* and *ājñapti* in the royal *dāna* [Dirks 1976: 125-151]. The Purāṇic world-view replaces the sacrificial one and Purāṇic deities, Viṣṇu and Śiva, particularly the former, replace Indra and other Vedic gods in the equation of royalty with Viṣṇu's all-pervasive character as the protector of the earth, the husband of Śrī or prosperity and as associated with fecundity and fertility [Champakalakshmi 1990, 2011].

Recorded on copper plates, these *praśasti*s are poetic verses and belong to a changing historical context and political processes. Hence, equally important is their association with the emergence of the Purāṇic religions, together with institutional

forces like the *brahmadeya* and the temple, integrating society, economy and polity. The text is thus meant to make an ideological statement legitimizing major political and institutional changes. The operative part of the records in the regional language, Tamil, is more directly related to the socio-economic structures that are now being created or re-organized.

The fabricated genealogy of the Pallavas claim divine descent from Viṣṇu (from whose navel appeared Brahmā), tracing an ancestry from epic heroes (Droṇa and Aśvatthāmā), the *gotra* connection (Bhāradvāja) (Viṣṇu, Brahma, Samyu, Bharadvāja, Droṇa and Aśvatthāmā—to Pallava), using symbols and metaphors for comparison with the Purāṇic deities, who are invoked in their various mythological incarnations and forms. In the Vaikuṇṭha Perumāḷ Temple [Minakshi 1941; Hudson 1988, 2009] are found historical sculptures in the panels on the walls of the corridor running around the main shrine, a unique example of sculptural *praśasti* intended to reiterate that Nandivarman II Pallavamalla (eighth century) belonged to the Pallava lineage both through his maternal and paternal families, as *ubhayakula pariśuddha*.

The invocatory verses, to Viṣṇu, Śiva and Brahmā, point to the Purāṇic religions as the mainstream tradition, the Vedic sacrifice becoming more of a ritual and formula, the actual act of legitimation centering around the *brahmadeya* along with the temple. Protection of the *varṇāśrama dharma* now appears as one of the main functions of the ruler institutionalized by the Brahma-Ksatriya status assigned to the Pallavas.[3]

Clearly the Pallavas were introducing the Brāhmaṇical order in society and the Purāṇic world-view as the core of their ideology. The genealogical claims to divine origin in the bilingual charters synchronize with the acquisition of a clear territorial base and control over Kāñcīpuram and its environs—the region called Toṇḍai Nāḍu and a progressive expansion towards the south as far as the Kāvērī and the system of incorporative authority with long established local chiefs, some of whom came to be entrusted with administrative and military functions and also as *vijñapti*s and *ājñapti*s.

The Pāṇḍyas of the seventh–tenth centuries AD used a different form of Purāṇic connections [Subramanian 1967]. Apart from the Candravamsa linkages that are sought to be established, the more direct ideological claim is the descent from Śiva, with the sage Agastya as their *purohita* (preceptor) and as the poet of the first legendary Sangam and the author of the first Tamil grammar. More importantly his association with the Potiyil Hill and the Tāmraparṇi (Taṇ Poruntam) River is significant. Two other links, one with the Pāṇḍyas of the Sangam anthologies, especially with Mutukuṭumi Peruvaḻuti, the founder of *yajñaśāla*s (halls of sacrifice) and the second with the establishment of the Tamil Sangam, are undoubtedly related to their long association with the Tamil

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[3] Velurpalaiyam and Udayendiram Copper Plates etc., of Nandivarman II, see Subramanian 1966.

Language (the Pallavas were alien) and the cross-generational legitimacy derived from the ancestor who performed Vedic sacrifices. A third set of claims is derived from the immediate ancestors of the grantor, who established and revived *brahmadeyas*, built temples and gave *dēvadāna* gifts, constructed irrigation works and head sluices.[4]

The Purāṇic *yuga* concept, the *Dharmaśāstra* ideal of *varṇāśrama* and the destruction of *Kaliyuga doṣa* are common to all these grants, although in the Pāṇḍya case it is related directly to the revival of the *brahmadeya*s which had been misappropriated by evil kings (Kali araśar) and Śūdras (?).[5] However, the revived *brahmadeya* settlements have a changed character, that of a new institutional force for upholding kingship and royal protection as well as a new agrarian institution of integration, a feature already known from the Pallava grants. In contrast, the Pallava grants are not revivals of earlier land grants but entirely new ones, either colonizing virgin lands or clubbing together earlier subsistence level settlements or integrating them.

Henceforth there is a duality in the royal records, the Sanskritic and the regional (Tamil) traditions used in a judicious combination of myth and historical facts in versified rhetoric, symbols and motifs derived from both sources for the text of the *praśasti*.

G.W. Spencer's study [Spencer 1984: 415-432] of the Cōḷa genealogies as ideological constructs tries to establish that they were meant to enhance through ritual a very uncertain royal power and effect centralization through ritual sovereignty in the face of contrary reality, i.e. segmented political structure, a la Burton Stein. The Purāṇic cosmological notion of the *yuga,* arranged in a descending order in the Cōḷa genealogy (*Kṛta, Tretā, Dvāpara* and *Kali*), with the historical kings being placed in the *Kali yuga*, is also interpreted as emphasizing the need for kingship as an essential bastion against the deteriorating, evil ridden *Kali*.

A close study of the Cōḷa genealogies would show that genealogy, in the Cōḷa case, was not the major ideological component in establishing sovereignty. The ideology which sustained the Cōḷa state synthesis had several important strands of ideas and beliefs, which had emerged as an alternative to the 'exclusive brāhmaṇical supremacy and elitism in the sphere of religion' [Spencer 1984: 415-432], with the *bhakti* ideal as its dominant component. In the Cōḷa context, ideology (*bhakti*) was interwoven in the very processes of production, i.e. the evolution, expansion and diversification of material base and hence of the socio-political structure.

Although the Pallavas and the Pāṇḍyas adopted rock-cut cave architecture for their early temples as at Māmallapuram, the immense potentialities of the structural mode in temple architecture were realized even by the end of this period, i.e. ninth

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[4] Subramanian 1967, Dalavaypuram Copper Plates.
[5] Velvikkudi Grant, see Subramanian 1967.

century AD when both the ritual needs and the economic reach of the temple began to widen, first as an agrarian institution and later as an urban nucleus, due to land grants, money and cattle gifts, apart from the incorporation of the vernacular idiom of the *bhakti* hymns in temple ritual.

The iconography of the exquisite Pallava cave temples is rich in narrative sculptures of Purāṇic themes, focusing on Vaiṣṇava stories and the *avatāra*s (in particular, such as Varāha and Trivikrama) [Champakalakshmi 1981], while that of the Pāṇḍya caves focused on the Śaiva themes. Due attention is given to other deities like Durgā (Koṟṟavai) and Skanda (Murukan) in both the religions, but they represent the Sanskritized brāhmaṇical version of the earlier Sangam *tiṇai* deities.

2. The Pallava Royal Temples: The Kailāsanātha and Vaikuṇṭha Perumāḷ at Kāñcī

The royal temples of the early medieval rulers are to be understood as a statement of political power, drawing upon cosmic symbolism, equating the king/monarch with the deity and the temple as cosmos/territory. The Kailāsanātha and Vaikuṇṭha Perumāḷ temples of the Pallavas at Kāñcī, and the Rājarājeśvara and Gangaikoṇḍacōḷeśvara of the Cōḷas at Tanjāvūr and Gangaikoṇḍacōḷapuram are some outstanding examples of such political statements. and are architecturally impressive and often stupendous like the Cōḷa temples.

Interestingly, the two royal temples at Kāñcīpuram, the Kailāsanātha (Rājasiṁheśvara), and the Vaikuṇṭa Perumāḷ (Parameśvara Viṇṇagaram) temples symbolize the change from the Vedic to the Purāṇic tradition in their iconographic scheme. While the Kailāsanātha enshrines Śiva as Sōmāskanda, a composite icon, and relegates the Vedic deities to the peripheral niches as *padadevatas—lokapāla*s and *dikpāla*s—the Vaikuṇṭha Perumāḷ Temple is almost entirely devoted to the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* in its iconographic representations, the triple shrines of the *vimāna* housing the three forms of Viṣṇu being a metaphor for the three worlds [Hudson 1988, 2009: 1-26]. Both these temples thus symbolize cosmic structures, i.e. equating the temple with cosmos and territory.

In the Kailāsanātha Temple[6] cosmic structures are symbolized by the presence of small *dikpāla* shrines and the concept of the *padadevatā*s, who are none other than the Vedic deities now turned into attendant divinities to Śiva (or Viṣṇu). The positioning of the deities on the exterior walls of the main temple also indicates this subordinate status, which symbolizes the changing context of the Brāhmaṇical tradition from the Vedic to the Purāṇic religion.

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[6] Nagaswamy 1969a for the iconographic scheme and positioning of the main and subsidiary deities.

By far the most ingenious concept evolved by the Pallavas was the Sōmāskanda (Śiva, Umā and Skanda) which was given the pride of place in the *garbha gṛha*, both in cave and structural temples [Nagaswamy 1962: 1-50]. In the *garbha gṛha* the image of Sōmāskanda is enshrined as a relief on the back wall, while the *liṅga* is placed in the centre, the image and the aniconic *liṅga* complementing each other. The value of the conceptual equation of the royal family with Śiva's family is undeniable, as it indeed established such an equation in the period of Rājasiṁha, the most prolific temple builder and was himself titled Āgamapriyaḥ [Nagaswamy 1962: 1-50]. The Sōmāskanda image is repeated in all the peripheral shrines of the *prākāra* emphasizing the significance of the icon. His *magnum opus*, the *Rājasiṁheśvara* in Kāñcī is a remarkably rich document of the triumph of Purāṇic-Āgamic canonical worship and the subordination of the Vedic deities to the Purāṇic ones. (Plan of the Kailāsanātha Temple)

The Vaikuṇṭha Perumāḷ Temple even follows a triple shrine arrangement in the *vimāna* symbolizing the cosmos, i.e. the three worlds [Hudson 2009: 1-26]. The triple-shrine structure of the Vaikuṇṭha Perumāḷ at Kāñcī, has been perceived as drawing a symbolic parallel between the divine sovereignty over the three realms and the royal control over the three worlds.[7] The iconographic and architectural plan and design of the temple carry this symbolism, and one may find a corroboration in a *bhakti* hymn from *Periya Tirumoḻi* composed by Tirumankai Āḻvār on this temple to make this royal-divine allegory explicit.[8] The images that are represented in the temple are undoubtedly described by the Āḻvār, although the single hymn on the temple itself is related to the parallelism of the god-king and the temple-territory. Above all the political metaphor is established by the series of sculptured panels in the corridor around the main *vimāna*, narrating the story of the Pallavas, especially their divine origin or descent from Viṣṇu and Brahmā and the epic heroes Drōṇa and Aśvatthāmā (as per their inscriptional *praśasti*s) and the historical events leading to the accession of Nandivarman II in the absence of a direct heir to Parameśvaravarman II.

3.   Cōḷa Ideological Constructs

The Cōḷa genealogies, in comparison with those of the Pallavas and Pāṇḍyas, are of a distinctive pattern. The Solar origin, descent from Manu and the variable lists in the

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[7] See Hudson 1988, 2009: 1-26. Hudson provides an esoteric meaning to the three floors, as contained within a *maṇḍala*. He quotes various verses from the Alvar poetry to explain this esoteric meaning. However, implied in this discussion is the equation of the temple with the whole universe, symbolizing god's omnipresence. The king is here equated with god.

[8] Tirumankai: 2-9. See Champakalakshmi 1981, for the iconographic forms of Viṣṇu described by Tirumankai, many of which are depicted in the Vaikuṇṭha Perumāḷ Temple.

Fig. 6.1: Plan of the Kailāsanātha Temple

Sanskrit portion of the copper plates are more of the stock-in-trade motifs.[9] The more important portions of the Cōḷa genealogy are those establishing linkages with the Sangam Cōḷas as their ancestors, whether or not a direct descent can be proved. The significance of this link does not necessarily lie in their anxiety to claim a special and enduring relationship with the Kāvēri [Spencer 1984: 430] but doubtless has a basis in the historical traditions associating Karikāla (a Sangam Cōḷa) with flood control activities, i.e. building embankments to render the Kāvēri delta productive and to extend cultivation, which, in other words, would refer to the creation of the Cōḷa nāḍu by the Sangam Cōḷas and hence the connection. Interestingly, the next Sangam Cōḷa, who figures in all the genealogical lists, is Kōccengaṇṇān, whose inclusion should be understood as the most significant of all, on account of his temple building activities glorified by both the Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva *bhakti* hymnists [Vellaivaranan 1961: 889-891; Tirumankai: VI, 6], temple building having assumed a major role in political legitimation.

In the Cōḷa genealogy, the 'ethnobiological' aspect transmitting charisma across generations is not emphasized as in the Pallava genealogy. It is the historical aspect that is accorded a special relevance and prominence. To illustrate this further, one may turn to the *meikkīrtti*s [Nagaswamy 1969b] of the Cōḷa stone inscriptions, which are conceived of, if not directly as war poems, but more as metaphorical eulogies of the king's achievements in the *puṟam* tradition of the Sangam. This was an innovation of Rajaraja I, under whom the Cola state had evolved to its maturity. The *paraṇi* as a war poem draws on the *puṟam* tradition to praise the armies of the royal warrior leader, i.e. the Cōḷa.[10] Similarly, the *ulā* genre, praising the king's prowess and beauty at the time of the royal procession,[11] has its origins in the *akam* tradition, a feature repeated in the *ulā* of the deity. The *akam* genre as a poetical form came to be preserved and given a different connotation in the *bhakti* poetry with reference to the love of the devotee for his god and thus became the most effective divine parallel to the *puṟam* of the king.

4. The Evolution of Bhakti as an Ideology

Under the Cōḷas, the emphasis clearly shifts from the northern forms of the Purāṇic tradition to the Tamil forms as popularized by the *bhakti* hymns of the Śaiva Nāyanār

[9] Anbil Plates of Sundara Cola, *EI* 15: 44-72; Larger Leiden Plates (of Rajaraja I), *EI* 22: 213-266; Tiruvalankadu Plates, *SII* 3(3): 382-439; Kanyakumari Inscriptions, *Travancore Archaeological Series*, vol. III, pt. 1, 1922, vv. 28-35, pp. 87-158; Udayendiram Plates of Prithvipati II, *SII* 2(3): 375-390; Krishnan 1984. See Sastri 1975: 116.
[10] *Kalingattupparani* of Jayankondar on Kulottunga I's Kalinga War.
[11] *Vikramacolan Ula*, *Kulottungacolan Ula* and *Rajarajacolan Ula* on the three successors of Kulottunga I.

and Vaiṣṇava Āḻvār. These emotionally powerful hymns created not only a text but also a sacred geography of temples which coincided with the agrarian and political geography of the Cōḻa regional state.

The expansion of Purāṇic religion is intrinsically linked with local and popular traditions and their interaction with Brāhmaṇical religion in a two-way process. In the Tamil region, it had come to be established as the vehicle propagating a 'cosmological world view' by the Pallava-Pāṇḍya ruling families. Evidence of such a development is provided by the invocatory verses added to the Tamil classics by the seventh-eighth centuries AD when the tradition of the Sangam itself and the collection of the anthologies were systematized, presumably under Pāṇḍya patronage. The addition of the invocatory verses in praise of the Purāṇic Śiva and Viṣṇu may be seen as an attempt to 'Brāhmaṇise' or 'Purāṇise', the Tamil classics and their religion [Sivathamby 1988: 59-62]. The Tamil *bhakti* literature would seem to mark the culmination of this process and the emergence of a regional idiom.

The beginnings are traceable even in the Sangam classics due to the interaction between the Sanskritic and Tamil humanistic religions and the transformation of some, at least of the *tiṇai* deities into pre-eminent godheads may be recognized, e.g. Vēntan of the *marutam* being equated with Indra, Māyōn of the *mullai* with Viṣṇu (Kṛṣṇa), Cēyōn or Murukan of *kuṟiñci* with Skanda/Subrahmaṇya and Koṟṟavai of *pālai* with Durgā. The binary distinction between the Great and Little traditions becomes too simplistic to describe such a synchronic interaction, a process which requires a multidimensional model for correct explication.

In two of the late Sangam works, the *Paripāṭal* and *Tirumurukāṟṟuppaṭai* (fifth-sixth centuries), one meets with the concept of a transcendental absolute, a universal god, but in a different milieu viz., the temple [Champakalakshmi 2011: Chap. 1]. It is in the gradual evolution of the Viṣṇu cult of *Paripāṭal* that the idea of *bhakti* also progresses. It manifested itself clearly in Āḻvār poetry from the seventh century AD i.e. by the time of Nammāḻvār, the Śūdra saint of about the seventh century AD. The *Paripāṭal* introduces us for the first time to the temple milieu and its iconographic relevance and importance. Here, the temple represents a new cultural focus and was later to become an innovative economic and political focus.

Generally assigned to the sixth-ninth centuries period, the impact of the *bhakti* hymns, did not visibly alter the Purāṇic-Sanskritic basis of the Pallava-Pāṇḍya temple cult and its role as an ideological apparatus, except as a means of legitimation to the royal builder. The Sanskritic-Purāṇic religion was informed more by a metaphysical/intellectual *bhakti* and this is what is reflected in the hymns of the early Āḻvārs (Pūtam, Pēy and Poykai) of the Vēṅkaṭam-Kāñcī region dated in the fifth-sixth centuries AD [Champakalakshmi 1981: Chap. 3; Hardy 1983: pt. 3, 203].

By the time of Tirumankai Āḻvār, i.e. eighth century, *bhakti* becomes more complex and included 'devotion to the true *bhakta*s', as well as institutionalization of temple services and the concept of *tīrthayātrā* or pilgrimage. The *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*

of the eighth-ninth century AD (a much debated date) whose composition is located
in the Pāṇḍya country, marks the culmination. of the *bhakti* ideal in its emotional
form and renders in Sanskrit the religion of the Ālvar. It integrates all the different
strands, Tamil and Sanskrit, derives its mythology from vernacular sources, although
it adopts the Purāṇic literary form and even the *advaita* position to reconcile *bhakti*
with Brāhmaṇical orthodoxy [Hardy 1983: pt. 3]. The *bhakti* ideology assisted in the
process of enhancing the power of both the divine and the human sovereigns through
the symbolism of the Cosmos/Temple/Territory.

A struggle between the Tamil Veda (hymns) and orthodox Vedic Brāhmaṇism,
is hinted at in the hymns and in the light of such confrontations [Devanathan 1971:
342-379], a change may have been brought about by its temple-base and Sanskrit-
educated priesthood supported by members of the ruling families [Nandi 1976: 118-
123]. Thus it is argued that *bhakti* could provide the delusion of equality among the
lower orders which, in reality, remained beyond their access even in the ritual area.[12]

The notion of temple service manifesting itself in the Ālvār hymns is often linked
to a 'feudal' relationship. The devotee's status hailed as even higher than the brāhmaṇa
would suggest an earlier consolidation of the *varṇa* system and Brāhmaṇization with
royal support. Hence, the popularization of the ideology projecting two of the Ālvārs
and many of the Śaiva Nāynārs as members of low castes or even outcastes, which
gave birth to the myth of the social/religious revolt against the establishment.[13]

The *bhakti* of the Śaiva Nāyanārs, also assigned to a period between the seventh
and ninth centuries AD, is to be regarded as secondary or derivative, traceable to the
emotional Ālvār *bhakti*. The Ālvār hymns express a profound reaction to the Jain and
Buddhist ideologies, a feature much more pronounced in the hymns of the Nāyanārs,
some of whom give vent to their animosity in unequivocal terms.[14]

Thus the concept of *bhakti* acted in two distinct ways in establishing the
Brāhmaṇical temple as the pivot of the enactment of the various roles of society. One
was by encountering the increasing influence of the 'heterodox' religions leading to
their ultimate decline or subordination. The other was more significant as it induced
messianic expectations among the lower orders of *varṇa*-based society through the
ideal of salvation. Correspondingly, it led to the expansion of the temple's role as

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[12] All such attempts at questioning the Brāhmaṇical supremacy and elitism in the sphere of
religion met with social and ideological opposition, which expresses itself in the contradictory
structure of myth, e.g., ascriptive spirituality *versus* achieved spirituality as in the *Bhāgavata
Purāṇa*. Sectarian texts had to declare as orthodox, the beliefs and practices of an innovative
social group probably in an attempt to gain control over such movements. See Srinivasan 1980:
207. Hence also the popular expression in the form of a protest against brahmana exclusiveness
and the choice of the vernacular, i.e. Tamil.
[13] Chattopadhyaya 1983: note 36; See also Narayanan and Veluthat 1987: 347-375.
[14] Tirujnanasambandar is the most vocal of the Śaiva Nayanars in his denunciation of the Jains
and Buddhists.

the innovative focus for restructuring society and facilitating the advance of those branches of knowledge concerned with ritual display, i.e. architecture, sculpture, painting, music and dance and allied arts and crafts—in short iconography and art as efficient ideological apparatuses.

The temple-based *bhakti* was developed into a transcendental norm and assisted in the integration of several non-conformist elements in society and religious sects, which assumed extreme forms of rites**.** Through the *maṭha* organizations the Kālāmukha-Pāśupata sects became an integral part of Śaiva temple religion from the ninth century AD [Lorenzen 1972] onwards. The Vīraśaiva sect which seems to have been a reformist schism of the Kālāmukha sect in Karnataka was also influenced by the Tamil Śaiva *bhakti* [Ramanujan 1973; Ishwaran 1982].

Bhakti's interaction with the Siddha philosophers, an unorganized group of wandering mendicants, shows a mutually beneficial influence. The Tamil Siddha school shows features such as anti-ritualism, anti-ceremonialism, emphasis on ethical principles and even a pronounced radicalism in its anti-Brāhmaṇism [Zvelebil 1973; Arunachalam 1977: 88-117]. Tirumūlar's analogy of the human body and the temple of god and the idea of the body as a fit instrument for the soul (= icon = god) provided an interesting and convenient alternative to the icon in the temple. Hence the canonization of Tirumūlar (a *bhakti* saint) [Champakalakshmi 2011: Chap. 1], the greatest of the Tamil Siddhas, was an interesting feature of twelfth-century societal and ideological crisis due to the claims for greater non-Brāhmaṇa participation in temple administration consequent upon the enhancement of economic status among some artisanal and crafts groups, a successful attempt to include important anti-Brāhmaṇical and non-orthodox elements into the traditional Śaiva order.

The caste and class background of Vaiṣṇava Āḻvārs of a pre-seventh century date (Poykai, Pūtam and Pey) appear to have been deliberately camouflaged. Among the other Vaiṣṇava saints who hailed from the Cōḻa, Pāṇḍya and Cēra regions, Tirumankai, the most temple oriented Āḻvārs described as a bandit chief. Six of them belonged to the higher echelons of society, some being Brāhmaṇas and members of ruling families. The two exceptions were Nammāḻvār, a Śūdra and Tiruppāṇālvār, a ministrel (*pāṇar*) of low caste. The general tendency was to treat the Āḻvār *bhakti* as a popular protest against a growing 'feudal' oppression and as opposition to and criticism of Brāhmaṇical orthodox attitudes based on the hymns of Nammāḻvār [Hardy 1983: 435-478].

The Śaiva saints, whose number was fixed at sixty-three by the twelfth century AD were obviously drawn from various social groups and castes from the Brāhmaṇa to the paṟaiya.[15] However it is necessary to make a distinction between those saints, who composed the devotional hymns, and those who came to be included

[15] The stories of the Nāyanars as narrated in the *Tiruttondar Puranam*. See Vellaivaranan 1972, 1980.

in the hagiological works of the eleventh-twelfth centuries AD viz., the *Tiruttoṇṭar Tiruvantāti* and the *Periya Purāṇam*.

The famous *Tēvāram* (hymns) trio, viz. Appar, Sambandar and Sundarar were Brāhmaṇas and Vēḷāḷas or agriculturists. Added to this group is a fourth name, Māṇikkavācakar, the philosopher saint, who was an Ādi Śaiva Brāhmaṇa and the son of a minister at the Pāṇḍya court in the ninth century AD and whose avowed aim was to discredit Buddhism. Among the rest, many were of doubtful historicity and the chronological muddle which surrounds them would add to the suspicion that many of them were fictitious and were added to make up the number sixty three which was directly borrowed from the sixty-three *śalākāpuraṣa*s of *Jain Purāṇa*s.

Those who collected the hymns and composed the hagiologies belonged to the Brāhmaṇa caste and ruling families, i.e. Nambi Āṇḍār Nambi, an Ādi Śaiva Brāhmaṇa and Cēkkiḷār, a Vēḷāḷa and a minister of the Cōḷa king Kulottunga II. The propagators came mainly from the upper strata or castes but the movement acquired a popular character with the inclusion of the members of the unprivileged socio-economic groups like the potter, weaver, bard, washerman, hunter and the untouchable (paṟaiya) in the hagiological works of the tenth-twelfth centuries AD. Interestingly, the Brāhmaṇa remained the only medium through which initiation into religion and salvation could take place, as revealed by the story of Nandan the paṟaiya whose purification by the Brāhmaṇas was necessary before salvation.

5.   Śaivism, a Deliberate Choice of the Cōḷas

The Cōḷas adopted the *bhakti* ideology, but chose to use Śaivism as the vehicle of its expression. Śaivism became a more efficacious instrument of acculturation for acquiring a wider popular base in the hands of the Śaiva Nāyanārs and subsequently because of Cōḷa royal patronage. The worship of the *liṅga* as the royal cult of the Cōḷas was of central importance in this process.

Purāṇic Śaivism evolved in this region out of several earlier forms of worship of different milieux which provided greater avenues of extensive popular support *vis-à-vis* Vaiṣṇavism. The *tiṇai* (eco-zone) deities and popular forms of early Tamil worship such as Koṟṟavai = Durgā of the hunter tribes (Eyinar in *pālai*), a form of mother goddess and Murukan, the warrior god of the hill tribes (*kuṟinci*), the popular Tamil deity known as Ālamar Celvan (the deity seated under the banyan tree, suspiciously similar to the Buddha and not one of the *tiṇai* deities), and the deity, who danced at burial or cremation grounds were basic elements absorbed into Śaivism.[16] Indications of Śiva's association with those groups, who constituted the

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[16] *Puarananuru*, Invocation, 3.7; 198: 9; C*irupanarruppatai*, 97; *Kalittokai* Invocation; *Cilappatikaram*, 6: 40-43; 44-45.

lower categories of agricultural workers and craftsmen, professionally and socially differentiated from the higher agricultural (Vēḷāḷa) groups and ruling families are recognizable. Evidence on this point which is crucial to an understanding of later-day Śaivism is scanty, indirect and mainly inferential, based on later social developments, in which the lower strata of agriculturists and artisans and craftsmen generally retained their earlier associations with the subsidiary/folk elements in the Purāṇic pantheon [Champakalakshmi 2011: Section I, Chap.1; Stein 1978: 112-146].

By far the most significant factor in the process of the expansion of the Śaiva pantheon was the inclusion of Murukan by the seventh century AD. Murukan's evolution as an independent deity with a tribal Vaḷḷi as his consort and the Sanskritic (symbolic) Devasēna as his second consort in his role as the commander of the army of the gods, is an important development in the two-way process of Sanskritization. The later incorporation of the *Tirumurukāṟṟuppaṭai*[17] in the Śaiva canonical literature is an interesting example of the all encompassing character of the Śaiva sectarian *bhakti* ideology under royal patronage.

In the aniconic form of Śiva, i.e. the *liṅga*, now visualized as Śiva emerging from the *liṅga* or Liṅgodbhava, Viṣṇu and Brahmā came to be subordinated.[18] The *liṅga*, on the other hand, came to be standardized by the early Cōḷa period as the only cult object which came to be enshrined in the main sanctum, while all the other forms of Śiva described by the *bhakti* hymnists found suitable niches on the outer walls of the *vimāna* such as Dakṣiṇāmūrti and Naṭarāja of Āgamic worship. There is a clear standardization in the niches allotted to various forms of the deity by the late tenth century AD [Balasubramaniam 1971] and additions were made depending upon the size and importance of a temple. Particularly significant is the prevalence of independent cult centres for Durgā (Piḍāri) or Kāḷikōṭṭam, Muruka or Kumarakōṭṭam and even Gaṇeśa outside the Śaiva temple complex in several early settlements in pre-Cōḷa times and referred to in early Cōḷa inscriptions engraved in Śiva temples [Champakalakshmi 1979; Champakalakshmi and Gopal 1996: Chap. 6]. They disappear from Cōḷa records from the late tenth and early eleventh century AD, when the capacious fold of the Śaiva temple complex incorporated them in its *niches*. They reappear in subsidiary shrines within the temple precincts from the twelfth century AD,[19] a period which saw a societal crisis in which artisanal and crafts groups as well as non-Brāhmaṇa elements in general acquired greater participation in temple rituals. It would, therefore, seem that Śaiva iconography evolved in direct relation to the specific requirements of the ideological needs of Cōḷa power.

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[17] *Tirumurukarruppatai*, see Vellaivaranan 1981: pt. 2, 789-888.

[18] *Sambandar*, 9th verse of every hymn; *Tirunavukkarasar*, 9th verse of every hymn.

[19] The Tirukkamakkottam refers to the separate shrine for the goddess added to the temples from the twelfth century AD. See Srinivasan 1946: 50-56.

Yet another aspect of this process of acculturation is the creation of temples at various centres meant, apart from new shrines, also the conversion of local cult centres or spots, where a tree or pillar (stone) within an enclosure served as a place of worship, into a shrine for Śaiva or Vaiṣṇava worship, more often the former. This process may be inferred from the descriptions of the *liṅga* without a structural protection over it being worshipped by Tiṇṇan or Kaṇṇappa, the hunter[20] who is counted among the 63 Śaiva Nāyanārs and whose *bhakti* is eulogized even in the *Tēvāram* hymns. The priests of such local cult centres were evidently integrated into the new order of worship and many of these temple priests or Śiva-Brāhmaṇas referred to in inscriptions from the ninth-tenth centuries would seem to be those who were newly initiated as temple priests. This class of temple priests later came to be distinguished with an inferior rank among the Brāhmaṇa sub-castes from the more orthodox Smārta Brāhmaṇas, Vaḍamas (northerners), those who were followers of Vedic and Smriti rites.

6.   Cōḻa Measures to adopt and Propagate Bhakti

There is, however, no evidence of royal initiative or participation in building canonical temples till the end of ninth century AD (with the exception of the Vaikuṇṭha Perumāḷ Temple in Kāñcī). Significantly the earliest of such temples are located in the Kāvērī valley, where there is a concentration of *bhakti* centres. Most of them were early brick temples converted into stone structures under the Cōḻas and may well have been those *bhakti* shrines attributed to their ancestor Kōccengaṇṇān by the hymns themselves and in the Cōḻa *praśasti*s. Āditya I, who conquered Toṇḍai nāḍu in the late ninth century AD, is also credited with the construction of temples on either banks of the Kāvērī. Parāntaka I (907-955), who extended Cōḻa authority practically over the whole macro region, was also the earliest Cōḻa who utilized the religious network of Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava centres for the expansion of Cōḻa authority. Epigraphic evidence would show that the early Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava *bhakti* centres in the Kāvērī Valley, are known only through the records of Parāntaka I and some of Āditya I [Balasubramaniam 1971], suggesting the assumption of an integrative/institutional role by the temples from this period. Interestingly all the known Rāma and Kṛṣṇa temples in the Tamil region have their origins in this period [Champakalakshmi 1990: 49-66]. The *bhakti* hymnists were creating not only a text, but its context too in the form of a sacred geography which coincided with the agrarian and political geography of the Cōḻa period.

   The singing of the *Tiruppatikam* or *bhakti* hymns as part of the temple ritual

[20] Vellaivaranan 1980: 888-893. This is assumed in all the writings on the Bhakti Movement. See Swamy 1975: 119-180.

was also introduced in the same period when Āditya and Parāntaka made extensive use of land and other endowments for the hymns to be made an integral part of Śaiva temple worship [Champakalakshmi 2011: Section 2, Chap. 6]. The temple had by now superseded the *brahmadeya* as the super-ordinate integrative force.

The collection and organization of the hymns were also made under royal initiative and patronage. For the Vaiṣṇava hymns this was achieved by Nāthamuni, a Brāhmaṇa under Cōḷa royal patronage by the second half of the tenth century AD [Sastri 1975: 638-639; Jagadeesan 1977: 10-11]. The Śaiva hymns were collected by Nambi Āṇḍār Nambi, also a Brāhmaṇa, under the patronage of a Cōḷa king (Tirumuṟaikaṇḍa Cōḷa) identified with Rājarāja I (985-1014). The story of the collection or 'rediscovery' is located in Tillai (Chidambaram), the most holy of the Śaiva canonical temples. Closely linked with the collection of hymns was the apotheosis of the Śaiva hymnists and the installation of their images in Śiva temples from the period of Rājarāja I.[21] The deification and inclusion of the Āḻvārs in Vaiṣṇava temple worship were the direct result and more positive expression of the later Śrī Vaiṣṇava movement founded by Rāmānuja in the twelfth century AD.

Fig. 6.2: Aerial view of the Taṇjāvūr Temple.

[21] *SII* 2, nos. 29, 38, 40, 43.

   The temple as the determinant factor in the expansion of the sacred and temporal domains is best illustrated by the Tanjāvūr and Gangaikoṇḍacōḷapuram temples, which were stupendous royal projects. In keeping with the *bhakti* tradition, hymns were composed in praise of these two royal temples and came to be included in the ninth book of the *Tirumuṟai* or Śaiva Canon.

   The temple, as the major channel of socio-political communication, conveyed the royal orders through inscriptions. Temple entertainments such as music and dance, festivals instituted by the royal family and setting up of royal images in addition to those of the *bhakti* saints also served to glorify royal power. Rājarāja I requisitioned the services of a variety of people from different parts of his territory for ritual and administrative service in the Tanjāvūr temple. The Tanjāvūr inscriptions provide the picture of a cross-section of social and economic groups which were integrated into temple service at Tanjāvūr, including *patikam* singers and dancers. The orders relating to their movement (transfer) to Tanjāvūr also give the names of places where local institutions like the *sabhā*, *nagaram* and *ūr* hastened to supply the temple requirements. A reciprocal flow of money, gold and land gifts to the temple and their investment with such local institutions in different regions (in various *maṇḍalam*s) including northern Sri Lanka for supply of commodities are also on record.[22]

   Auditing of temple accounts and reorganization of the redistributive system through royal officers suggest royal penetration into local organization through intervention into the working of the ideological apparatuses.

7.   Symbol and Metaphor in Cōḷa Art and Architecture[23]

The royal temples of the early medieval rulers are to be understood as a statement of political power. They are architecturally impressive and often huge like the Cōḷa temples at Tanjāvūr and Gangaikoṇḍacōḷapuram. The Rājarājēśvara in Tanjāvūr represents a ceremonial complex symbolizing Cōḷa territorial sovereignty through cosmic structures. The architecture of the temple was planned and designed to represent the cosmos, in keeping with the Cōḷa ideology which equated temple with cosmos at one level and with territory on another level. Well conceived and majestic, the temple's architecture is the product of an imperial vision. As Dakṣiṇamēru, the temple is conceived of as the axis of the universe, while the *dikpāla* shrines are located at the cardinal points of the cloistered, pillared veranda running on all four sides of the temple-courtyard or *prākāra*. Interestingly, ritual consecration was performed, not only of the main shrine, but also of the shrines of the regents of the eight quarters,

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[22] Tanjavur Inscriptions, *SII* 2.
[23] As to this section, see Champakalakshmi 2011: Chap. 13; Maxwell 1997; Panofsky 1955; Dehejia 1990.

conveying the cosmic symbolism of the monument. (Tanjāvūr temple- aerial view)

The Tanjāvūr temple is a monument which stands as the most powerful expression of the political authority of its royal patron. It was consciously developed as the focus of the underlying socio-cultural processes of an art tradition, which reached its maturity in the highly stylized representation of the dominant image of the god/ king, visually and verbally. Representing the political iconography of Rājarāja I, the iconographic programme of the Tanjāvūr temple was an attempt at establishing a near total identity of the king with Śiva comparable to the cult of Dēvarāja in Kambuja, the medieval Cambodian kingdom, the king of Orissa surrendering his sovereignty to Lord Jagannātha of Puri, and the king of Travancore ruling as the representative of Lord Padmanābha.

The iconographic programme of Tanjāvūr was indeed the political iconography of Rājarāja, whose reign saw the most significant efforts at centralization of power through various administrative measures such as revenue surveys, assessments, redefining of *nāḍu*s (peasant regions), introduction of *vaḷanāḍu*s (larger revenue units composed of several *nāḍu*s), and conscious efforts to promote trade and *nagaram* (market centre) organization, for which the institutional means was the temple, the ideological apparatuses, and its art and ritual. The Tanjāvūr temple was itself the recipient of revenues and other rare items of ritual significance, from several villages located not only in Cōḷamaṇḍalam, but also in Jayankoṇḍacōḷamaṇḍalam, Pāṇḍināḍu, Nuḷambapadi, Malaināḍu and Īḷamaṇḍalam (north Sri Lanka). The economic outreach of the temple was impressive, as it covered the whole kingdom. The *sabhā, ūr, nagaram* (assemblies of *brahmadeya, ūr* and *nagaram*) of several centres, where lands or whole villages were granted to the temple, and which were entrusted with gold deposits for the supply of consumables and other articles for rituals and festivals, hastened to fulfil these requirements, establishing a reciprocal flow of resources. The gifts of a wide variety of ornaments to the various images by the royal family were made out of the enormous booty from the wars against the Cēras, Pāṇḍyas and Cāḷukyas, apart from the regular revenues.

The Cōḷa temple mirrored the royal court, the royal and temple servants, viz., the Taḷipparivāram and the royal and temple functionaries/officials called Kōyiṟṟamar, being identically perceived having similar duties. The Śrīkāryam (the chief manager) of the temple and of the royal court had comparable functions to discharge. It is interesting that like the king, the temple images also had army groups separately assigned to protect them. More interestingly Caṇḍeśvara, the Nāyanār, who was a passionate devotee, was given an elevated status as the guardian of the Śiva temple. His consecration as the *mūlabhṛtya* (chief functionary or servant of Śiva) is an important innovation in the temple's iconography, which acquired greater prominence in the Gangaikoṇḍacōḷapuram temple built by Rājēndra I, where apart from a shrine for Caṇḍeśa, the theme is executed in a sculptured panel of remarkable beauty at the northern entrance to the *ardhamaṇḍapa*. His earliest representation in

a separate shrine is on the north of the *ardhamaṇḍapa* in Tanjāvūr, co-eval with the main temple. Inscriptions record royal orders that all temple accounts of income and expenditure are to be presented to Caṇḍeśvara, who may well have represented the king himself or vice versa, the king acting as the guardian in the form of Caṇḍeśvara.

The Cōḷas built up this political imagery and consolidated their power, transcending the micro-level monarchical systems and integrating the whole of Tamiḻakam into a cohesive politico-cultural region with the Purāṇic world-view and the vernacular idiom of *Bhakti* as ideology.

Thus it establishes the inseparability of the ritual and political functions of the state. Contrary to the theory of a 'weakly organized polity' of a segmentary state as suggested by American historians like B. Stein and G.W. Spencer and even Kenneth R. Hall—a theory which has influenced many recent studies on the Cōḷa state, it is possible to show through an integrated study of the temple that political elements cannot be distinguished from ritual elements in the Cōḷa state, that political and ritual sovereignty coincided and the divine and temporal realms were coterminous. The Cōḷa state emerged as a highly centralized polity, given its complexity in agrarian and urban/commercial institutional organizations, like the semi-autonomous *nāḍu*, *sabhā* of the *brahmadeya*, *ūr* and *nagaram*. It certainly wasn't 'a weakly organized polity' and its 'very uncertain power' was made visible not through ritual sovereignty as claimed by the segmentary state theory but its actual power was visible through organized functionaries similar to a bureaucracy. In the Tamil macro-region the peasant regions were not autonomous segments. They were integrated into a larger state synthesis.

8. Śiva as Tripurāntaka and the Cōḷa King[24]

The Tripurāntaka image served as a metaphor for royal power and warrior image. This form has important implications for power and conquest. It has greater significance as an ideological tool, for this form was assumed by Śiva to destroy the three *asura*s, who were deluded into becoming the worshippers of Māyāmoha, a form taken by Viṣṇu, who in order to help the *deva*s against the *asura*s, produced this illusory form from his body to lead the *asura*s astray. In fact the Māyāmoha form was equated with both the Jain Digambara monk and the Buddhist *bhikṣu* and was meant to be an illusory form for the deception (delusion) of all those *asura*s who gave up their adherence to the Vedic dharma and all *pāṣāṇḍa*s (frauds) who contradicted Brhāmaṇical beliefs and rituals. The regional version of this myth is prominently depicted in the sculptures and paintings of the Rājarājeśvara temple at

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[24] Champakalakshmi 2011: Chap. 13 and Chap. 14; see also Dragens 1980: 36, 65-67, for representation of Tripurantaka.

Tanjāvūr, apart from bronze images. The representation of Tripurāntaka in the temple facing the direction of the enemy, as prescribed by the *Mayamata,* is believed to bring about the defeat of that enemy. Although known from the Pallava times, Tripurāntaka form is introduced as a prominent icon in the *vimāna* walls in the Cōḷa royal temples and more importantly it becomes a major theme in *the convergence of architecture and iconography* (emphasis added) [Champakalakshmi 2011: Chap. 13 and Chap. 14; Dragens 1980; Mevisson 1991: 539-560]. The parallel between the divine and royal sovereigns is reinforced by the festival of the deity in procession on the chariot on festive occasions which created a strong visual impact among the devotees and subjects and the main theme in the *ulā* genre of texts used for the procession of both the deity and the king.

The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* narrates this episode and the Māyāmoha form was deliberately assumed by Viṣṇu for deluding the asuras into believing the 'false heretical faiths'. A Tamil version of the story as told in the *Kallāḍam* [Champakalakshmi 1991: 667-674], ends up by bringing the *asura*s back into the Śaiva fold and even makes Śiva accept them as his servants (door-keepers) and *kuḍamuḻā* (drum) player.

In the frescoes of the inner ambulatory of the Tanjāvūr temple, the whole narrative, on the north wall, starts from above with the figure of the Buddha and the *asura*s in a worshipful posture and moves down to the battle scene and the destruction of the *pura*s. However, it is important to note that the story or the myth is also meant to subordinate the Vedic tradition by making the Vedas the four wheels of the chariot on which Śiva rides, with Brahmā as the charioteer, Agni as the arrow aimed at the *pura*s and all other Purāṇic deities (Durgā, Gaṇeśa and Subrahmaṇya and others) joining the fray to support Śiva, thus creating a mythological event to suppress counter ideologies and even the Vedic Brāhmaṇical tradition in order to elevate the Śaiva faith as the only true faith. The Tripurāntaka form is repeated in all the niches of the second tier of the *vimāna* wall facing the west, north and south. The *Mayamata*, an architectural text, prescribes the representation of this form facing the direction of the enemies for their defeat and destruction, and Rājarāja I's *meikkirtti* (true fame or eulogy in inscriptions) claims that he defeated all his enemies in all directions. It is hence the warrior aspect emphasized by the Tripurāntaka motif, which was used for representing in stone sculptures in niches, narrative panels and in the frescoes of the inner ambulatory and above all in one of the most remarkable bronze images described as Tañjai Aḻagar in inscriptions.

One of the major innovations of the Cōḷa period was the convergence of architectural design with iconographic themes in an aesthetically pleasing form in the temples of Śiva which glorify Śiva as Tripurāntaka. The Amrtaghaṭeśvara temple at Mēlakkaḍambūr, is the earliest temple, planned and built in the shape of a chariot with two wheels on each side drawn by caparisoned horses in a prancing posture, marking the conceptualization of the shrine as a vehicle for the divine sovereign and brings together the images of the ruler and the deity.

More important are the two royal temples which have *maṇḍapa*s shaped in the form of a chariot, i.e. the Rājarājeśvaram at Dārāsuram built by Rājarāja II (AD 1146-1173) and the Kampahareśvara temple at Tribhuvanam built by Kulottunga III (AD 1178-1216). Built by Rajaraja II, the Airāvateśvara temple at Dārāsuram has an *agramaṇḍapa* with its porch shaped like a chariot, being pulled by horses, along with steps with elephants on the sides, i.e. balustrades, hence, this temple explicitly employs the chariot allegory described above. The base of the *maṇḍapa* has horizontally arranged panels depicting the events of the Tripurāntaka episode in great detail.

9. Ideology in Crisis

Ideologies like *bhakti*, often became transcendental norms in establishing uniformity of functions. Hence, constant shifts made in the ideological base by politically powerful elite and new societal alliances helped to resolve conflicts arising out of new historical situations in medieval south India. This is reflected in the growth of cities like Kāñcīpuram and Kuḍamūkku-Paḻaiyārai (Kumbhakonam) into multi-temple complexes, the locus of the ceremonial complex shifting according to shifts in royal patronage [Champakalakshmi and Gopal 1996: Chap. 7]. The shift in favour of Śaivism occurred with a clear point of break after AD 950. A shift, if not a break, also occurred in the reign of Kulottunga I in favour of leading Vaiṣṇava institutions located in places like Kāñcīpuram, which was a relatively autonomous urban centre due to its long established commercial importance and as the foremost of the weaving centres and already an important administrative centre, brought into the expanding commercial network by the time of Kulottunga's accession (AD 1070).

It is against this background that the reformatory zeal and activities of Rāmānuja may be viewed. Rāmānuja, the Vaiṣṇava teacher-reformer of the twelfth century, spent his formative years in Kāñcīpuram and subsequently shifted to Śrīrangam, Tirupati and Melkoṭe (Karnataka). His liberal measures to widen the social base of Vaiṣṇavism involved a reorganization of rituals in Śrīrangam and the incorporation of non-Brāhmaṇa elements into Vaiṣṇava worship [Stein 1967: 78-95], thus creating avenues of status enhancement for the artisanal and other crafts groups including the weavers (*kaikkōḷas*), who were one of the chief beneficiaries.

Stories of the persecution of Rāmānuja by a Cōḻa king (Krimikaṇṭha identi-fied with Kulottunga II) and attempts to eliminate Vaiṣṇava worship from the Chidambaram temple may also be interpreted as a crisis, when sectarian ideology and rivalry took a violent turn in the twelfth century AD [Sastri 1975: 644-645]. Śaiva ideology was in crisis and the Śaiva religious network would seem to have viewed as a serious threat the Vaiṣṇava attempts at extending their social base and assigning greater participation to Śūdras in temple worship.

The twelfth century, in fact, represents a crucial period for both the Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava sectarian movements, for we find them constantly drawing upon the *bhakti* tradition of the hymns of the Nāyanārs and Āḻvārs to strengthen their hold. In a sense, the composition of the monumental hagiological work, viz., *Periya Purāṇam* by Cēkkiḻār, a minister of Kulottunga II, may be seen in the light of this rivalry, as an attempt to revitalize the Śaiva *bhakti* tradition by harking back to the earlier *bhakti* hymnists, although the ostensible purpose of the hagiology, as it was claimed by Śaivas, was to supersede the Jain epic *Jīvakacintāmaṇi* [Champakalakshmi 1996: 162] or suppress the remnants of Jaina influence, which would explain the special care with which the Śaiva hagiological works and the Śaiva Siddhānta Canon came to be codified in the twelfth-thirteenth centuries with royal support.

The Śaiva protagonists also resorted to the organization of a monastic network, the *maṭha*s emerging as the custodians of the *bhakti* literature and the Śaiva Siddhānta Canon. These measures, with royal patronage, are well articulated through the proliferation of monastic lineages all over the Tamil country, a number of such *matha*s coming up in weaving and trading centres as seen in the region around Kāñcīpuram and Kumbhakonam. Monasteries henceforth survived as a decisive force in forging an institutional base for the Śaiva religion from the twelfth century onwards.

10.   Bhakti and the Monastic Organization/Network: Parallel Authority Structures[25]

The subsequent development of the *maṭha* influenced the Brāhmaṇical religions to form the spiritual lineages of teachers or monastic orders to act as a complement to the temple in the propagation of the faith and in creating a wide social base and strong community consciousness among the followers of the Purāṇic sectarian religions of Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism from the early medieval times, which crystallized into an authority structure in society parallel to the political.

Monastic organization among the Śaivas in Tamil Nadu may be said to have originated in the period of the *bhakti* saints. It is in the *Tirumandiram* and *Tiruvācakam*, which explain the significance of the Āgamas and which form the foundation upon which the whole structure of the Śaiva Siddhānta was built, that Śaiva monasticism becomes an important theme.

There is no evidence of an institutionalization of the monastic organization until the Cōḻa period. *Maṭha*s begin to figure prominently in the inscriptions of the ninth-tenth centuries AD, when lands were granted for their maintenance. A systematic development of this institution began from the eleventh century and gained substantial influence in the late Cōḻa period.

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[25] As to this section, see Champakalakshmi 2011: Chap. 8.

In fact, contacts between the Tamil Śaiva *maṭhas* and Śaiva organizations in other parts of India led to a more elaborate and complex monastic organization. The Goḷakī school of Śaivism with its monastic organization in central and north India appears as a major influence in the south especially from the period of Rājēndra I (1014-1044). Significantly, the period of the rise of several lineages of teachers claiming links or connections with the Bhikṣā and Lakṣādhyāyi *maṭha*s of Kāśī or Vārānasī coincided with the period of the intensive attempts to claim and establish a pan-Indian legitimacy for all sectarian traditions.

The vernacular hymnal tradition gained special importance. Their collection and recitation , training of ritual singers and ultimately the philosophical thrust given to the whole organization under the influence of the Vēdānta and its varied interpretations in south India from the ninth century and more intensively from the twelfth-thirteenth centuries, both by Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva religious leaders like Rāmānuja and Umāpati Śivācārya, led to the monastic organization playing a special role in the emergence of religious communities.

The Tamil Śaiva Siddhānta school with its first well organized monastic tradition claimed direct connections with the Āgamic tradition, the *bhakti* tradition and also a pan-Indian association with northern lineages at Kāśī and Tripuri (central India) and gained a philosophical base from the thirteenth-fourteenth centuries, when great Śaiva teachers like Meikkaṇṭār and Umāpati Śivācārya brought in the Upaniṣadic or Vedāntic concepts of Brahman and Ātman in establishing Śiva as the Brahmān and providing a link between Śaiva theology and Upaniṣadic philosophy. Later the Smārta tradition of Śankara also established its *maṭhas* in some of these centres from about the thirteenth-fourteenth centuries, which may be seen as an attempt to counter the vernacular basis of the Tamil *maṭha*s.

Yet another lineage known as the Mudaliyār Santāna is referred to in various inscriptions both from the Cōḷa and Pāṇḍya regions such as the Tiruccattimuṟṟattu Mudaliyār Santāna, the term Mudaliyār, an honorific suffix indicating primacy in authority, becoming a caste suffix of the Vēḷāḷas later. The Vēḷāḷas played an important role in the organization of such *maṭha*s leading to a supra-regional integration in this period [Champakalakshmi 1996: 154]. Headed by non-Brāhmaṇa preceptors devoted to the promotion of *bhakti* and Śaiva Siddhānta their consolidation and influence as an institutional base were of great significance in the evolution of the Śaiva community. The *maṭha* came to play a crucial role as a parallel structure of authority in society, with which even the political powers had to share authority in the Vijayanagara period.

The Tamil *maṭha*s were institutions which, as pointed out by most scholars, arose mainly from opposition of the *bhakti* saints to Brāhmaṇa exclusivism and their social order of caste hierarchy and inequalities. The Vēḷāḷa community questioned Brāhmaṇa exclusivism in the religious and economic spheres as reflected in the stories of the Nāyanārs in hagiographical works like the *Periya Purāṇam*. Hence, the

*maṭha*s received patronage from all sections of society, especially from the twelfth century in the context of a societal crisis, the non-Brāhmaṇa castes and the lower occupational and crafts groups and trading communities, other than the dominant agricultural classes, claiming social mobility and recognition. However, the caste system *per se* remained unaffected except in creating a new paradigm, i.e. the Right and Left hand castes (Valankai and Iṭankai) for accommodating all occupational and lower caste groups, other than the Vēḷāḷas (and Brāhmaṇas and ruling elite, who were at the apex of society), within this vertical division and assigning them a ritual ranking around the temple [Appadurai 1974].

The *maṭha* head's (pontiff's) influence over the control of endowments to the temple, assigning lands, donations and also hearing declarations shows their growing importance. Yet they had no complete control over temple jurisdiction till at least the end of the Cōḷa period, as direct royal control prevailed through royal functionaries. Institutions for welfare functions such as education (both Sanskritic, particularly vedāntic and vernacular – Tamil), hospitals (medical facilities) and others were entrusted to these *maṭha*s, with land and other grants facilitating such activities.

In the *Tirumandiram* of Tirumūlar, the preceptor is conceived of as equal to god. The *guru* was Śiva himself and also the spiritual leader transcending the Veda, Āgama and Pramāṇa.[26] Such a position given to the teacher along with the religious canonical tradition contributed to the evolution of the major symbols in the development of community consciousness in the period from the twelfth-fourteenth centuries, which undeniably led in the post-Cōḷa period to the evolution of a parallel institutional structure with a growing political and administrative role of the *maṭha* in the Vijayanagara and post-Vijayanagara periods.

Thus the temple and the *maṭha* emerged as rich landowning institutions and controlled the agricultural processes and redistribution of land and revenue from land. Maḍāpatyam (Maṭhādipatyam?) hence meant control over the resources, management of endowments and exercising great economic influence in the agrarian sphere. With the development of inter-regional trade, the *maṭha* encouraged such activities even through investments in trade, for in most commercial centres, which served as centres of local exchange (at the village level) intersecting with itinerant trade, the *maṭha* played a major role in the movement of trade and hence was patronized by the itinerant traders, such as the Ayyāvoḷe 500 or the Tiśai Āyrittu Aiññūṟṟuvar and the Maṇigrāmam, apart from other supra-local organizations like the Cittiramēḷi Periya *nāḍu* and the local *nagaram*. Many of the centres visited by the itinerant guilds had monastic establishments which could have attracted trade in the medieval period. Some of these centres served as distribution points in inter-regional trade as well as craft production [Champakalakshmi 1996: 387-390].

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[26] *Tirumantiram*, Stanzas 1551, 1578, 1581.

Unlike the pre-Vijayanagara *maṭha* organization, which were less visible in the political sphere, except for providing spiritual guidance to the ruling powers and exercising control over temple affairs, the *maṭha*s of the Vijayanagara period were internally more cohesive and evolved parallel authority structures for the respective religious communities such as the Vaiṣṇava, Śaiva and Jaina. More importantly the Smārta tradition acquired an influential role in society and polity by building up impressive spiritual lineages, re-establishing the power of Vedic authenticity in all sectarian traditions.

11.   The Right and Left Hand Caste Divisions[27]

The emergence and crystallization of the paradigmatic Right and Left Hand divisions in social organization may be seen as a consequence of the societal crisis of the twelfth-thirteenth centuries. It would appear that the capabilities of the *bhakti* tradition were being stretched to breaking point in order to provide norms of validation to newly emerging economic groups. In the medieval south Indian context, all the emergent institutions and urban forms, including *nagaram* and crafts organizations, were merged into a single systemic relationship, for diverse economic and ethnic groups were accommodated as a substantial component within the same structure by seeking validation within the norms of a traditional order. Hence the vertical division of Right and Left Hand 'castes', helped to accommodate the lower crafts groups and agricultural groups within the traditional structure. Claims to an enhanced ritual status by economically more powerful crafts groups like that of the weavers were met by the expanding temple ritual and even participation in gift giving and administrative functions of the temple.

12.   Temple Geography, Agrarian Expansion and Integration

Temple geography and ecology provide a more useful method of contextualizing the data on temple distribution, both spatially and chronologically and clues to the nature of agrarian expansion, the expansion of a nuclear temple settlement and of an agrarian region such as the *nāḍu/kūrram* or even the pastoral-cum-agrarian region known as the *kōṭṭam* or their integration. Such a method involves the use of the evidence from the *bhakti* hymns for a general spatial pattern of distribution by the ninth century and its correlation with the epigraphic and architectural evidences on the construction of temples either in the act of renovating older brick structures in stone or as entirely new stone structures, for establishing the chronological variations. The latter would

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[27] As to this section, see Appadurai 1974; Stein 1980.

be particularly important in showing the nature of agrarian expansion and integration.

If one has to rely on the evidence of the *bhakti* hymns both of the Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava exponents alone, the general pattern of distribution of temples in the ninth century AD, the *terminus ad quem* of all the hymnists, would show that Vaiṣṇavism had its major concentration in and around Kāñcīpuram (Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam) and in Pāṇḍi nāḍu in the lower Vaigai and Tāmraparaṇi valleys, with the Kāvērī delta also indicating a similar concentration. On the contrary, Śaiva *bhakti* centres had their greatest concentration in the Cōḷa nāḍu (Kāvērī delta) and lesser concentrations in and around the Pallava and Pāṇḍya capitals (Kāñcī and Madurai). A comparison between the Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava centers points to the significant fact that the total number of Vaiṣṇava centres would hardly be one-third of the total number of *bhakti* centres known from the hymns by the ninth century AD. The pattern would however become more complex, if the chronological spread of the temples is studied on the basis of epigraphic and architectural evidence.

The general picture which emerges at the time of the early Cōḷas, i.e. ninth-tenth centuries AD based on both hymnal and epigraphic evidence, is that both Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva *bhakti* centres were fostered and patronized by the late Pallava and early Cōḷa rulers and temples were erected with the deliberate policy of emphasizing their institutional role in agrarian expansion. The Cōḷa achievement lies in the widening of their territorial base/temporal domain/political authority through the medium of the *bhakti* ideology. Expansion meant both the renovation of existing brick structures into stone ones or building new ones, replicating the temple's role in each of these centres as the super-ordinate integrative instrument.

The sequence of the emergence of *bhakti* centres as temple centres needs to be determined on the basis of the epigraphic and stylistic evidence of the monuments, foundation inscriptions being major indicators of their beginnings. The valuable work of S.R. Balasubramaniam on the Cōḷa temples has shown that they were built at various points of time from the ninth to eleventh centuries [Balasubramaniam 1971, 1975, 1979].

A cartographic presentation (see maps on Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva centres) of the emergence and phased expansion and integration of agrarian regions like the *nāḍu/ kūṟṟam* and *kōṭṭam* in the river valleys and the peripheral zones with the help of the chronological increase in *brahmadeya*s, *bhakti* centres and other non-*bhakti* centres with temples, would seem to be a revealing exercise, especially if the geographical and ecological context can be indicated. Inscriptional data from the seventh to eleventh centuries provide evidence of such expansion and integration together with the new irrigation works located near the *brahmadeya* and temple centres.
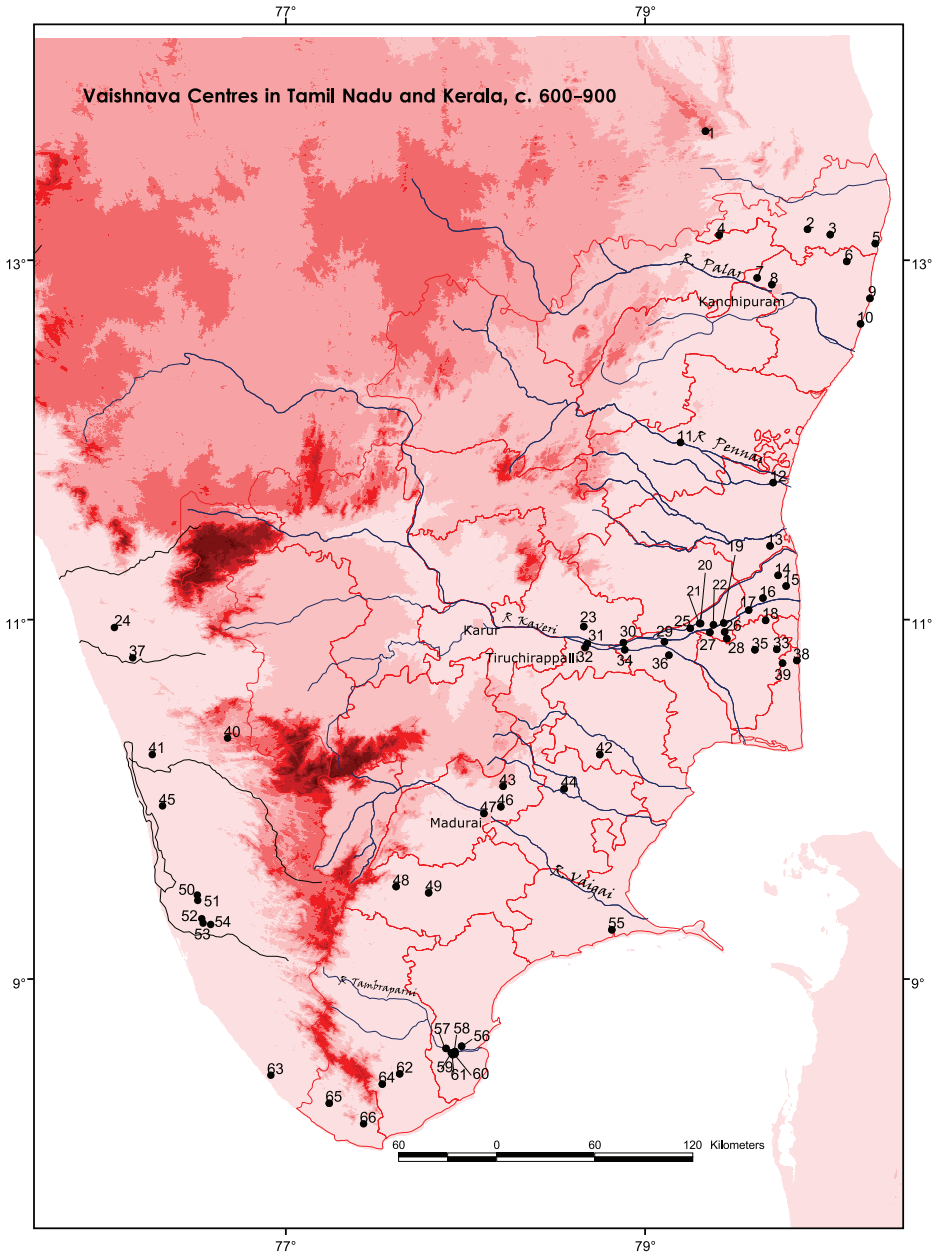
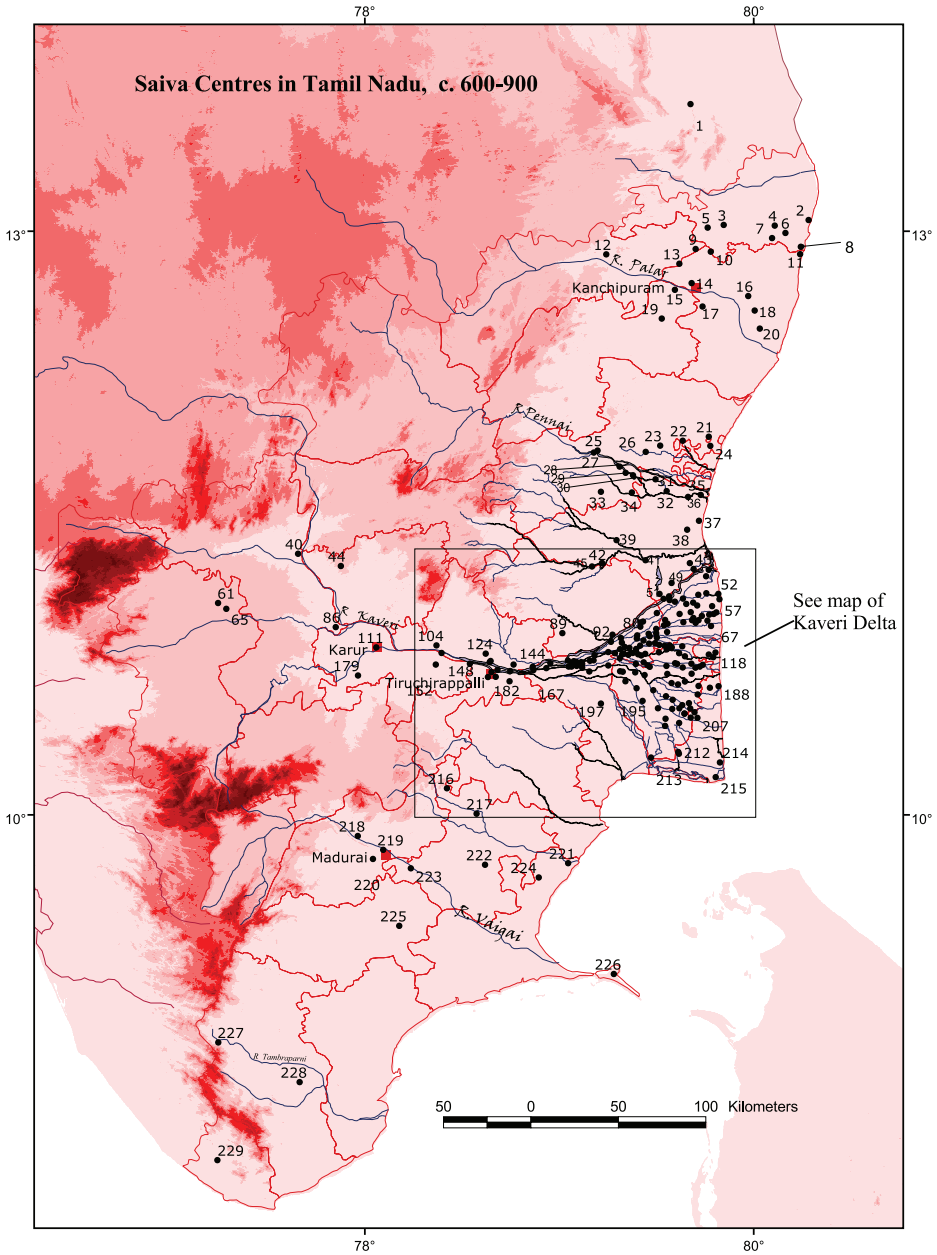Fig. 6.3: Vaishnava Centres in Tamil Nadu and Kerala, *c.* 600-900

Fig. 6.4: Saiva Centres in Tamil Nadu, *c.* 600-900

13. The Brahmadeya, the Temple and Agrarian Expansion

The Pallava-Pāṇḍya period marks a decisive shift from isolated or dispersed localities of the *tiṇai* based divisions of the early Christian era to new agricultural or settled tracts with new rural centres, *here the brahmadeya dominating the process* (emphasis added), which brought either virgin land under cultivation or integrated the earlier subsistence level settlements.

In Toṇḍaināḍu, the *kōṭṭam*, a pastoral-cum-agricultural region takes precedence over the *nāḍu*, while the *nāḍu*s increase over time due to an increase in irrigation works and royal initiative in reorganizing agrarian economy under the Pallavas and early Cōḷas through the *brahmadeya* and the Purāṇic temple. In Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam the evidence on the relationship between a new irrigation work and a new *brahmadeya* or temple settlement is much more direct [Champakalakshmi 1989: 91-101; Heitzman 1997]. The contextual and locational significance of a temple and a reservoir (*ēri* = tank) in key settlements, to which were later attached a number of subsidiary settlements in the form of *dēvadāna*s, *puram*s (revenue village) and *piḍāgai*s (hamlets), would show the links between irrigation and the expansion of a site.

The Cōḷas, it may be noted, used different strategies to tap the pre-existing infra-structural facilities of a region to restructure the economy and society through the temple. Hence, the concept of the *maṇḍalam* which defined these sub-regions was evolved by the Cōḷas under Rājarāja I, along with the *vaḷanāḍu* and the *taṉ-kuru* which made it possible for the four major *maṇḍalam*s, given their specificities, to draw from a common politico-cultural matrix, the forces and apparatuses of their integration, first into a politico-cultural sub-region and then into the larger Tamil macro-region, i.e. from sub-regional to a regional state. In other words, the Cōḷa state and the Tamil macro-region emerged simultaneously.

For the Kāvērī Valley (Cōḷa region) the location of *nāḍu*s which had emerged by the eleventh-twelfth centuries, as paddy cultivating and settled agrarian regions has been attempted scientifically [Subbarayalu 1973], although the chronological sequence of the *nāḍu* emergence has not been established. The identification and location of new settlements in the three sub-periods of Cōḷa rule, which, despite the complexity of inscriptional records, can be attempted, would help to explain the phased expansion and integration of various regions, which is attested by the conscious choice and development of Muḷḷi nāḍu lying athwart the Tāmraparṇī-Ghaṭana confluence and shows the harnessing of the river for irrigation (canal system) and expansion through new *brahmadeya*s and *bhakti* temples by the eleventh century AD.

Patterns of expansion in other regions suggest that the Cōḷas, while introducing irrigation and managerial inputs through the temple, developed a complex pattern of distinct structures of control over different geographical zones [Champakalakshmi 1989, 2001: 59-85; Subbarayalu 2012: Section 2], correlated to the types of resources

over which control was sought, wet and dry economies, salt, pearl and hill products, peripheral to paddy cultivated areas. One may stress, once again, that the uniformity of the integrating apparatus, the functional and transcendental norms that it brought about points to the centrality of the temple and the *bhakti* ideology.

14.   Brahmadeya and its Ramifications[28]

The works of N. Karashima [1984], Kenneth R. Hall [1984] and Hermann Kulke [1982] have shown that the *brahmadeya* played a significant role in the peaceful and stable extension of royal power. However, there was no homogeneity in the *brahmadeya*s of the Tamil region. They range from the largest to quite small settlements, with varying internal divisions. The terms *agaram* and *caturvedimangalam* refer to a set of privileges assigned to the brāhmaṇas as scholars and teachers. Some of them were also assigned as *dēvadāna*s to temples, i.e. *dēvadāna brahmadeya*s—from the ninth century. Small clusters of *brahmadeya*s were even made into *piḍāgai*s and *puram*s to a Taṉiyūr, a special category of the *brahmadeya* in the Tamil region.

Ecology introduced differences in the type, size, expansion and influence of the *brahmadeya*. The *brahmadeya* is made into a *taṉ-kūṟu*, a striking phenomenon, which appears as a separate unit of politico-economic significance from the early tenth century. Y. Subbarayalu first recognized it as a unit of revenue arrangement, fewer in number in Cōḷamaṇḍalam than those of Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam [Subbarayalu 2012: Section 2]. The *taṉ-kūṟu* or *taṉiyūr* was initiated in Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam under Parāntaka I and was carried forward by Rājarāja and Rājēndra who perfected the institutional organization of the *taṉ- kūṟu* and *vaḷanāḍu* (regrouping of *nāḍu*s into larger revenue units) and the systemic integration of different sub-regions. In fact, the *taṉ-kūṟu*, would seem to take the place of the *vaḷanāḍu*s in Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam, the *vaḷanāḍu* being a larger revenue unit created by an act of royal policy after a systematic land survey and assessment.

With their central place functions, they established. elaborate and enduring networks of relationship with other institutions, other minor *brahmadeya* villages as well as non-*brahmadeya* settlements and were places for public notice and for registration of events. An important aspect of the *taṉiyūr* formation is the significance of the *pēriḷamai nāḍus* and their links with the *taṉiyūr*s of Cōḷamaṇḍalam and Naḍuvil Nāḍu (Chidambaram and Mannargudi), which shows the potentialities of the *brahmadeya* as a concept and physical entity in the process of agrarian expansion and the development of administrative structures. All hamlets (*piḍāgai*s and *puram*s, etc.)

[28] As to this section, see Champakalakshmi 2001; Hall 1980, 1983: 393-410; Karashima 1968: 233-238, 1984.

and other sites attached to the *taṇiyūr* were formed into *pēriḷamaināḍu*s and often named after the Cōḷa rulers. The *taṇiyūr* was carefully removed from the jurisdiction of the *nāḍu*, as part of the regrouping or new groupings under the reconstituted *nāḍu* scheme.

They had to make way for the greater autonomy of the temple centres from about the twelfth century, which slipped out of the *sabhā*'s control and progressively fell into the hands of the temple authorities and the local *ūr* assemblies.

In the urban historical geography of the Tamil region, the *taṉ-kūṟu* occupied a significant level in urban hierarchy below the royal and administrative centres, with lateral interaction with other *taṇiyūr*s and *nagaram*s and links with trading networks. The *taṇiyūr*s widened the orbit of their economic functions, developing markets and attracting traders from outside. The *taṇiyūr*s show a distinct pattern of socio-political dominance, with a higher status than other *brahmadeya*s, members of the royal family bestowing special attention on them, extending their direct patronage to the temples, entrusting fiscal and other functions to the *sabhā* and closely interacting with the local elite groups. Temples in *taṇiyūr*s were invariably royal foundations, named and renamed after the founder kings and their successors. Their internal structures had quarters named after the royal family or the patron deity.

The *taṇiyūr* acted as an information channel, especially for royal orders. Land survey and assessment orders relating to remissions or revision of taxes on traders, weavers, oil mongers and other professional groups, affecting several regions, were invariably recorded and publicized through these centres. Major craft production centres like those of weaving, oil production and salt manufacturing were attached to them. The *taṇiyūr* represents a supreme example of rural urban continuum.

15.   Bhakti Ideology, Urbanization and Regional Culture

A study of south Indian urbanization has shown the crucial importance of the *bhakti* ideology in initiating through the temple, the emergence of cities [Champakalakshmi 1996: Introduction; Eisenstadt and Schachar 1987: 357-361]. The character and morphology of these cities/towns were determined by the temple, the ideological apparatus, that formed invariably the core of a settlement and its expansion in a horizontal pattern with a remarkably clear horizontal stratification of the space for the hierarchical caste and occupational groups. In this pattern of expansion through the *bhakti*/temple as the focus, the theory of the processes of centrality and concentration, recently put forth as an analytical concept for the study of urbanization [Champakalakshmi 1996: Chap. 7] would also support the significant role we have assigned to the *bhakti* ideology. In applying this concept to the study of the urban configurations of the Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam between AD 600-1300, it has been shown that in medieval south India the processes of

centrality would seem to have been predominantly at work in the emergence of urban hierarchies and the shaping of the contours of the city, whereby the symbolic and political centres of a society are constructed and crystallized, with two important characteristics, viz., the religious and politico-administrative manifestations. The forces of concentration refer to the concentration of population usually as a result of demographic and economic processes that led to such concentration in specific areas, generating social differentiation and division of labour and growing interaction between various groups and the emergence of crafts and services. Even in a city like Kāñcīpuram, where the forces of concentration made it into a commercially important centre from the early historical period, the forces of centrality operating from the period of the early Cōḷas through *bhakti* and the temple led to its development as a city (*mānagaram*). In other words, it was a re-urbanization process, which linked this city to a wide agricultural and commercial hinterland and external trade nexus and simultaneously shaped the city's evolution as a multi-temple complex. The same forces of centrality also brought into existence different levels of an urban hierarchy in which the *taṉ-kūṟu* (*taṉiyūr*) created by the Cōḷas out of major *brahmadeya*-s and temple-centres, has been shown to be a crucial link in the rural-urban continuum

16.   Vijayanagara: A New Historical Situation

Vijayanagara marks the emergence of the supra-regional state in south India, for which earlier ideological constructs which had been developed as strictly regional idioms although based on pan-Indian norms (i.e. *bhakti*), would have proved to be inadequate. New technology of warfare, introduced by the Islamic states of north India and the Deccan, would have further underlined the limitations of religious ideology, necessitating new technologies of control combined with existing ideological apparatuses.

There is, hence, a return to pan-Indian forms of ideological claims as seen in the conscious efforts of the early Vijayanagara rulers to revive Vedic studies through the large grants made by them to Śṛṅgērī and for the well-known commentaries, i.e. *Vēdabhāṣya* of Sāyaṉācārya, who was closely linked with the Śṛṅgērī *maṭha* headed by his brother Vidyāraṇya.

Another pan-Indian dimension is also provided in the Vijayanagara inscriptional references to a new pilgrimage network covering the whole of India, presumably with Virūpākṣa of Hampi as its centre [Thomas 1985: 5-40]. In the process, some of the sacred centres of the Tamil region became supra-regional pilgrimage centres such as Tirupati, Tiruvaṇṇāmalai, Kāñcīpuram and Śrīraṅgam, where the question of dominance was resolved by the reaffirmation of the deity's supremacy as evidenced by the *Sthalapurāṇas*. Temples were now instruments of publicizing the valour of the king as well as their piety and devotion. Hence, the kings are seen undertaking

pilgrimages to such centres, where, at the same time, epigraphic records of the military achievements of kings like Kriṣṇadēvarāya, projected the military power of the king.

Abbreviations

EI: Epigraphica Indica
SII: South Indian Inscriptions

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