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THE SIMHACHALAM TEMPLE A CULTURAL STUDY



Dr. P. BHASKAR REDDY

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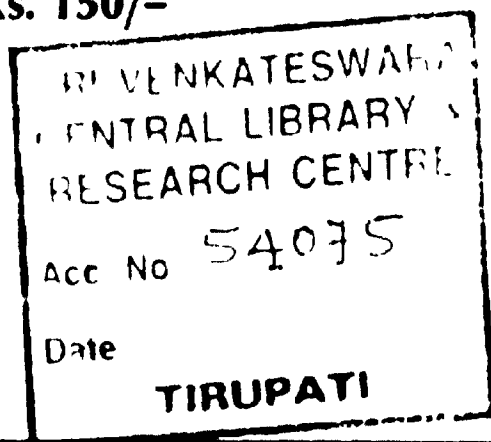
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PREFACE

The last few decades have witnessed a rapid advance of the studies on the South Indian temples. A vast majority of these studies deal with the historical, architectural, ecclesiastical and spiritual aspects without focussing their attention on the cultural dimensions of the temples.

The same is true with regard to the study of the temple of Simhachalam, a well known Vaishnava shrine located in the Visakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh. In recent years, a few detailed studies have been published on this temple. K. Sundaram was the first to contribute a full-length study on the history of the Simhachalam temple. He has also published an important book and a series of articles dealing with the architecture of the temple of Simhachalam. A few others have written brief accounts of the religious, mythological and historical aspects of the temple.

The study of the temple of Simhachalam has reached a stage where further progress depends largely on an intensification of cultural research based on epigraphical materials. The present enquiry is devoted to a study of the cultural aspects of the Simhachalam temple in space and time. In this context, the inscriptions, besides oral literature, are tapped to extract the relevant information and depict a picture of the cultural life and contributions of the temple. The scope of the study covers the history, the complex system of religious worship, the elaborate frame of festivals, the economic stability, the administrative

and other aspects of the temple in a manner appropriate to understand the totality of the culture of the temple. It is an attempt at the macro level to understand the cultural wealth of a famous temple in South India.

There are in all 525 inscriptions pertaining to the temple of Simhachalam. A systematic analysis of the inscriptions helps us not only to reconstruct the cultural history of the temple but also of the influence of the temple culture in the region, the state and the people of South India, especially the Vaishnavas.

Chapter - 1 is an introductory one dealing with the location and description of the temple, the need, importance, objectives and the earlier works pertaining to the temple. The discussion highlights not only the nature of source material in terms of epigraphs, myths, oral traditions and many literary texts used for the present study but also the historical evolution of the temple through the Ages.

Chapter - 2 depicts the rituals and festivals conducted in the temple. The description reveals the origin, evolution and significance besides continuity in the temple rituals and festivals. Here, the special festivals instituted by the members of the royal family, the nobles and the wealthy individuals will also be studied.

Chapter - 3 examines the pattern of endowments made to the temple and the numerous purposes for which these gifts were made. A statistical study of the pattern of endowments gives an interesting picture of the economic stability of the temple attained by it over the centuries.

Chapter - 4 is devoted to the study of the temple staff such as priests, administrative officials, dancers, musicians and menial workers. Their duties and privileges are also well traced in this chapter.

Chapter - 5 is intended to discuss the cultural contribution made by the temple of Simhachalam to the society. The temple in ancient, medieval and modern times served as a great centre for social, economic, religious and cultural activities. The temple through donations acquired large economic resources and assets. This enabled the temple to play the role of employer. The economic stability of the temple and the large number of cash donations impelled the temple to act as a banker and promoter of agriculture. Besides, the temple promoted education and fine arts like music, dance, architecture and sculpture.

Chapter - 6 deals with the essence of the discussion contained in the chapters mentioned supra.

It is with great pleasure that I express my deep and sincere gratitude to my Research supervisor Dr V Venkataramana Reddy, for his valuable guidance and constant encouragement during the course of my research. I owe a special debt to Prof S Srinmachandra murthy for his inspiration and valuable suggestions. I am very thankful to other staff members working in Oriental Research Institute, Dept of Ancient Indian History, Culture and Archaeology, for the encouragement and acts of help at various stages of my research.

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Dr. P. BHASKAR REDDY

Lecturer

Dept of Ancient Indian History,
Culture and Archaeology

S V University

Tirupati - 517 502.

CHAPTER -I

INTRODUCTION

Simhāchalam is considered to be one of the important Vaishnava holy places referred to in the sacred traditional history of Andhra Desa in particular and South India in general. It gradually evolved into a great religious centre through the ages and played vital role in shaping the social, religious and cultural life of not only the people of Andhra Desa but also of the peninsular India.

The temple is located in a picturesque background. It is situated on a hill, in Eastern ghats, which is 800 feet above the sea level. The hill on which the temple is located is known popularly as *Kailasa*. The hill is near the village of Adivivaramu, located at a distance of 15 kms to the north of Visakhapatnam, the principal port city of the Andhra Pradesh¹. The mountain range runs from east to west from *lawsons* bay on the coast near Visakhapatnam to Simhāchalam, forming a natural boundary to Visakhapatnam. Near the top of the northern side of the hill and in a wooded hallow surrounded by a wide circle of elevated ground resembling an amphitheatre, is located the temple of Narasimhasvami.

The Narasimhasvami temple at Simhāchalam is one of the most popular, famous and the richest temples in the

northern circars This temple can be reached through different routes The most popular one is through the flight of steps, about one thousand in all, from the foot of the hill and even from Adivivaramu village There is a pathway to reach the temple This is from Mādhavadhāra on the other side of the hill It also runs over the top of the hill and finally terminates at the entrance of the temple Besides these two there is another route to reach the temple, which is laid in the recent times This route can be made use of by the mechanised vehicles to reach the temple The ascent of the temple starts from the Bhairavadvāra which starts at the very foot of the temple² It should be noted here that all these routes are in a picturesque setting which delights the pilgrims to the maximum extent and thereby reduces the physical fatigue to the minimum The setting of the temple add grace, charm and beauty to the temple complex

The presiding deity of the temple is Varāhanarasimha This is a peculiar iconographical form of Vishnu This is a combination of 'boar', (varaha) 'man' (*nara*) and 'lion' (*simha*) In general this form of Vishnu is in *Varāhāvatāra* aspect of Vishnu. This aspect is popularly known in the local tradition as *Simhādrinātha*, *Appanna*, *Apparu*, etc This aspect of Vishnu is very often referred to in the inscriptions that are found in the Simhāchalam temple complex It is observed that whenever parents begot children they were in the habit of naming them as *Simhāchalam*, *Simhādri*, *Appanna*, *Apparu* etc

DESCRIPTION OF THE TEMPLE

Sundaram was the first art historian in Andhra to study the architectural and artistic excellence of the Simhāchalam temple It is known from the work of Sundaram that the Simhāchalam temple complex exhibits the features of Andhra and Kalinga styles of architecture The principal architectural adjuncts of this temple are the *Prākāra*, *garbhagriha*,

antarāla, *sabhāmandapa*, *arthamandapa* and the subsidiary structures to provide accommodation for the *parivāra-devatās*. Thus it is evident that the Simhāchalam temple was built as a temple complex following Dravidian architectural traditions and at the same time giving due recognition and importance to the Orissan or the Kalinga artistic conceptions.

The principal deity of the temple is kept in a separate *mandapa* called *Prahlāda mandapa*. The principal icon namely Varāhanarasimha is covered with an unguent of sandalwood paste and appears in the shape of a big sandalwood linga. This sandalwood paste is removed only annually on the 3rd day in the bright fortnight in the month of Vaiśākha (akshaya tritīyā). It is at that time that the real appearance of the Lord is exposed to the devotees. In the original form he is shown in *tribhanga*-posture and has only two hands. He has the head of a boar, the tail of a lion and a human torso. On either side of the Lord are placed two standing images representing Śrīdevī and Bhūdevī, the principal consorts of the Lord. They are shown with two hands and holding lotus flowers³. The principal sculpture of the Lord is neither ornamented nor decorated with any drapery. The hands and the feet of the deity are very badly mutilated. The boar face of the Lord is also disfigured due to vandalism. It should be noted here that this is the only image representing the Varāha-*avatāra* aspect of Vishnu and that too, covered with a thick coat of sandalwood plaster, in the whole of India. The sandalwood plaster removed from the original image is regarded as invaluable and auspicious by the devotees.

There are several subsidiary shrines devoted to the accommodation of Vaishnava saints and even the consorts of the Lord. A small shrine within the temple complex is erected to house the image of Āṇḍāl - one of the saints of the Vishnava sect⁴. Lakshmi, the consort of the principal deity

is housed in a small room scooped out of the north western wall of the cloister. In fact this cell which houses the image of Lakshmi served originally as the treasury of the Lord⁵. The twelve saints of the Vaishnava sect who were normally styled as the Ālvārs are accommodated in various shrines⁶. In the north western corner of the main temple complex lie *Vaiśākha* and *Jyestha mandapas*. These *mandapas* were meant for conducting special festivals on certain special occasions. The *Kalyāṇa mandapa* is located on the north eastern corner of the temple complex and this is meant for the celebration of the marriage of the divine couple once in a year⁷. The *sabhāmandapa* of the temple is a pillared structure. In front of the *sabhāmandapa* there is a pillar which is known as *Kappastambhamu*. This is the centre of attraction in the temple. The pilgrims and the devotees who visit the temple pay their reverential tribute and respect at this pillar in the form of donations or offerings⁸.

The entire temple complex is surrounded by a *prakāra* (compound) and this *prakāra* is provided with big, imposing and impressive gate ways on the western and northern sides. The main gateway is located on the side and it is highlighted with the *gopura* on its top.

As the temple stands on the top of the hill, the main gateway has to be approached by a long flight of steps.

There is a bathing ghat attached to the main temple complex and it lies at a distance of two hundred metres to the north-west of the main temple complex. It is in the form of a natural spring. The waters of the spring are considered to be holy by the devotees, because they are used for the bathing of the Lord.

It may be mentioned here that the Tripurantaka temple, the *Kshetrapālaka* of the Lord lies on the way leading to the

bathing ghat which is locally called Gangadhara Śītārāmaśvāmī, Kāśivīśveśvara and the Hanuman temples are the other structures associated with the main temple complex

A careful study of the spatial organisation of the temple and the architectural style employed for the construction of the *vimāna* of the temple complex enable us to observe that the present temple complex under our study exhibits a harmonious combination of the Dravidian and the Kalinga styles of architecture

NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

India is a land of holy temples. These temples have architectural, artistic and cultural importance and significance. The temple occupied an important place not only in the field of religion but also in other fields like the society, the economy, the polity, and art and architecture. Further it played a prominent role in preserving and promoting Indian culture and civilization. The Simhāchalam temple complex is not an exception to this. It is one of the biggest religious institutions in Andhra Deśa which served the cause of the people and culture. It has been a centre of attraction not only to the people of Andhra Deśa but also the people from Kalinga. It has varied functions. It received donations from kings and queens, feudatories, devotees and the general public. Hence the income of the temple had increased, administration had become complex and the functions and festivals had multiplied greatly. It is on account of these multifarious activities that innumerable inscriptions had come into existence. These inscriptions form the very basis of the cultural study of the Simhāchalam temple complex.

EARLIER WORKS

K. Sundaram did pioneering work on the Simhāchalam temple complex. The results of his painstaking study were

published in the form of a book entitled "The Simhāchalam temple" But there are certain limitations in the work done by Sundaram for he devoted much of his attention to discuss the architectural details, artistic excellence, the antiquity of the temple and other allied topics Hence he could not exploit the unlimited wealth of information furnished by the inscriptions that are found in the temple complex of Simhāchalam Yet Sundaram's work is of immense value to the scholars who are interested in knowing the architectural and artistic contributions to the Simhāchalam temple The present work is an attempt to study in an analytical and critical way the epigraphical wealth of the Simhāchalam temple and thereby present a compendious and systematic account of the Simhāchalam temple complex Mention may be made in this connection that N Mukunda Rao in recent times made a study of the inscriptions found in the Simhāchalam temple complex

CONTENTS OF THE INSCRIPTIONS

Almost all the inscriptions of the temple are in the nature of donative records-*dānasāsanas* These inscriptions refer to some donations made either by the king or his officers or the citizens of the land in their individual capacity and sometimes in a corporate effort, to the presiding deity of the temple The Sanskrit portion of these inscriptions generally contain a brief eulogy of the ruling monarch If there is a reference to the ruler, it invariably contains the *śaka* year in significant code words together with other astronomical details such as the month, the date, and the day In some cases the auspicious occasion is also referred to in the inscriptions, for which the donation was made The inscriptions also furnish the details regarding the family of the donor, such as his *gotra* and parentage, his name and sometimes the name of the administrative office held by the donor if he is connected in any way with the royal service

Sometimes, the commendable virtues and the scholarly attainments of the donor, especially if he happens to be a royal officer of some rank finds a place in the introductory Sanskrit part of the inscription

The Telugu portion of the inscription gives the Śaka year in numerals with or without reference to the regnal years of the ruling monarch and it generally does not furnish any details regarding the family or personal virtues or attainments of the donor. But it provides us with full details of the donation made or of the service instituted in the temple by donor⁹. These inscriptions are of considerable interest not only to the scholars of history to rebuild the political, social and economic conditions of the age in which the temple played an important role but also to those who desire to know something of the ancient and time-honoured institutions, endowments, administrative arrangements for the management, of the temples of our country

In addition to the information furnished by the inscriptions an attempt is made to corroborate and to assess the information available from other source-material relating to the temple. Thus the present study is an attempt to understand the temple and its various institutions and thereby a cultural milieu

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Simhāchalam the place of the abode of Varāhanārasimhasvāmī is located in the present Visakhapatnam district and which was a part of Vengi mandala. By 11th century A D, the Eastern Chalukyan kingdom and the Chola empire came under the control of the Chalukya-Chola emperor Kulottunga Chola I. An inscription issued in the 11th regnal year, 1087 A D, of Kulottunga I is found engraved on a pillar in the Ālvār shrine at Simhachalam¹⁰. This is the earliest known inscription so

far discovered at Sīmhāchalam. Thus, it is evident from the inscriptions that the history of Sīmhāchalam starts from the 11th century A D This inscription records the gift of a garden by a private individual¹¹ We have another inscription of the same king in the Tamil language, dated Śaka 1021 This is damaged but records the gifts to the temple by the officers of the king It also refers to the temple treasury-śrībhaṇḍāra¹²

From the early inscriptions of the temple, it can be inferred that the officers of kulottunga I, the first ruler of the Chalukya-Chola dynasty, activated the entire region and the religious life of the temple The region around Sīmhāchalam continued to be under the influence of the Chalukya-Cholas and their subordinates

The Eastern Gangas, like the Chalukya-Cholas, also extended their patronage to the promotion and preservation of the Sīmhāchalam temple complex An inscription, dated 1151 A D , which belongs to the reign of Kāmārnava, is found at Sīmhāchalam Another inscription which is dated in 1221 A D , and belongs to Choḍa Gaṅga, is found at Sīmhāchalam¹³ A careful study of the inscriptions found at Sīmhāchalam will enable us to state that the Eastern Gangas played a very important role in the development of the temple Their inscriptions range from 1151 A.D. to 1430 A.D ¹⁴ They made munificent gifts in the form of land, villages, cash, cattle, oil etc , for the development of the temple The structural development of the Sīmhāchalam temple was carried out in the 13th century when the later Eastern Gangas and their feudatory chiefs intended their sway over the region It is evident from the inscription issued in the later half of the 13th century that the Sīmhāchalam temple underwent a radical change physically It was at this time that additional architectural adjuncts like *mukhaṇḍapa*, *nāṭyaṇḍapa*, *tiruchuttumāla*, *śrīvimāna* and *kalasās* were added to the temple complex in 1268 A D , by Narasimha I¹⁵ Originally

the Simhachalam temple must have been a simple and an unostentatious one. The Gangas also took interest in remodelling and even in rebuilding the structures which were already in existence.

The Gangas also showed interest in building subsidiary shrines. It is sufficiently attested with epigraphical evidence. An inscription, dated 1293 A.D., refers to the Vaikunṭhanātha shrine located to the north of the cliff of Simhagiri *śikhara*. The same inscription says that the Yajñavarāhadēvara and Madhavadevara were the other subsidiary shrines attached to the temple complex¹⁶

The Eastern Gangas not only took interest in the renovation of the temple but also took sufficient care to celebrate the festivals with music, dance etc. They were responsible for the introduction of a number of special festivals or *bhogas* in the names of the kings and queens¹⁹

The feudatory chiefs of the Eastern Gangas also took keen interest in the development of the temple by making liberal donations in various forms and also by raising new and additional structures to increase the architectural grandeur of the Simhachalam temple complex²⁰. The Nagavamsis, the chief of Viragottam, the Matsyas of Oddavadi, the Chalukyas of Elamanchili, the Koppula chiefs, the Kondapadumatis, the Kona chiefs, the Surabhis of Jantarunadu, the Telugu Chodas, etc., were the Ganga chiefs who contributed to the prosperity and for the promotion of the Varāhanārasimha temple at Simhachalam.

The Reddis of Kondavidu and Addanki who rose to power after the fall of the Kakatiyas of Warangal did some substantial service towards the development of the Simhachalam temple. Anavema Reddi, Kumaragiri Reddi, Vema Reddi and Virabhadra Reddi are represented by four inscriptions from the Simhachalam temple²¹. These

inscriptions record the gifts of land, villages and jewels to the temple. This reflects the support and the patronage extended by the Reddi kings for the propagation and the promotion of Vaishnavism in Andhra Deśa.

The other important royal dynasty that extended patronage to the promotion of the Varāhanārasimhasvāmī temple at Sīmhāchalam was the Gajapatis of Orissa. After the fall of the later Eastern Gangas the Kalinga kingdom came under the control of *Sūryavamśa* Gajapatis. Kapileśvara Gajapati was the founder of this dynasty. His nine inscriptions are found at Sīmhāchalam²². Many of his inscriptions are in the Oriya language, recording his instituting various *bhogas* in the temple. Kapileśvara Gajapati was followed by his son Purushottama Gajapati who ruled Kalinga from 1416 A.D. to 1497 A.D. His inscriptions which are ten in number and found in the temple complex at Sīmhāchalam attest to the liberal royal patronage that the temple enjoyed during his period. One of his inscriptions record the gift of income amounting to three hundred *tankas* per year to the temple for the maintenance of worship²³. The other inscriptions issued by him are in the Oriya language, and all of them are donative. Purushottama Gajapati was followed by Pratāparudra who is represented by two inscriptions²⁴. All the Gajapati's inscriptions, found in the temple complex at Sīmhāchalam, show the interest shown by the rulers for the safety and security of the temple.

The other important and major dynasty that exercised a sway over South India in general that of Andhra Deśa in particular and also which supported and patronised the Sīmhāchalam temple was the Vijayanagara dynasty. The inscriptions of this dynasty discovered in the Sīmhāchalam temple complex range from 1516 A.D. to 1519 A.D. It is well known that Krishnadevarāya of the Tuluva dynasty ran over the Kalinga region in one of his military campaigns.

and set up a Jayastambha at Potnuru near Sindhāchalam. We have in all four inscriptions of this illustrious emperor in Sindhāchalam. However, three of them are the copies of the same inscription. They are dated 1516 A.D.²⁵ They record the gifts of ornaments made by the king for the merit of his parents to god Narasimhanātha after achieving the conquest on the East. Mention may be made in this connection that the queens of Krishnadevaraya, Chinnādēvi and Tirumaladēvi, also made gifts of ornaments to the god at Sindhāchalam.

The Muslim dynasty of Qutubshahi is represented by a solitary inscription dated 1604 A.D.²⁶ This inscription belongs to the time of Hazarat Muhammad Kullipadasavadayalu. It records the gift of the village Narava consisting of gardens, wet as well as dry land, tanks and *grāma rokhas* accruing from these as a *sarvamānya* to the god Narasimhasvāmī by Sarvappa Aśvarāya, son of Kamalāya of the Padmanāyaka caste and of Vipparla *gotra* for restoration of *nitya-naivedyas* and *bhogas*. Incidentally the inscription informs about the military achievements of Aśvarāya who was credited with the driving out of Mukunda Bāhubalendra of the borders, capturing Koppulavāṅgottāmu, Viragottāmu and Yarajella under the orders of the king, his visit to Srikurmam, making the gifts of *sarvamānya* of the above grāmas to the god, Vaishnavas and Brahmanas visiting Sindhādri and the restoration from obscurity of the previous *bhogas* created by the Narapati to the god Sindhādri and following restoration by Mukundabāhubalendra forty years before to the present restoration.

This evidence shows that in the later 16th century, there was a forty years of religious inactivity before the date of restoration i.e., 1604 A.D. Thus the period of inactivity might have been from 1564 to 1604 A.D. We have an inscription

dated 1564 A.D., registering gifts for maintaining perpetual lamps in the temple²⁷. We have two more inscriptions in between 1564 and 1604 A.D., registering gifts to the temple in 1579 and 1597 A.D., respectively²⁸.

MYTHOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The discussion, so far of the history of the temple by taking into consideration the inscriptions that are found in the Simhāchalam temple complex and issued by the kings and feudatories belonging to various dynasties, would be complete only when a study of its evolution through mythological background. The temple of our study has very rich and at the same time, interesting mythological background.

Like many other Vishnu shrines of South India, Simhāchalam has also a *sthalamāhātmya*-also known as *sthalapurāna* of its own which gives a mythological origin to the temple²⁹. This is mentioned in Skandapurāna. There are also innumerable legends and stories about Simhāchalam and the presiding deity of the temple. The Skandapurāna is divided into 32 chapters. Obviously, the number is chosen to glorify the 32 manifestations of the Lord Narasimha which the purāna covers.

The *sthalapurāna* contains an account of the foundations of the temple and relates the well-known story of Hiranyakaśipu who was furious with his son Prahlāda, for his ardent devotion to Vishnu and in order to get rid of such a misbehaving and undesirable son, he subjected him to various forms of torture. It further narrates how Prahlāda was made to undergo several hardships by his father Hiranyakaśipu, as a last resort, asked his servants to heave his son into the sea and place a mountain over Simhādri with a view to placing the mountain over him. But before they could execute their deed, Lord Vishnu rescued Prahlāda by

jumping over the hill and lifting Prahāda from the sea. This story is narrated in 28 chapters. The remaining four chapters recount the reviving of the worship of the Lord in another life-cycle by king Puruṣa of the lunar dynasty.

It is thus stated in the mythology that Simhādri is the place where the Lord rescued Prahāda. The form of Varahanarāsinha was assumed by him then at the prayer of his devotee Prahāda, who wanted to see both the *avatārās* of the Lord, the one on the day he killed Hiranyāksha and the other, through which he has killed Hiranyakaśipu.

It is also evident that Prahāda was the first to construct a temple around the deity. He accomplished this after his father's death at the hands of Narāsinha³⁰. But at the end of that life-cycle (Kṛtayuga) the temple was neglected and began to decay. Even the deity was not taken care of and crests of earth slowly gathered round the image. In the beginnings of another life-cycle, the Lord once again was discovered by Puruṣa of the lunar dynasty, with his spouse Uṛvasī during their penetrations and is said to have visited this hill. Uṛvasī had a dream wherein she located the site of the god³¹. She had a dream-revelation that the Lord should be exposed to view only on the third day in the bright fortnight of the month Vaiśākha and that he should be covered with sandalwood paste during the rest of the year. Even to this day, the divine prescription is strictly adhered to in accordance with the tradition contained in the *sthalapurāṇa* and the Chandanotsava festival is performed on the 3rd day of the bright fortnight in the month of Vaiśākha every year.

Though the *sthalapurāṇa* depicts the temple from the mythological view point, it cannot be brushed aside as utterly untenable from the historical stand-point³². The *sthalapurāṇa* credits the construction of the temple to king Puruṣa. According to this version, the king discovered the image of the Lord, hidden under a mass of earth, restored it and revived

its worship by constructing a temple around the image and making a provision for its maintenance. This mythological information is corroborated by the evidence supplied by an inscription of the 13th century found at Sindhāchalam. This epigraph records that the Eastern Ganga king Naraśimhadeva I gifted 100 beautiful *sānis* to the temple to perform dance, music, singing and to wave the flywhisks to the god for the merit of himself. The inscription compares this act of munificence to similar gifts made by Purūrava in the past³³. It is clear from the epigraphical evidence that king Purūrava made gifts to the temple before 13th century A D, and it also enable us to state that the temple enjoyed popularity in the same period. This is further corroborated by the inscriptions of the Kulottunga I found in the same temple but dated in the 11th century A D³⁴.

K. Sundaram who studied the Sindhāchalam temple offers different theories based on tradition. He states that there is a tradition which affirms that the Varāhanarasimha is a Śiva *linga* which had been converted into a *Vaishnava* image by Rāmānuja³⁵. According to this tradition, Rāmānuja, the great *Vaishnava* saint, visited Sindhāchalam in the course of his tour and found it to be a centre of Śaivism. Rāmānuja, as it is known from the tradition, converted the *linga* into the *Vaishnavite* Varāhanarasimha³⁶. This tradition, though it is unsupported by any literary evidence, has many supporters. They rely upon certain features. Firstly the principal deity installed is exactly in the same way as a Śiva *linga* is usually installed. That is, it lies in the centre of *garbhagriha* with a *sōmasūtra*. This is unusual for a Vishnu image. Secondly, the festival of *Kāmadhahana* celebrated in the shrine is essentially *saivaite* in origin. Thirdly, the naming of the bathing ghat as Gangādhāra and that of the hill as Kailasa betray *saivaite* influence³⁷.

But K. Sundaram adduced arguments also in support of a *Vaishnava* origin. He states that the *Vaishnavas* believed

that Simhāchala Naraśimha is a self-manifesting deity. The mode of installation of the deity is in accordance with the principals of the *Āgamas*³⁸. The *Kāmadhahana* festival has also been in vogue in Śrīkūrmēśvara temple at Śrīkūrmam³⁹. The words Kailasa and Ganga are generally thought of in personal troubles. The Kailasa stands for any hill-range having a sacred halo about it and the Ganga is any sacred water. The Simhāchalam hill range is the most conspicuous hill range in the region⁴⁰. It is thus evident that much can be said on both sides. But one thing is certain that from the 11th century onwards as evidenced, from the epigraphical information, Simhāchalam has been a well-known *Vaishnava* pilgrimage centre and contributed a lot for not only to the cultural history of Andhra Desa but also of South India.

The earliest reference to this temple is found in Errapreggēda's *Lakṣmī Naraśimhapurāṇam*. The great Telugu poet was patronised by Prolaya Vēma Reddī of the Reddī dynasty⁴¹. In the *Naraśimha purāṇam* Errapreggēda mentions Simhāchalam as a holy place which he visited in his pilgrimage to holy places⁴².

The other important literary reference to the Simhāchalam temple complex is in the *Chātu verses* of Śrīmātha. He gave a picturesque description of the festivals conducted at Simhāchalam temple and also the gathering of the people there⁴³. This great Telugu poet flourished in the 15th century. He enjoyed the post of *Vidyādhikārī* in the court of Pedakomati Vēma Reddī and later on Virabhadra Reddī⁴⁴.

The great poet-king of the Vijayanagara kingdom, Krishnadevaraya, twice visited Simhāchalam. This information is very well recorded in his great work *Amuktamālyada*⁴⁵. Besides the above reference works, the *Krishnarayaviyavam* by Dhūrjati⁴⁶, and the *Kalapūrnodavamu* by Pingali Surana⁴⁷, also make reference to the Simhāchalam temple. It is very interesting to note here that the

Narasimhaśataka written by Gogulapati Kūrmanātha Kavi states that the temple complex under our study was subjected to Muslim invasions in the 18th century under the Mughals⁴⁸

It would thus appear from the above discussion that the Sīmhāchalam temple complex has a very rich historical and mythological background. The epigraphical and the literary evidences show that the temple enjoyed popularity right from the 11th century A D, upto 18th century A D. Even in the modern times it is a place of pilgrimage for the Andhras. The people who live in Coastal Andhra have been *taking* great care and attention to the renovation of the Varāhanarāśimhasvami temple at Sīmhāchalam, from time to time.

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- 18 *Ibid.*, No p 67
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- 22 *Ibid.*, Nos 1089, 793, 1155, 1151, 1157 and 1153
- 23 *Ibid.*, No 844
- 24 *Ibid.*, No 1164, 1149
- 25 *Ibid.*, No 694, 696, 1170 and 695
- 26 *Ibid.*, No 1184
- 27 *Ibid.*, No 1191
- 28 *Ibid.*, Nos 1210 and 1171
- 29 A few printed copies of *Sthalapurāṇa* are available in Devasthanam library at *Sinhachalam*
- 30 *Sthalapurāṇa* see Chap 24, 25 and 26
- 31 Op cited Chap 29, 30, 31 and 32
- 32 K Sundaram, *The Sinhachalam Temple* (Waltair, 1969), p 47
- 33 S.I.I., Vol VI VI, No 1197
- 34 S.I.I., Vol VI No 1172
- 35 K Sundaram, *The Sinhachalam Temple* (Waltair, 1969) p p 48-49
- 36 Echoes of similar tradition are also heard about the Sri Kurmesvara temple at Srikūrmam and about the Sri Venkateswara temple at Tirupati. In popular imagination Ramanuja converted all these shrines, which were once centres of Saivism into Vaishnavite shrines
- 37 K Sundaram, *The Sinhachalam Temple* (Waltair, 1969), p 61
- 38 *Padmasāhita*, Chapter 13, verses 39 ff
- 39 *Ibid.*, Chapter 18, verse 80
- 40 K Sundaram, *The Sinhachalam Temple* (Waltair, 1969), pp 61, 62
- 41 M.S. Sarma, *History of the Reddi Kingdoms* (Waltair, 1948) p 496
- 42 Errapreggāda, *Lakshmi Narasimhapurāṇam* (Vavilala edition Madras) 1st canto, verse 11
- 43 The authenticity of the verses of this type preserved only by tradition is often disputed. The verses under consideration can be attributed to Śrīmatī because of his patron's connection with *Sinhadri*
- 44 M.S. Sarma, *History of the Reddi kingdoms* (Waltair, 1948) p 515
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CHAPTER - II

RITUALS AND FESTIVALS

The temples were the centres of sanctity, sacredness and devotion. They provide spiritual solace to the pilgrims who visit them. Normally the people will develop love, liking and veneration towards a particular temple depending upon the rituals, festivals and the mode of worship offered in it. It is observed that the more complex and sacred the ritual worship and greater the attraction towards a particular temple complex. It is on account of this reason that every temple has developed certain established system of ritual worship and even special festivals. The devotees and the pious people taking into consideration the above referred special religious and ritualistic activities visit a particular temple and offer their donations and gifts in various forms.

In the Simhāchalam temple were instituted certain special festivals, rituals and other religious institutions which were meant to foster the deity. A critical study of the epigraphs found in the Simhachalam temple gives us a detailed information about the daily proceedings of worship (*pūja*) and ceremonial occasions (festivals) since centuries.

The rituals of the Simhāchalam temple do not differ essentially from those of other Vishnu temples of South India like those at Tirupati, Kāñchi and Srirangam. Credit for the

systematisation of the temple rituals in shrines dedicated to Vishnu is traditionally given to Rāmānuja and his followers like Andavan¹

K V Raman states, “in an Hindu temple, the daily offerings to the various deities at different times in the day is of fundamental importance. The day-to-day ceremonies connected with worship are called the *nityapūja*, while occasional ceremonies in connection with some special festivals, are called the *naimittika*. The daily offerings are obligatory and are essential to preserve the sanctity of the shrine. They represent the basic ceremonial rituals to be performed in the temple which are governed by the *Āgamās*”² The worship conducted in a temple from dawn to dusk and the various special festivals are elaborately described in the *Āgamās*.

It is a matter of common knowledge that the rituals in the Vishnu shrines of South India are based on one of the two main systems of worship - either the *Vaikhānasa* system or the *Pāñcharātra* system. The *Vaikhānasa Āgama* recommends *pūja* six times a day. The timings and the details of *Pūja* are as follows³

- 1 *Pratyūsha* (arunodaya)
- 2 *Prahāta* (pratahkala)
- 3 *Madhyāhna* (noon)
- 4 *Aparāhna* (afternoon)
- 5 *Sāyankāla* (evening)
- 6 *Nīśi* (ardhajāmu)

The *pāñcharātra Āgama* liberalises this and allows discretion to the temple authorities to perform two, three, four, five, six or even twelve *pūjās* in a day according to the

financial position and organising ability of the temple authorities⁴

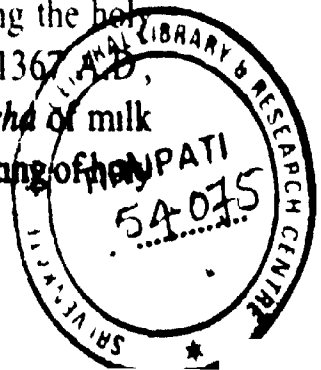
We can infer from the epigraphical evidences, that the *pāñcharātra* form of worship has been in vogue from ancient times in the Sindhachalam temple

In every temple there are three to six different times of worship beginning from the early morning and ending at midnight during which *pūjas* are performed and offerings, made. It is interesting that the inscriptions of Sindhachalam refer to special *pūjas* instituted by kings, queens and nobles which are called '*avasaramu*'. The elaboration of the worship and the variety of food offerings made on such occasions (*avasaramu*) varied depending upon the status of the donor. The worship ordinarily consists of sixteen services (*shōḍasopachāra*). They are *dhyāna* (contemplation), *āvāhana* (localisation), *āsana* (offering of a seat), *pādya* (washing the feet), *arghya* (washing the hands), *ācamanīya* (taking in a quantity of water), *snāna* (bath), *vastra* (clothing), *yajnopavīta* (the sacred thread), *gandha* (smearing sandalwood paste), *mālā* (decoration with garlands and flowers), *dhūpa* (waving incense), *dīpa* (showing a lamp), *naivedya* (offering food), *nārājana* (waving a lamp) and *mantrapushpa* (offering a tribute). As evidenced by the inscriptions the worship offered in the Sindhachalam temple is of four kinds according to time - *repaṇ* or worship offered in the morning, *māpaṇ* or evening, *ardhajāmu* (a period of one-and-half hours after sunset) and *tiruvajamu* (midnight). Of these the most important and elaborately done is the early morning service. It consists of *shōḍasa-upachāras*. The other items of worship are more or less repetitions on a minor scale with some constituent items omitted. According to inscriptions the daily rituals performed in the temple are as follows.

MORNING WORSHIP

The daily worship of the deity starts early in the morning with the chanting of *suprabhātam*. *Suprabhātam* is the song sung in all Indian temples to awake the Lord from sleep. This is referred to in two inscriptions of the period. The earlier inscription, dated 1296 A D, records the provision made for singing *mangalagītas* from the *suprabhātam* time till the *tirumanjāna* ceremony is performed⁵. The second inscription issued in 1376 A D, by Somayijiyana records the provision of facilities for vocal and instrumental music at the time of singing *mangalagītas* and playing *mukhari* at the time of *prabhātasamaya* in the temple⁶. This development, though mainly was dominated by a religious touch, it has its own cultural impact. It should be stated here that the temple of Sindhachalam in many ways fostered the cause of fine arts.

Tirumanjānam or *abhishekam* is another important ritual in the *nityapūja*, which is performed elaborately in the morning. A few inscriptions of the temple give us fairly a good idea about the way in which the *tirumanjānam* was performed in the medieval period. Sacred water, brought by a *brāhmana* and mixed with perfumes, was utilised for the *abhisheka*. An inscription, dated 1363 A D, records the provision made for bringing one potful of water for the *tirumanjāna*. It also states that the donor endowed a copper pot (*tirumanjāna-garaya*) to the temple for bringing water⁷ for *abhisheka*. Another inscription, dated 1519 A D, registers the gift of perfumes such as *gandhamu* (sandal), *agaru* (a kind of sweet-scented wood), *karpurumu* (camphor), *kastūri* (musk), *panniru* (rose water), *kumkumapuvu* (saffron) and *puladanda* (garland) that were to be used during the holy bath of the deity⁸. Another inscription, dated 1367 A D, records the gift of cows for providing one *kumcha* of milk everyday for the *abhisheka* of the god⁹. The chanting of *namam*



texts like *puruṣasūkta* and *sankīrtanās* etc , during the time of *tirumañjana* was a common practice. An inscription, dated 1350 A D , records the provision made for chanting the Vedic hymn referred to above, during the time of *abhiṣheka* everyday (*abhiṣheka kālamandu puruṣasūktam chaduvedi kesava bhāgavatulaku*)¹⁰ A few more inscriptions also refer to the chanting of *puruṣasūkta* during the time of *tirumañjana*¹¹ An inscription, dated 1374 A D , records the provision made for *nāmasaṅkīrtanas* on musical instruments commencing daily from *tirumañjana* and lasting till the completion of adorning the deity¹² It is very significant to note that the performance of *sankīrtana* in *Oḍṇa sāmpradāya* was arranged by a Govinda jiyana in 1390 A D , at the time of *tirumañjana*¹³ Offering of *vidiyamu* (set of betelnut and leaves) was also part of this service. The same person made provision for supplying *vidiyamu* to the god at the time of *tirumañjana*

Thus, the inscriptions give us a fairly good idea about the *abhiṣheka* of the Lord. The ritual starts with the bathing of the Lord in sacred water and milk. During the *abhiṣheka*, the *puruṣasūkta* and the other sacred names of the god are chanted. After the completion of *abhiṣheka* the application of sandal and new *yajñopavīta* (sacred thread) are offered to the god. The *abhiṣheka* ceremony comes to a close by offering food and *tāmbūla* to the god.

CHANDANALĀGI

The *Chandanalāgi* ritual is a very important and unique ritual observed in the temple under our study. Application of sandal, to the deity's body after the *abhiṣheka* was an important item. The word used in the inscriptions to denote application of sandal is *chandanalāgi*. The word *chandana* means "sandal" and *lāgi* means 'application'. Various services were also performed during the celebration of this ritual. In 1375 A D , a gift was made to a woman for waving *chāmara*

at the time of *chandanalāgi*¹⁴ *Ālavana* service was arranged in 1375 A D , at the time of *chandanalāgi* by the Reddi king Anavema¹⁵ Provision was made for holding a mirror before the god at the time of *chandanalāgi* and to decorate the floor with coloured powder at the celebration of the sacred festival¹⁶ The performance of *sankīrtana* was arranged by a *Kalinga-parikṣha* in 1391 A D¹⁷ After the completion of offering *chandana* to the deity's body, the image was dressed with clothes and bedecked with ornaments

In 1359 A D , Oddavadi Bhimanapreggada gifted one *bhūṣanam* (ornament) to the god for wearing specially after *turumañjana*¹⁸ A number of devotees presented jewels and ornaments to the god

It may be stated here that the application of sandalwood paste to the body of the image of the deity is the central theme of this ritual. It is on account of this, the temple and the deity came to assume a position of paramount importance and interest. It is known from the Ganga inscriptions that the conduct of this ritual was very meticulously supervised by the political officers of *Kalinga-Kalinga-parikṣha*

Sacred thread (*yajñōpavīta*) made of thin twisted gold wires or cotton was placed on the body of the deity after the *turumañjanam*. An inscription dated 1389 A D , mentions the arrangements made for the supply of two *yajñōpavītas* to the god¹⁹ Another inscription, dated 1350 A D , states that Gangadevi, the queen of Eastern Ganga King Narasimhadeva, made provision for the supply of one *yajñōpavīta* to the god²⁰

After the decoration with the *yajñōpavīta* and jewels the deity was offered various kinds of flowers and garlands. The flower garlands were made up of several flowers so as to facilitate the decoration being done in an attractive manner. Several inscriptions record donations made by the devotees

for supplying *tomālas* (*tulasi garland*) and flower garlands daily to the temple²¹. Flower garlands and *tulasi* were regularly supplied with the help of donations made by devotees and there is enough epigraphical evidence to attest to this²².

It is clear from the above epigraphical information that jewels and ornaments of various kinds were donated by the devotees to the god. It is likely that this act on the part of devotees might have paved the way for the promotion of an industry for the manufacture of various ornaments. It is very interesting to note in this connection that donations were made for the specific purpose of maintaining flower gardens to supply flowers of various kinds to adorn the deity. This indirectly promoted horticulture. Thus, the jewels and the flowers that were profusely used for the decoration of the deity had an economic significance.

REPATI DHŪPA

The bath and decoration was followed by *archana-dhūpa-dīpa-naivedya*. This is attested to by an inscription, dated 1274 A.D. It records an endowment made for offering *archana-dhūpa-karpūra* and *naivedya* to the god²³. The *dhūpa* or waving of incense was conducted after the *archana*. But the inscriptions are silent about the details of the *archana* ritual. The *dhūpa* offering is followed by a number of services and offerings. An inscription, dated 1415 A.D., records that Haridasa *sahasamalla*, the Śimhādri *bhōga-pariksha*, made provision for the supply of a vesselful of curds to the god to be offered as *madhuparkamu* at the time of morning *dhūpa*²⁴. Another inscription, dated 1385 A.D., records the gift of 50 cows for supplying *payasa* (milk preparation) to the deity daily during the morning *dhūpa*²⁵.

Several kinds of services were arranged, during the time of *dhūpa* offering. A number of inscriptions record the

provision made for holding *chamaras*, *umbrellas*, *slavaṇas*, torches etc., in the presence of the god during both the *dhūpas*²⁶. In 1413 A.D., Niladevi made arrangements for payment of wages to a woman for cleaning the premises of the temple and decorating the place with colours during both the *dhūpas*²⁷. Provision was made for the reciting of *Vishnu stotra* at the time of *repaṇi dhūpa* before the god in 1396 A.D.²⁸. Recitation of *nāmasankīrthana* was also arranged by the devotees in presence of the god during both the *sandhyas*²⁹.

An inscription, dated 1299 A.D., states that provision was made for singing *mangalagāṇas* before the deity, during the *ubhayadhūpas* by Varadagiri Śrīpadalu a *bhoga-pariksha* of the temple³⁰. The musical entertainment was also a part of morning *dhūpa*. Provision was made for two women to play on the *Vīṇa* and two women to follow at both the *dhūpas* before the god³¹. Another inscription, dated 1453 A.D., records, the provision made to a woman for dancing in the presence of the god and waving *chāmara* during this time³². After the completion of the *dhūpa* and other services, the Lord was taken in procession around the village (tiruvīdhulandu) in both the *dhūpas*. Two inscriptions of the period renew the provision made for torch-bearing in presence of the god when he was taken in procession around the village³³.

NAIVEDYA

Offering of *naivedya* to the deity during the specified hours of the day and on different occasions is an important item in the daily *pūja*. The offerings are made usually at the end of each of the series of functions in the course of the worship of the deity. It is evident from the inscriptions that the food offered daily at *repaṇidhūpa*, *māpaṇidhūpa*, *tiruvajṇmu* and *tiru-ardhajṇmu*. The food, after it was offered to the god, was distributed among the temple employees and

also to the devotees who gathered at the time of performing various services. During the 14th and the 15th centuries, extensive provisions made for the *naivedya* are recorded in the inscriptions. In fact, most of the inscriptions give a long list of details about the different preparations of the various provisions and groceries required for different kinds of food-offerings. In 1266 A.D., Lakshmidevi, the queen of Raparti chief Mangiraja, gifted one village to the temple for offering *naivedya* daily to the god³⁴ In 1398 A.D., Singamaraju, the Jantarunati chief, made arrangements for offering *naivedya* to the god³⁵ The chief of *Chondanadu*, made arrangements for *naivedya* to the god Narasimha as well as other ancillary deities of the temple in 1273 A.D.³⁶ An interesting record dated 1519 A.D., lists different kinds of food to be offered to the god during mornings. The following food particulars are mentioned in the inscription namely *pakalam*, *kuralu*, *piṇḍu*, *nāṇḍu*, *sārasētulu*, *payasamu*, *arisalu*, *sodhumanoharālu*, *nandanābhānam*, *appalu*, *hamsakalilu*, *badalu*, *kākarālu* and *tāmbūla*. It further mentions a few items like rice and curd to be used in preparation of above items³⁷. The most important and interesting feature of the celebration of this ritual is that of the offering of various types of food. It has a sociological importance. Their culinary expertise and gastronomic excellence in preparing certain delicacies for the Lord's 'naivedya', are of sociological interest.

MAPATI PUJA (EVENING WORSHIP)

The *mapati puja* was a repetition, on a minor scale, of the morning *puja*. The evening part of the worship started with a brief *tirumanjanam*, of which decoration of the Lord with *tulasi* garlands and flowers formed part³⁸. These services were followed by instrumental music and dance, singing *mangalagitas* and recital of sacred texts³⁹. The waving of *chamara*, *ślavāṇa* and other services were also offered to the god in *mapati dhupa*⁴⁰. The *mapati puja* ends with *dhupa*-

dpa-naivedya, followed by a procession of *utsavamūrtis* around the village⁴¹.

TIRU-ARDAJĀMU AVASARAMU (NIGHT WORSHIP)

The night worship or *tiru-ardajāmu* worship also started with an *abhisheka*. A number of inscriptions record the arrangements for *tiru-ardajāmu* worship. An inscription, dated 1402 A D., mentions the arrangements made for the *tirumanjanam*, conducted daily during the night⁴². After this *abhisheka* the deity was decorated with various kinds of floral garlands like *donḍavanamāla* and *tomāla* etc.,⁴³ *Dhūpa* was also offered during the night worship after decoration. Various kinds of offerings like, *triguni-pālakaḷasālu*⁴⁴, *semantikhirt*⁴⁵, *jṇu*⁴⁶, were offered to the deity during the *rātri dhūpa* and provision was made by the devotees for this purpose.

TIRUVAJĀMU AVASARAMU (MIDNIGHT WORSHIP):

The midnight worship consisted of decorations, *ālavaṇa* service, offering of milk and it came to an end with lulling the god to sleep⁴⁷. An inscription, dated 1381 A.D., records that Oddadi Arjunadeva, made provision for the supply of ten *kumchās* of milk, honey and sugar to the god, offered at the time of *sejjasvasaramu* daily⁴⁸. Two more inscriptions of the period record the provision made for supplying milk to the god at *sayanaseva*⁴⁹. The elaborate process of *pūja* and its religious and cultural details were meant for to attract the devotees more and more and motivate them into divine fold. All this reveals the richness of rituals (in ritualistic manners) and the great popularity of the Sindhachalam temple in medieval times.

SPECIAL INSTITUTED OFFERINGS (BHŌGAS) :

As a mark of thier devotion towards the god Narasimha, the kings, queens and the chiefs instituted some special

bhōgas to the god which were called after them. References to such *bhōgas* are found in the inscriptions belonging to the later half of the 14th century and the beginning of the 15th century. These *bhōgas* which were conducted at specified times can be regarded as special offerings to the god Narasimha. To maintain these offerings either a village or some land or some cash and sometimes cows etc., came to be donated. The following is a brief account of the special offerings found in the inscriptions.

VIRANARASIMHABHŌGA:

An inscription, dated 1340 A.D., records that the Eastern Ganga king Viranarasimhadeva, instituted a *bhōga* called *Viranarasimhabhōga* to the god Narasimhanātha. To maintain this service Śankaradāsu Jiyana, a *Kalinga-pariksha* endowed 200 cows for providing 45 *kumchās* of ghee per mensum⁵⁰

GAṄGĀNĀRASIMHABHŌGA :

An inscription belonging to Viranarasimhadeva, dated 1350 A.D., records that his queen Ganga Mahadevi instituted *Gaṅgānārasimhabhōga* to the god for the prosperity and longevity of her husband. To maintain this service she gifted some villages and a few articles like *sahasradhāra*, lamp-stands etc., to the temple. It further states that Janardhana senapati who was the *bhōga-pariksha* of this *bhōga*, provided for music, dance and chanting *Puruṣasūkta* during the conduct of the *bhōga*⁵¹. Another epigraph of the same king, dated three years later (1353 A.D.), records that the same queen provided for the recital of the *purāṇa* every day during the *Gaṅgānārasimhabhōga* by remitting 52 *gaṇḍa-māḍas* as principal amount into the temple treasury⁵². Another inscription, dated 1379 A.D., records the gift of a piece of land by the same king to one Umadevi who was to serve the Lord in the conduct of *Gaṅgānārasimhabhōga*⁵³.

ARJUNABHŌGA :

Arjunadeva, the Oddavadi chief instituted a *bhōga* in his name to be offered daily in the evening to the god. An inscription, dated 1369 A.D , records the gift of 10 *puttis* of land for food offerings to the god during this *bhōga*⁵⁴ Another inscription belonging to the same king and dated 1381 A D , records that the king endowed 300 cows for providing 10 *kumchas* of milk daily to the god at the time of *sejja-avasara* It is stipulated that 30 *kumchas* of milk should be so boiled that the quantity would be reduced to 10 *kumchas* This service was to be offered to the god under the name of the king as *Arjunabhōga* and after the completion of the *Narasimhabhōga* The king further remitted 40 *mādas* into the temple treasury for providing sugar and a milk vessel⁵⁵

KHANḌADHARĀ KOLUPU :

An inscription belonging to the king Viranarasimhadeva, dated 1380 A D , records the institution of a service called *Khanḍadharā kolupu* to be offered daily during both the *dhūpas* To maintain this service everyday the king appointed one Narayana *Jiyana* who was a *Kalīṅga-parikṣhā*. From the inscription it is clear that food offerings were to be made during this *bhōga*⁵⁶

UTTAMAMAHĀDEVIBHŌGA :

An inscription belonging to the king Pratapa Viranarasimhadeva, dated 1394 A D , records that his queen Uttamadevi instituted a *bhōga* to the god Narasimha in her name This *bhōga* was to be conducted daily after the completion of morning *dhūpa* To maintain this *bhōga* the queen gifted a village after purchasing it from Somanathabhatta who received it earlier from the king She further gifted 85 *mādas* for providing food-offerings and

other requirements of services, etc⁵⁷. In the same year she made arrangements for curd-offerings to the god in this *bhōga*. It further states that these offerings were entrusted to the acharya valalaru Tammaya⁵⁸. In 1396 A.D., the queen made arrangements for waving *chāmara* and providing *ghee* for making sweet cakes to be offered in the *bhōga*⁵⁹.

NISSANKABHĀNUBHŌGA :

An inscription, dated 1417 A.D., records that a *Kalinga-pariksha* of the king Gajapati Pratāpa Nissankabhānudeva instituted a *bhōga*-called *Nissankabhānubhōga* after the king's name for his (king's) prosperity and longevity⁶⁰. This *bhōga* was offered to the god daily after the completion of *tirumanjāna*. To maintain this *bhōga* he gifted two villages, out of the income of which food-offerings, etc., were to be provided. The *Narasimhakavacha* which deals with the origin and evolution of the *avatāra* of Narasimha and the *Narasimha-purāna* were to be recited during the conduct of the *bhōga*.

Apart from the special offerings instituted by the kings and chiefs to the god Simhādrinātha after their names some others also instituted several *bhōgas* to be offered daily to the god but without calling them specifically after their (donors) names. Three inscriptions of 14th century dated 1389 A.D., record that Birujadevi, Taradevi and Niladevi, the grand-mother, the mother and the queen of Gajapati Sri Viranarasimhadeva respectively instituted *bhōgas* separately to be offered daily to the god⁶¹. Another inscription of the same year records that the *rāyaguru* *Uttama-mahāpātra* also instituted a *bhōga* to be offered daily to the god⁶². It is evident from the inscriptions that portions of half of the village, Pinagandi, was purchased by the donors and were gifted to the temple for maintaining the respective *bhōgas*. The endowments were made on the first, the fifth, the seventh and the eleventh days of the dark fortnight of the month of phalguna in the Śaka year 1311.

It is evident from the foregoing discussion that some special offerings were instituted by the kings, the queens and chiefs. The most interesting aspect of these special offerings is that they were named after them. The best examples of this type are *Viranarasimhabhōga*, *Gangānarasimhabhōga*, *Arjunabhōga*, *Uttamamahādevi-bhōga* etc. This *bhōga*, apart from having a religious significance, had a sociological importance. That is naming the *bhōga* after the donor. This type of practice was introduced in medieval Andhra by Eastern Chālukyās of Vēṅgi⁶³, the Kākatiyas of Warangal⁶⁴ and the Reddis of Kōṇḍavidu, Addanki and Rajamundry⁶⁵. Another important thing is that the donors who instituted special offerings also showed unwillingness to name the offering after them. This is evident from three inscriptions found in the temple. Besides all the donors who were responsible for the introduction of these special offerings, took sufficient care and caution for the successful conduct of the special offerings by granting the required financial assistance and also by instituting special officers to supervise the conduct of the special offerings during the course of their execution.

WORSHIP IN OTHER SHRINES :

Simultaneously with the proceedings in the main shrine of Narasimha the worship was conducted in the other shrines situated in the neighbourhood of the main temple complex. Fairly a good number of inscriptions record the gifts made for providing food offerings to the *Parivāra-devatas*, i.e., the ancillary deities. An inscription, dated 1360 A.D., records the gift made by Dharmasāhasamalla, a *Kāṭiāga-parikṣha* for maintaining a perpetual lamp in the presence of the god Yajnavarahadeva. He further gifted 18 more *gaṇḍa-mādas* for providing food-offerings and other services to the same god⁶⁶. The actual location of this deity is not specified in the inscription. Another inscription, dated 1472 A.D., records

the gift of 300 *tankas* for the worship of the ancillary deities like Achaṇḍa, Prachaṇḍa and Garuda who were described as *tiruchuttumālī devuḷḷu*-subsidiary deities⁶⁷ A third inscription, dated 1535 A D., records that one Kurma *mudali* consecrated the image of Hanuman at Bhairavadvāra and made provision for his worship⁶⁸ Finally an undated inscription records the gift of five *māḍas* for the worship of the god *tripurāntakadeva* both morning and evening⁶⁹.

The ritual performances of the Lord reveals that the Lord's daily activities were similar to those performed by a grown-up dignified personage whose needs are to be attended to, in the most befitting manner. As a result, the various ritual services rendered were symbolic of those received by an adult from his near and dear Accordingly the Lord is awakened from sleep by singing certain hymns that address, then bathed, adorned and served with food and again put to repose at certain hours These are parallel to the activities of a human (or) royal personage They are personal and intimate in terms of human life. They reflect virtually the social impact of the age on the domain of the ritual world

The long process of rendering services to the Lord is symbolic of its counterpart, adopted in Vaikuṇṭha, the abode of Lord Vishṇu In Vaikuṇṭha it starts with the awakening of the Lord with the help of the recitation of specific hymns to produce sweet and sonorous music. The next process of rendering the services to the Lord is symbolic of how water is offered to the Lord to complete his ablutions and how light refreshments in the form of milk and its preparations are offered to the Lord in the mornings The noon and the afternoon offerings consist of a large variety of sumptuous dishes prepared out of rich and delicious food

It is evident that all the daily rituals performed to the Lord in Vaikuṇṭha and the pomp and pomposity attendant on it were observed by the kings and their admirers in the

period of under our study. This is the *śamantas* used to show their veneration and respect towards their over Lord by offering the same ritual that was offered to the Lord Viṣṇu in Vaiṣṇava. This has a political significance in that it is similar to the ritual worship offered to the mortal kings of the period under review. It is interesting to note in this connection that the deification of the king and the constructing shrines for the images of the deceased kings were started by the Chōlas in the Sangam age. The same custom was followed by the Chōla emperors in the medieval history of South India⁷⁰ It is likely that this tradition was followed by the earlier and also the later Eastern Ganga and the Gajapati rulers of Kāṇṇa.

II. FESTIVALS :

The conduct of the daily proceedings differs naturally from the special festivals of the Lord. The celebration of the festivals has been an important and attractive feature of the functioning of the temple. It enhanced the popularity and sanctity of the temple. Most of the donations made to the Simhachalam temple relate to this aspect and indicate its importance. Consequently the temple attracted a large number of devotees even from far-off places and thus became an important centre of pilgrimage. Probably there had been no day without the celebration of some festival or other and special offerings being made in the temple. In fact except one or two like Kumarapunnami, almost all the festivals are celebrated with pomp and grandeur even today

The festivals conducted in the temples are generally known by the name *utsava* or *tirunāl*. The '*utsavās*' of the temple are many. They are divided into two categories viz., the basic festivals connected with the ritual of the temple-worship which are enjoined by the *śāstras* and *āgamas* and some auxiliary festivals according to the nature of the establishment or the endowment by devotees etc. The

Kalyāṇotsava, *Chandanayatra* and certain others have the sanction of ancient texts, while the *dhanurmāsotsavas* and *Kāmadahana utsava* etc., are the auxiliary festivals. Apart from the annual festivals, there are a number of minor festivals conducted in the temple described as *vārotsavas* (weekly festivals) *pakshotavas* (fortnightly festivals) and *māsotsavas* (monthly festivals) These are generally performed in the afternoon

In general, the god on festival days, is adorned with precious and attractive jewellery and offered worship. The *utsavamūrti* (the processional idol) bedecked with valuable jewels and mounted on various kinds of vehicles on different days, is taken out in procession around the temple. On such occasions one can see a blending of deep devotion and joy in the pilgrims

A brief account of the festivals celebrated in the temple over the centuries is given below. These festivals which are referred to in the inscriptions are arranged below in an alphabetical order

CHANDANŌTŚAVAMU :

Chandana utsava falls on the third day of the bright fortnight of the lunar month Vaiśākha (akshaya-tritiya) (corresponding to April-May). It is the most important festival in the Simhāchalam temple and is popularly known as *Chandanayatra*. The special exposition of the Lord Vishnu takes place on the day every year and it is believed to be one of the days specially favoured by Lord Vishnu.

During the rest of the year the deity is completely covered with sandalwood paste ostensibly to contain the ferocity (*ugrartāpam*) of the Lord. So, this day is thus chosen for the celebration of the festival connected with the sandalwood paste of the image. The sandalwood paste that

covers the deity is removed in the early hours of the morning (around 4 a.m.). The doors of the sanctum sanctorum are thrown open to public to see the Lord's '*nijarūpa*'. The image, as it appears on *Chandanotsava* day is made out of a block stone about 2½ feet in height with a crude form of the face of a boar, the tail of the lion and two hands. There is neither ornamentation nor drapery. The limbs are not distinct. The legs have no feet and hands are devoid of palms. Even the boar face and the tail are not distinct. It appears that as though a limestone cut crudely to give the outline of the human torso. This form is called, Varāhanarasimha. This *nijarūpa* (original image) which is open to view on this day, differs from all other Vishnu forms. Nowhere else in India we can find an image of Vishnu completely covered with the sandalwood paste so as to impart to it the shape of a *linga*.

The festival was observed elaborately even in ancient days. The kings, their subordinates and the common people had greatly contributed to the Simhāchalam temple by their liberal gifts for the celebration of this particular day. We have at least 40 inscriptions which record the gifts made on this auspicious occasion by the devotees. An inscription, dated 1281 A.D., registers the gift of two villages on the occasion of *akshaya tritiya day-chandanotsava*, for the food offerings to the god Narasimha⁷¹. Another inscription, dated 1293 A.D., records the gift of two *gaṇḍa-mādas* for providing food offerings to the god on *akshaya tritiya* day by a certain Vallabha *nambyālu*⁷².

EKADASI UTSAVAS :

As is well known, the 11th day of both the former and the latter fortnights, is very auspicious especially for the Vaishnavas. These are called *Pakshotsavams*. They take place when an auspicious asterism appears on that particular day. Fairly a good number of inscriptions from Simhāchalam

record the gifts for conducting worship and food offerings to the god Narasimha on the *ekādasi* day. One of the inscriptions, dated 1226 A.D., records that Gangadevi, the queen of Bayyaraju, a Biragottapu chief, gifted 4 *puppis* of land for various offerings like *naivedya*, *chandana*, *karpura*, *viḍiḍya* and lighting of lamps to the god Narasimha on every *śukla ekādasi* day (*Sri Narasimha devaraku māsam prati śukla ekādasi utsvamuna*)⁷³. Another inscription, dated 1249 A.D., (damaged) mentions the gift made for offering *naivedya*, *karpura*, *appālu*, flowers and other articles on the *ekādasi utsava*⁷⁴.

Of the *ekādasis* the *Jalasyana ekādasi* is considered to be very auspicious. It is considered that Lord Vishnu retires to sleep during the rainy season which lasts for four months. This sleep commences on the 11th day of the former fortnight of the lunar month *Aśvadhā* and ends on the 12th day of the former fortnight of the lunar month *Kārttika*. Hence these two days, which are called the *śayana ekādasi* and the *utthana dvādasi* respectively are considered to be very auspicious. Generally liberal endowments were made on these days to attain religious merit. An inscription, dated 1198 A.D., states that one Malli Setti gifted 10 *tyāgi-mādas* for maintaining one perpetual lamp in the temple on the occasion of *Jalasyana ekādasi*⁷⁵. Another inscription, dated 1385 A.D., records the gift of 50 cows for providing *payasa* to the god in the morning offerings by a certain Ayyadevaraju. This gift was made on the *Kārttika-śukla-dvādasi*, which is *utthana-dvādasi*. However, the inscription does not mention the occasion as such⁷⁶.

GRĀMA PRADAKSHINA UTSAVA :

A solitary and damaged inscription of the temple, dated 1242 A.D., records that Purushottamanayaka made provision for celebrating the *grāma pradakṣhina utsava* to the god Narasimhadeva once in a year⁷⁷. It appears that the donor

deposited some money into the temple treasury for providing specified food-offerings, *tambula*, etc., to the god on this occasion. Though taking out the god around the village in procession is a common practice in temples, it is strange that we have only one reference to it in the Simhāchalam temple inscriptions. We know from the Śrīkūrmam temple inscriptions that provision was made by many devotees for celebrating the *grāma pradakṣiṇa utsava* of the god Śrīkūrmanātha on various occasions including the days on which the natal stars of the donor fell⁷⁸. It was believed that *grāma pradakṣiṇa* of the deity would bring prosperity to the village and also to the inmates from the ancient times and it was followed in the medieval and modern times

GRAHAṆAKĀLAS :

The days on which the solar and lunar eclipses occur are considered to be very auspicious and it is believed that by making gifts on such occasions the donor earns immense religious merit. We have a number of inscriptions in the Simhāchalam temple which record the endowments made by the devotees on these occasions⁷⁹. This practice is noticed not only in the inscriptions that are found in the Simhāchalam temple but also referred to prominently in the inscriptions found in various other temples.

JANMAŚHTAMI :

The eighth day of the dark fortnight of the month Śrāvaṇa is *Janmāṣṭami*. It is on this day that Lord Krishna was born and hence it came to be known as *Kṛṣṇa-janmāṣṭmi* or *Janmāṣṭami*. This festival is celebrated with pomp and grandeur in all the Vaishnava temples in the country. We have an epigraphical evidence to show that gifts were made to celebrate this festival for centuries. An inscription, dated 1233 A.D., records that 100 cows were gifted for providing milk, probably of 10 *kumchas*, to the

god Narasimha from that year's Janmashtami day onwards. Since this inscription is damaged, other details are not clear⁸⁰

KALYANOTSAVA :

At the outset, it may be noted that none of the inscriptions from the Simhachalam temple, mentions this *utsava*. This festival occurs on the 11th day in the first half of the lunar month Chaitra. K. Sundaram gives detailed account of this festival as it is celebrated even in the present time. This festival like any other *Mahotsavas* commences with the hoisting of the *Garuda dhvaja*. Interestingly, one of the inscriptions from Simhachalam (1401 A.D.) records the gift of a *Garudārohana kamba* for celebrating the *divyamahotsavas*. It is significant that the endowment was made on the 5th day of the bright fortnight of the month Chaitra⁸¹. This definitely suggests that the *Kalyanotsava* of the god was being celebrated much earlier than that date and it had come to stay, after a long period of observance by them.

K. Sundaram observes that "the festival starts on the 11th day (*ekādasi*) and extends over a period of 5 days, i.e., from *ekādasi* to the fullmoon day (*purnami*). This can be described as the *mahotsava* of the temple, since it includes the principal items in the procedure adopted in *mahotsavas* celebrated in most of the temples of South India. These are sowing of seeds (*ankurārpana*), hoisting of flag (*dhvajārohana*), pleasure ride of the Lord on chariot (*rathotsava*), purification ceremony (*avabriti*), rewarding a devotee (*bhaktotsava*) and putting the Lord to bed (*śayanaseva*). As the name indicates, this ceremony celebrates the *kalyāṇa* of the Lord and thus resembles the wedding that one sees in Hindu families". Due to the non-availability of the epigraphical information it is

not possible to know how the *kalyāṇotsava* was performed in the earlier days⁸²

KARTTIKA DIPĀVALI :

Dipāvali literally means a congregation of lights. It is one of the main festivals of the Hindus celebrated in the month of *Kārttika*. So it is popularly known as *Kārttika-dipāvali*. On this occasion the temples are decorated with innumerable lamps in a grant array at once captivating. A couple of inscriptions from the temple record the gifts of lamps made to the temple. Firstly, an inscription, dated 1270 A D , records that one Chittana Gopala set up two *akhaṇḍadīpas* in the Simhādri temple on the occasion of *Kārttika-dipāvali*. He also gifted fifty cows and two lamp-stands for perpetuation of the above lamps⁸³. Another inscription of 1278 A D , records that one Allāḍa-nayaka, son of Draviḍa *Perumālu* gifted 47 cows for maintaining one *akhaṇḍadīpa* in the temple on the same occasion⁸⁴. No other epigraphical evidence is coming forth to show the performance of this festival in the Simhācalam temple.

KUMĀRA PUNNAMI :

The celebration of the festival *Kumāra punnami* in the Simhāchalam temple is referred to, in a lone inscription, dated 1298 A D ⁸⁵. It records that food offerings were made to the Lord in the night of *Kumāra punnami* day. As evidenced by this inscription and also another record from Srikūrmam, we know that this festival is celebrated on the 15th day of the bright fortnight of the lunar month *Bhādrapada*⁸⁶. However, we have no details to show how this festival is celebrated in the Simhāchalam temple. As mentioned above, this festival is not celebrated in the modern times. We have also no evidence to know when the celebration of this festival was discontinued.

NARASIMHA JAYANTI :

It is well known that Lord Vishnu manifested himself as Narasimha at the time of evening twilight (*sayamsandhya*) on the 14th day of bright fortnight of the *Vaiśākha* month and killed the demon Hiranyakasipu by tearing open his stomach and disembowelling and cutting his intestines in order to dare Prahlada from his murderous father. Hence, even today the Narasimha Jayanti is celebrated in the evening of *Vaiśākha śukla chaturdasi*. The special feature of this festival is that it was conducted as part of the evening ritual of the Lord in a specially decorated assembly hall. The proceedings of the morning rituals are as usual, but the 'rājabhōga' is omitted and postponed to the evening. The evening ritual starts at about 6 p.m. and is essentially the same as the daily *archana* upto the time of the sacred bath. Then, a respite is given to the course of ritual during which readings from the particular chapter of the *Kshetramśatmya* which deals with the genesis of the Lord's incarnation, are made. This is followed by the usual last phase of the ritual, namely, the offering of *dīpa-dhūpa and naivedya*⁸⁷.

We have epigraphical evidence to show that gifts were made to celebrate this festival in the temple. An inscription, dated 1287 A.D., records that Raghavanayaka and his grandson made arrangements for food-offerings to the god on this occasion⁸⁸. Another inscription, dated 1356 A.D., records the gift of 20 *ganda-mādas* for daily food offerings to the god. This gift was made on *Vaiśākha-śukla-Chaturdasi* i.e., *Jayantimahōtsava* day⁸⁹.

SAṆKRAMANAS :

The Sankramana festival corresponds to the movement of the Sun in the heaven. The day on which the Sun enters each *rāśi* or division of the zodiac is considered an auspicious occasion and is celebrated in all the temples. Of these, the

Makara-Sankranti and the *Kartika-Sankranti* corresponding to the *Uttarayana* and *Dakshinayana punya kalas*, are specially observed universally. *Vishnu-Sankranti*, corresponding to the vernal and autumnal equinoxes are less important. A good number of inscriptions of the temple record the gifts made for this occasions and many devotees made gifts on these occasions to earn religious merit. One of the inscriptions, dated 1269 A.D., records that Oddavadi Arjunadevaraju gifted 75 cows for burning one lamp on the occasion of *Vishu-Sankranti*. It further records that he also made provision for supplying camphor for this occasion⁹⁰. Another inscription, dated 1417 A.d., mentions the provision for supplying pots to the *Sankranti* festival⁹¹. A good number of inscriptions record the gifts made on this occasion. Though the *Sankrantis* other than the *Makara* and the *Karkataka* are also considered as auspicious occasions, the number of endowments made on these occasions is comparatively few. The reason for this is that far greater significance is attached only to the *Makara* and *Karkataka-Sankramapas*. Endowments were made on these occasions by devotees for the religious merit of their parents, overlords and others who were near and dear to them. Offerings were also made by people for their own merit.

STAR FESTIVALS (NAKSHATRA UTSAVAS) :

The monthly star festivals signify the special festivals conducted in honour of the Lord on a certain day in a month on which an auspicious star (*subhanakshatram*) appears. According to tradition there are 27 stars, each with a name. Not all these stars are considered auspicious. Only some of them are regarded auspicious. They are *Mrigasira* (head of Orion), *Punarvasu* (part of Gemini), *Uttara* (part of Andromeda) and *Shravana* (part of Aquila). Therefore, the Vaishnavites consider these four stars the most auspicious and celebrate festivals in their honour in the temples. We

have a lone reference to the *nakshatra-uttsavas* in the inscriptions. An inscription, dated 1220 A.D., records that *Srinarasimha mahamuni* made arrangements for food-offerings to be offered on the occasion of *uttara phalguni nakshatra*. It states that the food-offering were to be made after the conclusion of the procession of the god around the village³².

These are only the festivals referred to in the inscriptions of the temple. Apart from these festivals the other festivals like *Adhyayanotsava*, *Dhanurmasotsava*, *Uplottsava*, *Navaratri utsava*, *Makaraveja*, *Dotsava*, *Kamadahana utsava* etc., are the other important festivals that were celebrated in the Simhachalam temple. But none of the inscriptions refer to these festivals.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RITUALS AND FESTIVALS:

The daily, weekly, fortnightly, monthly and annual performances and festivals were conducted in honour of Lord *Varāhanarasimha* may be understood in terms of their with reference to universal welfare, devotion to divine worship, religious symbolism, reverential spectacular, social integration, educational importance and regulation of correspondence between great and little traditions of the Hindu civilization

Firstly, the performance of the rituals and festivals conducted in honour of the Lord are meant for the material and spiritual well-being of the devoted and the welfare (*yogakshemam*) of all humanbeings. This reveals the functional significance of the performances.

Secondly, the festivals and rituals conducted in the temple under our study, have an impact on the pilgrims, who celebrate and participate in them actively. In the first instance, it enlightens them as to the metaphysical and the mystical

significance of these rituals and ceremonies. In the second instance it will help to remodel the life of an individual according to the Hindu concept of *dharma-ārtha-kāma-moksha*. It also enhances the devotional tone of the devotees. The devotee of the worship is the principal player in the drama of rituals and ceremonies. He requires total dedication, concentration and surrender to the god with utmost devotion and reverence without expecting any thing in return materialistically. This ultimately paves the way for the development of worship on the lines of *bhakti-mārga*.

Thirdly, the rituals and festivals conducted in the Sindhāchalam temple complex will give opportunity to the devout pilgrims to know about the significance, the meaning, the character and the ritualistic aspects of the rituals and festivals. Besides, the rituals and festivals normally influence the devotees spiritually and resultant effect of which would be that they will develop spiritual attachment to the deity. A sense of sacrifice and dedication they develop not only towards the god but also towards the fellow-humanbeings. That this festivals and rituals have had humanitarian importance and value is without doubt. Besides, they also reveal the symbolic and spiritual significance of their performances.

Fourthly, most of the rituals and festivals were celebrated with pomp and splendour through various types of offerings, the use of ornaments and finally, the utilisation of the temple paraphernalia is normally found to occupy a position of paramount importance and interest. The nature or the way of celebrating rituals and festivals has become a centre of attraction to the people at large and the devotees in particular. Thus, people belonging to different castes, customs and traditions used to flock around the temple complex at Sindhāchalam. This fact has a sociological significance in that it paves the way and facilitates a special impetus for the

development of social mobility It is likely that these rituals and festivals might have promoted social equality, in the first instance in the presence of the god and later as a society This might to the most potential reason for the absence of socio-economic tensions during the period under our consideration This is very well attested by the epigraphs and literary works of that time

In conclusion we may state that the temples in general and the rituals performed in the Simhachalam temple complex in particular, reflect or reveal a combination and an accommodation of some great and small traditional elements, characteristic of the Hindu civilization of India. The main temple and the main god housed in the sanctum sanctorum represent the great tradition. The main temple is surrounded by many subsidiary temples for the accommodation of the *parivṛatadevatas* or subsidiary deities. This aspect clearly reveals a harmonious combination and a judicious compromise of the traditions, referred to above.

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- 92 *Ibid.*, No 1167

PATTERN OF DONATIONS AND TEMPLE ECONOMY

WE have discussed so far the rituals and festivals conducted in the Varāhanarasimha temple at Simhāchalam. In this connection the nature, the course, the mythological background, the mode of performances and the ultimate significance of them are elaborated. The organisation of the temple requires economic subsistence. In this context the pilgrims and devotees contributed their mite in donating various things they could afford. These donations are discussed at length in this chapter. In this connection the donors, the nature of the donation, the purpose for which the donation was made and the ultimate importance of it, are evaluated critically.

The construction of a temple and the installation of deities were considered to be of religious merit and the help rendered for the maintenance of the temple and the conduct of various items of the services therein, was deemed to fetch greater merit. Through the help of liberal donations made by the devotees from time to time, various services were maintained in the temple without any interruption. These

donations were in various forms, either in kind or in cash. Grants made in kind or cash provided a continuous income to the temple. In this context we may note that whenever a grant was made in the form of money, the gifted amount was deposited in the temple treasury and only the interest accruing from it, was utilised for maintaining the services for which it was granted. Inscriptions found in the various parts of the Simhachalam temple *ranging in dates from the 11th to the 18th centuries*, contain numerous instances of a variety of gifts made by kings, queens, chiefs, their family members, ministers, merchants, the rich and the common people. In all the instances the endowments have been made with a stipulation that the gifts were to be invested by the temple and a particular service or *seva* should be performed in the name of the donor. The most substantial gift was of villages and land. Kings and his subordinates gifted groups of villages, while others gifted individual villages, parts of villages or plots of land as *vriddis*. The variety of gifts included gardens for growing flowers, vegetables and betel-leaves. Another important form of donation was the gift of coins of several kinds like *māṣa*, *chinnam*, *nishka*, *ṣaṅka*, *gadya* etc. Yet another variety of gift mostly made by the well-to-do, was the donation of ornaments for adorning the deity. This included gold as well as gold dust for several purposes. The requirements of worship like perfumes, flowers as well as *tulaśī* garlands for decoration of the deity. *Vinjanaras* or *chamaras*, utensils, holdings of offerings were also provided by the donor devotees. The most popular form of gift was the gift of a lamp to be lighted either daily or on particular occasions. This often included the gift of lamp-stands of different metals and shapes. Cows, sheep, goats and buffaloes were gifted for the supply of ghee for the burning of the lamps and for food-preparations.

OCCASIONS AND PURPOSES FOR MAKING GRANTS:

The king used to make grants to the temple on the day of his coronation, at the time of his leading an expedition, on the occasion of victory in the battle, at the request of others and at the time of construction of the temple and installation of images. For example, in 1516 A.D., the famous Vijayanagara king Krishnadevarāya invaded the Kalinga region in one of his military campaigns and captured the forts of Udayagiri, Konḍavidu, Konḍapalli and Rājamahendravaram. On the way he visited the Simhāchalam temple and gifted jewels, pearls and coins to the god Narasimhadeva for the merit of his father and mother¹. Another inscription, dated 1268 A.D., records that the Ganga king, Śrī Viranarasimhadeva constructed *śrīvimāna*, *mukhamandapa*, *nāyamaṇḍapa* and *tiruchupumāla* and made arrangements to the temple for the worship of god on this occasion². A number of inscriptions of the temple register the gifts made by the kings of various dynasties on specific occasions. The main object of making these grants and gifts was for the benefit of his own merit, for the merit of their respective parents and for one's own long life, health and wealth.

As for the occasions for making grants by the chiefs, the ministers and other rich and poor individuals, it all depended upon their degree of fulfilment of vows made. Generally, the chiefs and the ministers used to make grants on the occasion of regnal years of the ruling king for the benefit of the king's health, wealth and universal peace. The rich and the poor made grants to the temple on important occasions like the celebration of the religious festivals viz., *Sankrāntis*, *Ekādasīs*, *Tritīyas* and other auspicious days. In addition to all the above occasions the most common occasion on which various donors made grants to the temple were the eclipses of the Sun and the Moon. The main object of making these grants was to invoke the blessings of the deities at the

time of the beginning of any work and for the successful completion of the same or for favours from the deities here on the earth and in the heaven or to attain *moksha*. Generally, the donors aspired for merit, for themselves or to their dead ancestors or for their children, their masters and overlords in making these grants.

In the following pages a brief account of the various donations made to the Simhachalam temple is given. It also includes the various items of income and expenditure of the temple referred to, in the inscriptions.

I. DONATION IN CASH :

Many inscriptions from the Simhachalam temple reveal the money grants made to the temple by various categories of the donor including the kings for maintaining different services. In this context we may note that whenever a grant was made in the form of money the gift amount was deposited in the temple treasury (*tribhaptara*) and only the interest accruing from it was utilised for maintaining the services for which it was granted. In some instances it is observed that money grants were also deposited with the private persons, other than the temple authorities for providing some specific services in the temple³.

PURPOSES OF CASH ENDOWMENTS :

(a) *Food Offerings* : A large majority of money grants were made to the temple for making food-offerings of various kinds to the deities daily. For example, an inscription dated 1273 A.D., records that a certain Purushottama *Pradhani* gifted 700 *malla-māḍas* for offering a *naivedya* daily in the morning to the god Narasimha (*Dina pratinitya pradhamavasara naivedya*)⁴. This offering consisted of 2 *pappu naivedya*, 5 *appāḥu*, 3 *naivedyas* to *Garuḍadeva*, 20 *hanavali appāḥu* and 2 *pappu naivedyas* for midnight offering and 40 *karpura vidīyāḥu*, 4 *kunchas* of ghee to the perpetual

pumps to be burnt during the time of this offering. Again it states that this *prasāda* was entrusted to the priests of the temple for conducting the worship, etc. Another record of 1406 A.D., mentions that Pārvatimahādevi, the queen of Pratapa Gajapati Viranarasimhadeva instituted a *bhōga* to the god. For this purpose she paid 300 *malla-mādas* into the *Kaṇka-bhaṇḍāra* and purchased a village Mummādivada and gave it away to the temple for providing offerings to the above said *bhōga*. This *bhōga* was offered to the god before the *paścāṃṣṭa* service daily⁵. Another important inscription of 1475 A.D., states that Gajapati Pratapa Purushottama Devaraja granted the tax income of 300 *saskani-tankas* collected at the rate of 25 *saskani-tankas* per month for conducting a certain *bhōga* to the deities enshrined in the *śrīcāyanaśrī* of the temple⁶. This *bhōga* consisted of 5 *plantains*, 20 flowers and 5 *tulasi garlands* apart from other dishes and sweet beverages. In 1391 A.D., a certain individual gifted 20 *gaṇḍa-mādas* for the supply of 36 *puṭṭis* of paddy and 2 *puṭṭis* 8 *tanus* of green gram for preparing food offerings to the god at the time of morning worship⁷. The offering of *tambala* after *nāivedya* was also provided by the donors through money investments. This is attested by an inscription dated 1365 A.D. It records that Oddavadi Bhimana preggada gifted 60 *gaṇḍa-mādas* into the temple treasury for providing *karpūra viḍiṭya* daily in the evening *dhāpa* session⁸. In all the above instances the grants were made to the temple for providing specific offerings to the god daily. In some instances money grants were made to the temple for providing *nāivedya* to the god on special occasions only. In 1275 A.D., a certain Vallabhanambyalu gifted 2 *gaṇḍa-mādas* for food offerings to be made on *akshaya tritīya* day to the god on every year⁹. He gifted another *māda* for offering *chandana*, *karpūra* on this occasion. Another inscription of 1284 A.D., states that a certain Raghavanayaka gifted *gaṇḍa-mādas* for providing *nāivedya* to the god on the occasion of *Srījayanti*¹⁰.

(b) *Maintenance of Perpetual Lamps* : Most of the cash gifts were intended for providing ghee to the perpetual lamps and for purchasing lampstands. As stated above, the gift money was treated as principal amount and the interest accruing from it alone was spent for maintaining the service fixed by the donor. For example a record, dated 1340 A.D., states that a woman Kanakadhara Vuyyamma, daughter of Talla Tiruvadārayudu, gifted 12 *ganḍa mādas* to the *Śrībandāra* for maintaining one *akhaṇḍadīpa* in the temple daily¹¹. Another inscription, dated 1403 A.D., records that a certain *Kalīṅga parikṣha* gifted 40 *ganḍa mādas* to the temple treasury for providing ghee to one perpetual lamp. It further states that he gifted another 20 *ganḍa mādas* to a person for supplying 7 *kumbhas* of ghee, a month to the temple¹². Yet another inscription, dated in 1454 A.D., records the gift of 100 *saskāni-tankas* by an individual for supplying 7½ *tumus* of ghee a month at the rate of an *aḍḍa* ghee a day for burning one lamp in the temple¹³. Finally, a record dated 1472 A.D., registers the gift of 180 *saskāni tankas* by one Renimallu for supplying the same quantity of ghee for a similar purpose¹⁴.

These are only a few of the many examples of cash endowments made for maintaining *akhaṇḍadīpas*. In a good number of instances money was also paid for purchasing lampstands. In such cases the amount paid varied, depending upon the size of the lampstand and the type of metal used for it. For example an inscription, dated 1416 A.D., specifies that 5 silver *tankas* were paid into the temple treasury towards the cost of a *dīpa-pratimā* by a certain Guru-mahāsenāpati¹⁵. Another inscription, dated 1375 A.D., records the gift of 20 *ganḍa-mādas* being the cost of *dīpa-pratimā*¹⁶.

A close study of the available data shows that there were no hard and fast rules about the amount of cash to be endowed to the temple for maintaining a lamp. Obviously whenever the money, more than the required amount to the temple for this purpose was paid, the excess amount was

utilised by the temple authorities for different purposes. In fact we have a few inscriptions which record that the money gifted for burning a lamp was utilised for developing the irrigation facilities of the temple lands. In such cases the temple authorities themselves took the responsibility of maintaining *akhaṇḍadīpas* as stipulated by the donor. An inscription, dated 1207 A.D., records that one Srīrama bhātopadhyaya gifted 10 *braṅgoṭṭapu-gadya-māḍalu* for maintaining the *akhaṇḍadīpa* in the temple and the same money was invested for deepening a tank at Duttada. It further states that one *puṭṭi* and 5 *tāmus* of land, irrigated by the aforesaid tank water, was set apart and out of the income from it, one *mana* of ghee was supplied daily to the temple for maintaining the *akhaṇḍadīpa* set up by the donor¹⁷. In this context it may be recalled that a large number of inscriptions from Tirumala and Tirupati attest to the fact that the money paid for maintaining different services was utilised either for excavating new tanks or for repairing the existing ones, to better the irrigation facilities to the temple lands¹⁸.

(c) *Maintaining Servants and Services* : The temple received many cash gifts for feeding its staff, as well as for maintaining different services instituted by the donor. For example an inscription, dated 1375 A.D., records that Appabayyama Devi gifted 10 *māḍas* to the temple treasury for sharing 2 *kumchas* of *prāsāda* to a *sāni* who was to perform the *viñjamaraseva* to the god and for supplying a *tulāsi* garland daily¹⁹. Another inscription of 1400 A.D., records the gift of 10 *māḍas* to the treasury for providing 2 *kumchas* of *prasāda* to two *sānis* for waving fly whisks in presence of the Lord during both the *sandhyas*²⁰. Yet another record of 1378 A.D., registers the gift of 25 *gāṇḍa-māḍas* by a certain *mahāsenāpati* for 5 *kumchas* of *prasāda* entrusted to five *nayakas* (each *nibandha* to one person) for doing services like the umbrella service (*Goḍavupaṇṇu*), torch bearing, (*Dīvyakola*) *śṛvaṇṇa*, water supply and for providing

tirutomāla daily to the god²¹. And most of the gifts were intended for providing articles of worship, like garlands, requirements of *tirumatjanam*, lighting lamps, decoration of deity, etc.²².

The above instances clearly show that in the majority of cases the money grants were deposited in the temple treasury for sharing the *prasāda* from the temple and this *prasāda* was given to the persons for providing some specific service in the temple without interruption.

(d) *Maintenance of Auxiliary Institutions* : Money was also endowed to the temple for maintaining educational institutions, *mathas*, *satras* and free feeding houses attached to the temple. An important inscription of 1291 A.D., records that the minister of Narasimhadeva, the Eastern Ganga king, visited the Simhachalam temple as *Kaliagade tapariksā* and made the gift of 140 *ganḍa-mādas* for maintaining the following charities²³.

1. Gift of golden necklace studded with diamonds.
2. One big bronze plate, five dishes, one big brass vessel, two copper pots and one *nibandha* for bringing water once with these copper pots (*Jalakamu oka kavaḍi techchupaku*).
3. Three *nibandhas* for two *ghaṭṭisāsi brāhmanas* who were to teach *kāṇḍava* and *Taittiriya śāstras* and another five *nibandhas* to three *brāhmaṇa* scholars who were to teach *purāṇa*, *kāvya*, *nāṭaka*, *vysthāraṇa*, *alankāra* and *abhidhāna*.
4. One *nibandha* for the head of the free feeding house attached to the temple and one *nibandha* for the attendant of the *matha*.
5. Two *nibandhas* for two musicians and four *sauts* who were to sing the *maṅgalagānas* both in the morning and the evening.

Two *nibandhas* for two *brāhmaṇas* who were to offer *naivedya* daily prepared with one *tumu* of rice to the god Vaikuṇṭhanātha set up on the north *śikhara* of Sindhagiri.

Laying a garden and providing twenty four *nibandhas* to the temple servants numbering six, who were to fetch vegetables to the free feeding house and garlands to the temple.

Grant of land for offering to the god Yajñavarāhadēva and construction of a *maṭha* in which 30 *brāhmaṇas* were to be fed every day.

Gift of 12 *mādas* for supplying curd daily.

0. One *ganḍa-māda* each was given to the potters and for those who were supplying fuel (wood).
1. Two perpetual lamps with stands and 50 cows for their maintenance.

We have two more references of provision of money to the temple to promote *vedic* education. Of these two instances the latter is more interesting as can be seen in the sequel. The first one, dated 1383 A.D., records that a *śāhasenapati* purchased *prāsāda* measuring 3 or 4 *kuntchas* probably at the cost of 16 *mādas* and gifted the same to Oḍḍya eddibaṭṭlu for teaching *vedas*²⁴. The chief interest of the second inscription 1210 A.D., lies in the fact that the amount of 10 *tyāgi-mādas* gifted by one Narasimhanāyaka for maintaining a *veda-khaṇḍikā* was utilised for excavating a tank²⁵. This inscription further states that the produce of the land of one *puṭṭa* and five *tumus* in extent, which was irrigated by the above tank water, was utilised for offering *naivedya* consisting of 4 *kuntchas* of rice and other side dishes daily to the god Varāhanarasimha. This inscription proceeds to register that this food offering to the god was made to a teacher who was to teach *Yajurveda*. It is of interest to note

that the donor is stated to be wellversed in mathematics (*Gaṇita-Jñāna-Sampanna*). Though the donor was a master mathematician he donated the gift to a religious institution for the propagation of religious instruction. This shows that the secular and the sacerdotal learning received equal recognition and importance.

(e) *Celebration of Festivals* : One of the important activities in the temple was the celebration of a number of festivals. To meet their expenditure some devotees made provision by their money gifts. An inscription, dated 1287 A.D., records that one Purushottamanayaka gifted 2 *ganḍa-mādas* to the *Śrībandāra* for offering *naivedya* to god on the occasion of Srijayanti every year²⁶. In 1298 A.D., a certain Jihari *nayaka* gifted 2 *ganḍa-mādas* for offering *naivedya* to the god on the occasion of *Kumāra-purnamī*²⁷.

(f) *Recitation of Holy Texts* : Equal attention and importance was paid to the recitation of holy scriptures in the presence of the god daily and money grants were made for this purpose. An inscription, dated 1362 A.D., states that a certain Vajapeyajulu gifted 12 *mādas* into the temple treasury for reciting *puruṣasūkta* in the temple. It also registers another gift of 6 *mādas* for one *kumcha* of *prasāda* for bringing a water pot daily to the temple²⁸. In 1353 A.D., Gangadevi, the queen of Viranarasimhadeva, gifted 52 *ganḍa-mādas* into the temple treasury for providing 4 *kumchas* of *prasāda* every day and annual wages of 1 *māḍa* and 2 *chinnas* for reciting *purāṇa* every day at the time of Ganganarasimha *bhōga*²⁹. Another record of 1396 A.D., registers the gift of 5 *mādas* for providing one *kumcha* of *prasāda* to a person for reciting *viṣṇu stōtra* every day in the morning³⁰. A damaged inscription, dated 1337 A.D., records the gift of 2 *mādas* and 5 *chinnas* for singing *mangalagītas* in the presence of the Lord daily³¹.

(g) *The Maintenance of Dancers and Musicians* : Money was also endowed to the temple for the maintenance of dancers and musicians. An inscription dated 1453 A.D., records that one Pavadaraju *jiyana* gifted 10 *saskani-pakkas* to the temple treasury for providing a certain share in the *prasāda* to the *sānis* who were to perform dance and wave the fly whisks in the presence of the god³². Another inscription of 1435 A.D., records the gift of 8 *mādas* for one *buncha* of *prasāda* to be given to the musician for rendering *kankriana* in the presence of the Lord daily³³. A certain inscription, dated 1421 A.D., states that a *bhoga-pariksha* of Simhachalam temple made the gift of 20 silver *pakkas* for 1 *bunchas* of *prasāda* given to the temple musician named *Abhinava bharatacharya chappanam beyakara toqaramallu Ranganatha vaggeyakaru*³⁴.

(h) *Repairs and Renovations* : Devotees also made money grants specially for the renovation and repairs of the temple. An inscription, dated 1296 A.D., records the gift of 2 *gasāda-mādas* by one Peddinayaka apart from other arrangements for removing vegetation on the *śrīvimāna* of the temple³⁵. Another record, dated 1374 A.D., states the arrangements for the white-washing of the temple every year³⁶. And a good number of inscriptions record the endowments of money into the temple treasury for maintaining the temple servants like watchmen, sweepers, decorators, gardeners, cattle maintainers, potters and others³⁷. In some instances the money grants were also made to the temple for purchasing jewels, ornaments, vessels, etc.³⁸.

The foregoing evidences makes it clear that generally the money intended for maintaining dancers, musicians, singers and other servants, was deposited into the temple treasury and that the temple in turn gave a share in the *prasāda* as stipulated by the donor. Thus, only the interest accruing from the deposit was utilised for providing a share in the

prasāda without touching the principal amount. Obviously this strengthened the temple economically.

II. ENDOWMENT OF LANDS :

A large number of inscriptions, right from the 11th century onwards, records the endowment of different types of lands to the Varāhanarasimha temple at Sinhāchalam. Of all the gifts, gift of land is considered to be most meritorious. Obviously it is a permanent source of income. Even a cursory glance at the Sinhāchalam temple inscriptions reveal that the temple economically became very strong by the land endowments made over the centuries. The lands granted to the temple may be classified into wet land³⁹ dry land⁴⁰, *chavuka bhūmi*⁴¹ (saline soils), *vūdupu bhūmi*⁴² (land under active cultivation) and garden land⁴³. During the period under review the temple received the lands for various purposes for maintaining various services instituted by the donors like the food-offerings, wages to dancers, musicians and other servants. Land was also gifted to the temple for maintaining its cattle wealth, for raising gardens and for the cultivation of various crops required by the temple

A brief account of the land grants made to the temple for different purposes are discussed below. The earliest inscription of the temple, dated 1087 A.D., records the gift of a garden for the enjoyment of the Lord by a merchant of Penugonda⁴⁴. In 1268 A.D., a certain *senapati* of Śrī Viranarasimhadeva gifted one *puṣṭi* of land in the tank of Adivivaramu for raising a garden and appointed four *dāsaris* to cultivate the above land and for supplying different types of garlands daily. It further states that he gifted another 6 *puṣṭis* of land to the four gardeners and two garland makers for their subsistence. The above land was purchased at the cost of 45 *gaṇḍa-mādas* through the temple treasury invested by him. He further appointed a garden supervisor and gifted another 2 *puṣṭis* of land for his maintenance⁴⁵. Another

inscription of 1285 A.D., states that the Jantarunadu chief Gangaraju gifted 5 *ganḍa-mādas* to the temple treasury being the cost of 10 *tāmus* of land for raising a flower garden. Unlike in the instance above it is stipulated here that the donor himself would maintain the five gardeners⁴⁶.

The temple also received lands from the devotees for various purposes. An inscription, dated 1375 A.D., records that one Chennamanayaka gifted 6 *puṭtis* of wet land (*Jalakshetramu*) in the village Gottivada which he received from Oddadi Arjundeva for maintaining worship and other services to the god. In turn he received seven *nibandhas* as *vr̥tti* and made them over to seven brāhmanas who were to serve the god by way of seven *koḥupus*. Here he fixed each *nibandha* consisting of 7 *kunchas prasāda*, sweet cakes and betel-nuts⁴⁷. Another inscription of 1379 A.D., records the gift of 5 *puṭtis* of land by the king Pratapavira Narasimhadeva for conducting *Gangābhoga* to the Lord⁴⁸. An inscription of 1390 A.D., records the gift of 4 *puṭtis* of wet land *behind a* tank for providing *prasāda* and wages to one *sani* who was to wave fly whisks both in the morning and in the evening⁴⁹. A fourth inscription of 1266 A.D., records the gift of 4 *puṭtis* of *chavuka bhūmi* by Gangadevi, the queen of Biragottapu Bayyaraju, for offering *narvedya*, *chārdana* and *karpūra* to the Lord on every *śukla ekādasi* day⁵⁰. A fifth inscription of 1459 A.D., records the gift of 4 *puṭtis* of wet land by Hambirakumara *Mahāpātra* for maintaining the temple musician who was to play on the *vīṇa* at the time of *tirumanjanam*⁵¹. Another inscription of 1363 A.D., mentions that Chuppamma, wife of Oddavadi Bhimana, made a gift of 15 *tāmus* of wet land for supplying one *tāmu* of rice (*maḍapali*)⁵² to the god Varāhadeva in the course of morning worship. Yet another record, dated 1178 A.D., states that *Mahāmaṇḍalesvara* Mangiraja gifted 2 *puṭtis* of *vāṇṇu bhūmi* for maintaining one *akhaṇḍadīpa* in the temple. It is stipulated that one *mana* of ghee was to be supplied every day for

burning a lamp⁵³. These are only a few of many instances of land grants made to the temple and other subsidiary shrines for different purposes. In this context we may note that the maximum extent of land endowed by an individual was 9 *puṇḍis*⁵⁴ and 15 *tāṇus* irrespective of the type of the land.

GARDEN LANDS :

Several kinds of gardens like those of flowers, fruits, vegetables, betel-nut, etc., were gifted to the temple. In some cases, devotees gave away lands for laying gardens. In 1289 A.D., the Oddavadi chief Mankaditya Devaraja, gifted 10 *mādas* to the treasury being the cost of the garden in *Pulluvadadhara*. He further appointed a garden supervisor for cultivating the garden and for supplying different types of flowers to the temple. He gifted another 2 *puṇḍis* of wet land in the village Vembaka for his subsistence⁵⁵. An inscription, dated 1267 A.D., records that king Arjunadeva gifted two *puṇḍis* of wet land in the mango grove situated in Chennavoli⁵⁶. A damaged inscription of 1390 A.D., states that an individual Sridhara *senapati* gifted 6 *puṇḍis* of mango grove in the southern side of Potmuri *bhairava maṭha* for maintaining offerings to the god⁵⁷. Yet another inscription of 1421 A.D. records the gift of fruit and other trees to the temple by an individual. It further states that he purchased this garden, which was under the jurisdiction of the *bhoga-parikṣha* of Visakhapatnam⁵⁸.

III. VILLAGE GRANTS :

A good number of inscriptions from the 13th century onwards record the gifts of villages to the temple. Like land, villages also assured a more sizable and regular income to the temple. Here, we may note that the village was not owned by individuals but by the kings. So the king alone could grant villages for a charitable purpose. However, sometimes, the *yuvarāja* was also authorised to exercise the royal prerogative of granting villages. As for others, including

ministers and chiefs etc., with the prior permission of the king or on the orders of the king only they could grant villages. It is of interest to note that the royal family members like mothers, queens, etc., had also granted the villages to the temple. In these instances they had paid the cost of the village to the *Karakabhandāra* (royal treasury) and gifted the same to the temple. However, in a number of instances, the fact of obtaining king's permission or paying the cost, is not mentioned in the inscriptions, probably because it was considered too obvious to be specified.

The revenues collected from these villages, subject to the stipulation made by the donor, were paid into the temple treasury. Sometimes the villages were exempted from paying the taxes, etc., due to the king, while sometimes no such concession was allowed. The villages were granted to the temple for maintaining various *bhogas*, offerings, free feeding houses attached to the temple, etc. It is note-worthy that while granting the villages care was taken not to include *brahmadeyas* and *devadayas* gifted earlier. A brief account of the village grants made to the temple for different purposes is given below.

ROYAL GRANTS :

There are some epigraphs which record the grants of villages to the temple by kings. In 1337 A.D., the Oddavadi king Jayantaraju gifted two villages named *Gadichingavaramu* and *Gottamu* for maintaining offerings to the god⁵⁹. Another Oddavadi king, Arjunadeva, gifted a village *Chatuseemavadi* in 1421 A.D., to the temple for a similar purpose⁶⁰. The villages of *Pedaganu*, *Agnapūdi* along with hamlets *Gangavaram* and *Pina* *Agnapūdi* lay in *Kalingadandāpaṭa* which was wrested from Prataparudra Gajapati, was gifted in 1516 A.D., to the god by the famous Vijayanagara king Krishnadevaraya for maintaining a *bhoga* to the god⁶¹. Yet another inscription of 1525 A.D., records

that the Vishnuvardhana king Sri Beharamahāpātra, gifted a village Uttarapallī in Jantarunadu region for the construction of a *bhōga*-sātra attached to the temple⁶²

BY KING'S FAMILY :

There are some epigraphs which record the grant of a village made by queens and other members of the royal family to the temple. Interestingly in all the instances the queens purchased the villages from the king before it was granted to the temple. In 1266 A D , Lakshmidēvi, the queen of Raparī chief Mangiraja, gifted the village *Manapamu* to the temple for food offerings to the god⁶³. Gangamahādevī, the queen of Narasimhadeva, gifted the villages of *Tāndrangī*, *Mrompāra*, *Pinakrella*, *Karatamu*, *Velangāra*, *Ventigārapallī* in Erāda *visaya* which belonged to Kalingadeśa to the temple in 1350 A D , for maintaining a *bhōga* in her name⁶⁴. In 1394 A D , Uttamadevi, the queen of Pratapavira Narasimhadeva, purchased the village *Pinagāṇḍī* and gifted it to the temple for maintaining a *bhōga* instituted by her⁶⁵. A damaged inscription of 1388 A D , states that Muppamadevi, the queen of Koppula chief, gifted a village *Adulapālī* to the god for maintaining worship and offerings⁶⁶. The Parvatimahadevi, queen of Gajapati Pratapavira Narasimhadeva, paid 300 *mādas* to the royal treasury being the cost of the village *Mummadivāda* and gifted it to the temple in 1406 A D , for offering a *bhōga* daily to the god⁶⁷.

In some instances parts of villages were also gifted to the temple by the members of the royal family. In 1389 A D , the grandmother, the mother and the queen of Gajapati Viranarasimhadeva, each gifted $\frac{1}{6}$ part of the village *Pinagāṇḍī Vijayanarasimhapuramu* to the temple for maintaining a *bhōga* separately instituted in their names⁶⁸. It further states that they purchased the parts of village from Mavani Śrīpādālu.

BY CHIEFS AND OFFICIALS :

Some epigraphs record the grants of villages made by *āmantas*, *māṇḍalīkas* chiefs, ministers, and other high officials of the state. In 1265 A D, the chief Vallabhasahasamalla gifted a village *Porāmu* along with its hamlets and forest lands in Bobbili *viśaya* for offering *naivedya*, *karpūra*, *viḍiya*, etc, to the god. This grant was made in the 3rd regnal year of the king Virabhanudeva for his merit. It further specifies that two *puṁs* of *chavuka bhūmi* which was granted earlier and then lay in the village would not form part of this village⁶⁹. In 1273 A D, the chiefs of Chondanādu, purchased the village *kōdāmu* at the cost of 700 *mallā-mādas* and gifted it to the temple for maintaining *naivedya*, etc, to the god during morning *dhūpa* daily⁷⁰. In 1281 A D, the villages of *Kodūru*, *Jammu* in *Paratala grāma viśaya* and *Madupāda*, *Kōdāmu*, *Kindānapalli* in *Bobbili viśaya* were gifted to the temple, by the *māṇḍalīkas* of Ganga dynasty for the benefit of *Gangavamsa*⁷¹. Another inscription, dated 1417 A D, records that certain *senapati* of Gajapati king Bhanudeva, instituted a *bhōga* in the temple after the king's name. This *bhōga* was offered to the Lord after the completion of *tirumanjanam*. To meet its expenditure he gifted two villages *Kanuti* and *Māṇḍūka*⁷².

The last epigraphical evidence of the endowment of a village grant is available in an inscription, dated 1604 A D. It records that Padmanāyaka Aśvarāya, a representative of Quli-Qutub-Shah gifted the village *Narava* together with the gardens, lands, tanks and revenue to the temple for worshipping the Lord. It further states that this grant was made as *sarvamānya*⁷³.

IV. ENDOWMENT OF COWS, SHEEP, GOATS AND BUFFALOES

Cows : Interesting information is available in the inscriptions about the gift of animals like cows, goats, sheep

and buffaloes to the temple. The cows were specially endowed to the temple for the supply of milk for *abhisheka* and food offerings and curd also for food offerings and ghee chiefly for maintaining perpetual lamps. The Hindus consider cow as a sacred animal and thus the gift of cows to the temple is regarded highly meritorious

The earliest reference to the cows endowed to the temple is in a damaged inscription, dated 1233 A.D.⁷⁴. It records that one Erujiyana gifted 100 cows, for his own merit for supplying pure milk (*nirutapālu*) for night food offerings to the god. It further stipulated that this supply of milk to the temple was to start from the *Janmashtami* day. Endowment of cows to the temple continued to be very popular till about the 15th century. The references of this period show clearly that there were no hard and fast rules about the number of cows to be donated to the temple for any purpose. In fact it is interesting to note that the number of cows gifted to the temple varied from a mere 10 to as many as 1099. Ten cows were gifted for supplying one *kumcha* of milk daily at the time of *tirumanjana* in 1367 A.D.,⁷⁵ while 1099 cows were gifted for maintaining perpetual lamps and for offering milk during nights in 1369 A.D.⁷⁶ The particular inscription states that the Oddavadi chief Arjunadeva endowed 836 cows for maintaining eight perpetual lamps and 263 cows for providing milk to the god during night.

The inscriptions of the temple are very important for the analytical study of the endowment of cows for maintaining lamps in the temple. It is evident from these inscriptions that there was no prescriptive for fixing the minimum number of cows to be donated to the temple for maintaining a perpetual lamp. That is why in certain cases we find that 25 cows were gifted for one perpetual lamp while in a number of cases the number varied from 25 to as high as 104 for maintaining a single lamp. Of course, such instances of gifting such a large number of cows were rare

We conclude that in general the number of cows granted to each lamp depended upon the kind and its milk yielding capacity

For example the inscription of Raparti chief Mangiraja dated 1266 A.D., records that his queen Lakshmidēvi gifted 50 cows for maintaining two perpetual lamps for the merit of his son Upendrarāja⁷⁷ Another inscription belonging to the Oddavadi chief Arjunadevarāja, dated 1269 A.D., records the gift of 75 cows for maintaining one *Karpūravattī akhaṇḍadīpa* with the stipulation that 22 *kumchas* and one *aḍḍa* of ghee per month should be supplied for keeping the lamp burning⁷⁸ A third inscription (1278 A.D.,) registers the gift of 47 cows for one *akhaṇḍadīpa*⁷⁹ Another record of 1283 A.D., registers the gift of 100 cows by Choda Mahadevi, the queen of Mallappadeva maharaja, for maintaining two perpetual lamps⁸⁰ Another inscription of 1375 A.D., records that a certain Padmanāyaka made the gift of a perpetual lamp and endowed 25 cows for maintaining it The quantity of ghee to be supplied was specified as 7 *kumchas* and one *aḍḍa* per month⁸¹. Another inscription dated three years later (1378 A.D.,) records that Ambikadevi, the wife of a local chief, made the gift of 51 cows for maintaining one perpetual lamp instituted by her with the stipulation that 7 *kumchas* and one *aḍḍa* of ghee should be supplied a month Interestingly she is also stated to have endowed one *ganḍa-māḍa* for the supply of wicks for the lamp It may also be noted that though the number of cows endowed in the present instance was double to the one above, the quantity of ghee to be supplied was the same⁸² Yet another inscription dated 1379 A D , is very significant in that it records the gift of as many as 836 cows by the Oddavadi chief Arjunadevarāja for maintaining eight perpetual lamps Thus, approximately 104 cows were allotted for each lamp However, the quantity of ghee to be supplied is not specified⁸³

These examples bear eloquent testimony to the fact that the donor was given the option of donating any number of cows for maintaining the perpetual lamp endowed by him. However, we find from the inscriptions that in the majority of cases either 25 or 50 cows were endowed for maintaining a perpetual lamp. In all the cases where the donors, including the kings, made grants of cows for perpetual lamps, they saw to it that the cows granted were so protected as to improve the cattle wealth of the temple. In this connection the intention of the donor was to multiply the cattle wealth.

The purpose of granting of cows to the temple, as we have seen above, was to provide milk from which ghee was to be extracted for fuelling the lamps. However, the cows were also granted to the temple for providing *pañchāmṛta*, milk for *abhiṣheka*, etc., in the temple.

The following table shows the number of cows gifted to the temple for different purposes in a 50 year time scale.

A.D	Cows for supplying milk, curd and ghee to the bhogas, etc	Cows for maintaining perpetual lamp	Grand total
1200-1250	100	25	125
1251-1300	—	598	598
1301-1350	500	671	1,171
1351-1400	2,039	2,305	4,344
1401-1450	946	1,615	2,561
	3,585	5,214	8,799

The data given above gives a clear picture about the cattle wealth of the region and the economic stability of the temple.

Sheep : Apart from the cows, sheep were also gifted in a considerable number to the Narasimhasvāmi temple at Sindhāchalm. However, the lone purpose for which the gift of sheep was made is for maintaining lamps in the temple. Generally 50 sheep were given for maintaining one *akhandadipa*⁸⁴. However, we have a few exceptions to this. An inscription of a later Chalukya king Upendradeva, dated 1356 A.D., gifted 100 sheep for burning one perpetual lamp⁸⁵. Another inscription of 1428 A.D., records that one *Sāhasamalla* gifted 110 sheep for burning one perpetual lamp in the presence of the god⁸⁶. Interestingly we have a few instances of gift of more than one object for maintaining a lamp. For example the great sage Naraharītīrtha made the gift of 25 cows and 150 sheep for maintaining four perpetual lamps in the temple. Hence it may be presumed that the cows were gifted for one lamp while the sheep were for maintaining the other three lamps at the rate of 50 sheep for each⁸⁷. Similarly, in 1270 A.D., a certain *mahāmandalesvara* gifted 25 cows and 50 sheep for maintaining two perpetual lamps⁸⁸.

Goats : It seems the practice of granting goats for the maintenance of lamps in the temples was also in vogue and of which we have two instances. The first inscription, dated 1398 A.D., records the gift of 100 goats for providing ghee, at the rate of 7 *tāmus* and 2 *kumchas* a month, for burning one *akhandadipa* in the temple⁸⁹. The second inscription, dated 1402 A.D., records a similar grant by a *Kaṭṅga-parikṣha* for a similar purpose⁹⁰. However, in this case the monthly supply of ghee was stipulated to be 7 *tāmus* and a *kumcha*, that is one *kumcha* less than in the previous instance.

Buffaloes : As for the endowment of buffaloes we have only two epigraphical evidences. An inscription, dated 1397 A.D., records the gift of 10 buffaloes and 20 cows for supplying one *kalāṣa* of milk to the god at the time of evening

*dhāpa*⁹¹. Another inscription, dated 1455 A.D., states that Kunḍalesvara *Mahapātra* gifted 28 buffaloes for providing one *kuncha* of *prasāda* to the same god⁹².

In all the above instances the gifts of cows, sheep, goats and buffaloes were placed in the charge of individuals, subject to the condition that they were to supply the required quantity to the temple. To maintain these services the donor had also to make provision for the individuals. Such people were intermediaries between the temple and the donor.

V. ENDOWMENT OF GOLD AND JEWELLERY :

A good number of inscriptions from the Simhāchalam temple, particularly from the 14th century onwards, record the endowment of different kinds of valuable jewels and ornaments to the temple by the kings, queens, chiefs and the rich people of the region. In the following pages a brief account of it is given. Firstly, an inscription, dated 1342 A.D., records that one Ananta Lakshmi, alias Kommidevi, gifted one *Pahinḍi pagaḍapūvulamāla* (a gold vakulamāla), one *trisarimutyālacheru* (three stringed pearl necklace), 2 *bilasaramulu* (two necklaces with pendent) to the temple for the merit of her daughter Śītā Mahādevi⁹³. In 1343 A.D., a certain Somupadirayudu gifted a blue diamond (*nīlaratnam*) to the temple⁹⁴. Gangadevi, the queen of Narasimhadeva, gifted a *ashṭottatrimasat padmamālīka*, (a gold necklace of 38 lotuses) a pair of gold feet (*Pāhundi Sripādālu*), a lotus flower, one chrysanthemum and 8 *kēta* petals, all were gold jewels to the temple in 1349 A.D.⁹⁵ One gold *Vaijayantīmāla* studded with diamonds and the jewel in the shape of a serpent, probably to be worn on head (*Śikhā nāgabhūshanamu*) were gifted to the temple by Oddavadi Bhimanna Preggada in 1364 A.D.⁹⁶ Another inscription of 1390 A.D., records the gift of 9 *Pahinḍisūnalu* and 9 *māvatrī rēkulu* by a certain Gopala dasajiyana⁹⁷. Bachachala devi-Jiyama, daughter of Nandavarapu Bayyaraju, gifted a pendent

studded with diamonds and pearls in 1396 A D⁹⁸ Another inscription of 1408 A.D , records the gift of 2 *Śrībhujalu* (shoulder plates) and one vali (meaning not known) by *Mahāmaṇḍalesvara* Pratāpa Arjunadeva⁹⁹ A damaged inscription of 1421 A.D , states that the same chief gifted one pearl necklace consisting of 182 pearls and a gold pendent to the god Narasimhanātha¹⁰⁰

Krishnadēvarāya is known to have made lavish gifts to many important temples Simhāchalam temple inscriptions also record the munificent gifts made by this king to the god Simhādrinātha An inscription, dated 1516 A D , records the endowment made by the king and his two queens to this god The king gifted a necklace of 91 pearls, one *śankha-chakra* pendent, a pair of anklets studded with precious stones, while his queens Chinnadevi and Tirumaladevi endowed one gold pendent each Each of these pendants cost 500 *varāha gadyanas*¹⁰¹

VL GIFTS OF UTENSILS AND VESSELS :

The variety of utensils used for various purposes were presented to the temple by several devotees Gangamahadevi, the queen of Viranarasimhadeva, gifted 5 *Śaṣashrādhāra taliya pātralu*, 5 lamp stands, 8 silver plates, 5 silver *tambagarayas* and 2 *chāmaras* to the god¹ in 1350 A D¹⁰² In 1363 A D , one *tambagaraya* was gifted by an individual for fetching the water for *tirumañjanam*¹⁰³ Oddavadi Bhīmanapreggada gifted one *Pahīndi saṣashradhāra* in 1365 A D , for similar purpose¹⁰⁴ A silver *kuṭuva* was gifted in 1369 A D , to the god by the same person for offering *vidiya*¹⁰⁵ In 1400 A D , 2 *tambagarayas* were presented to the temple by Pratapa Arjunadevaraju¹⁰⁶

A number of plates of gold, silver, bronze and brass were presented to the temple Jayantaraju, the son of Oddadi Arjunadeva, gifted a silver plate to the temple in 1337 A.D¹⁰⁷

Krishnadevarāya and his queen, Tirumaladevi gifted a gold plate weighing 44,782 *gadyanas* to the god in 1516 A.D.¹⁰⁸.

VIÑJĀMARAS : Viñjāmaras were also presented to the deities. An inscription of 1420 A.D., records the gift of 2 silver *viñjāmaras* (*Veṇḍikōmala viñjāmara*) by a certain Visvanatha Jiyana for waving in both *dhupas*¹⁰⁹. In 1384 A.D., Taradevi, the queen of Gajapati Vīranarasimhadeva, gifted one silver quoted *viñjāmara* to the god for similar purpose¹¹⁰.

CHĀMARAS : *Chāmaras* needed for waving in the presence of the god were also gifted to the temple by devotees. In 1375 A.D., a certain Varadana preggada gifted 2 *chāmaras* to the temple and he also made provision for maintaining this service¹¹¹.

ĀḶAVAṬṬAM AND UMBRELLA : *Āḷavaṭṭam* and umbrellas were also presented to the temple. In 1427 A.D., Elladevi, the queen of Nissanka Bhanudeva, gifted 2 umbrellas and 2 *āḷavaṭṭams* to the temple¹¹². A certain *Mahāpātra* gifted an umbrella to the temple in 1381 A.D.¹¹³

LAMPS AND LAMPSTANDS : The most popular item of gifts made to the temple was that of a lamp. We have already discussed the same above. There are hundreds of instances of this gift and its maintenance¹¹⁴.

Devotees also presented several kinds of lampstands for maintaining the lamps in the temple. An inscription dated 1270 A.D., records the gift of 2 lampstands to the temple by a certain Chittanagopalu on the occasion of Karttika dipāvali, for the merit of his sister Anantalakshmi¹¹⁵. In 1403 A.D., Kunaparaju, gifted a bronze lampstand with the head of a swan to the temple¹¹⁶. Another record, dated 1410 A.D., records the gift of a bronze lampstand to the temple by a certain Tippari Gangi Chetti¹¹⁷.

VII. MISCELLANEOUS GIFTS :

Several kinds of miscellaneous gifts were also gifted to the temple. For example in 1266 A D , the Eastern Ganga king, Śrī Viranarasimhadēva, presented 100 beautiful women dancers to the temple¹¹⁸. A musical instrument was gifted to the temple by a certain *Mahāpātra* in 1459 A D ¹¹⁹. Another inscription of 1579 A D , records the gift of doors to the temple by a resident of Bhīmuniṣatnam¹²⁰. Finally, a record dated 1720 A D , mentions the gift of a silver and gold *sathagōpa* to the temple by Gōḍe Chengalvarāyanīngāru¹²¹.

The foregoing account leads us to conclude that, the Simhachalam temple was richly endowed with munificent donations by way of cash, lands, villages, cattle and jewellery by the kings, queens, dignitaries of the state and rich nobility. The revenue from all these sources was generally made over to the temple treasury, which, in its turn, paid for the different services either in cash or shares in the *prasāda* or both to the persons who were appointed to perform the specified services. The stipulation of the payment was fixed by the donor who offered these services to the god.

We have studied so far the various types of gifts made to the temple by various types of individuals. Now we may proceed to study the pattern, nature, quantity, quality and the mode of utilisation of these grants. The available epigraphical data shows that in the 11th and the 12th centuries the number of gifts made to the temple were fewer than the gifts made in the 13th, the 14th and the 15th centuries. It is likely that in the 11th and the 12th centuries the temple must have been simple and unostentatious. Another powerful factor which we have to take into consideration during this period is that Coastal Andhra experienced political instability. It was a period of transition indicating the disintegration of the Eastern Chalukyan kingdom and establishment of the Chalukya Chola power over Coastal Andhra. The chiefs and

the rulers cared more in wresting power than extending patronage to the temple¹²² This attitude is very well reflected in the paucity of the inscriptions found in the Simhachālam temple But from the 13th century onwards the history of Coastal Andhra records a revolutionary change in the political field The establishment of the Chalukya Chola regime over Coastal Andhra, the rise of Gajapatis and the later Somavamsis of Orissa and also the emergence of the powerful chiefs of the Matsyās of Oddadi brought a substantial change in the history of the Simhachālam temple It is likely that during this period that the temple underwent, as evidenced from the inscriptions, substantial renovations and this in turn made the Simhachālam temple the most popular centre for pilgrims It may be mentioned here that after the 16th century the importance of the temple declined This is clearly indicated by the presence of very few inscriptions in the Simhachālam temple

A clear, careful and analytical study of the gifts referred to above will enable us to draw a few conclusions regarding the pattern of gifts made to the temple over the centuries In the long period of its history, land and money were originally endowed to the temple for the maintenance of various types of rituals and festivals. It is of interest to note here that there were no rigid stipulations as to the minimum quantity of land and money presented by any individual to the temple and even for its utilisation It was a common practice from the beginnings of the 11th century that the temple authorities invested the money received from the devotees on the temple lands, with the intention of increasing its economic resources. In the later centuries we notice only a new twist and that is the collection of taxes from a particular region in the form of cash was gifted to the temple

The institution of burning a perpetual lamp was an ancient tradition The epigraphs of the Simhachālam temple show that this institution was introduced right from the 12th

century. But for its maintenance, land and money were donated. From the 13th century onwards the institution of burning the perpetual lamps in the Simhachalam temple brought a salutary change in the nature of the gifts. In this period along with land and money, cattle were donated. Here 'cattle' includes cows, sheep, goats and buffaloes. It is of significant interest to note in this connection that right from the 3rd quarter of the 15th century onwards, the gift of cattle had been surprisingly absent in the donations made for the perpetual burning of the lamps. This indicates either that there must have been a decline in the cattle wealth or that land and money were available in abundance for the donors towards donation for the burning of the perpetual lamps.

The inscriptions found in the Simhachalam temple give us a lot of information regarding the coins that were in circulation from the 11th to the 18th centuries. It is very interesting to note here that the donors not only donated land, cows, sheep, goats etc., but also coins for conducting various festivals. The coins that are found referred to in the inscriptions under our study are *ganḍa-māḍa*, *tanka-māḍa*, *bragonnapu-gadyāḥu*, *Matṭya-gadya*, *Varāha-gadya*, *tyāgi-māḍa*, *chinnāḥu*, *surabhi-gadya-māḍa*, *malla-māḍa*, *dāstura-māḍa*, *veṇṇi-tanka*, *sakāni-tanka*, *sonna-tankas*, etc. It is evident from this that *māḍa*, *gadya*, *tanka*, *chinnāḥu* were the popular coins of the period. A critical study of these coins will help us to draw the following conclusions.

Firstly *māḍas* of different types are referred to in the inscriptions. *Tyāgi-māḍa* and *malla-māḍa* were most likely the *māḍas* issued by the Tyagis and the Mallas. This custom was observed only to bring the distinction between the *māḍas* issued by various subordinate chiefs of the period under our study. For example *tyāgi-māḍa* was issued by the Tyāgi chiefs of *Guḍimeṭṭa*. In one of the inscriptions there is a reference to *surabhi-gadya-māḍaḥu*. It is the combination of *gadyas* and *māḍas* issued either by a chief belonging to a feudatory

family by name Surabhi. It is a conjecture yet to receive epigraphical confirmation. There is a reference to *ganḍa-māḍa*. It is likely that it was issued by a chief either having the name *Ganḍa* or the title of that name. But it is confusing to discover the significance of *tanka-māḍa*, for tankas and māḍas were different coins.

Secondly *tankas* of different types are found prominently referred to, in the inscriptions under our survey. The *venḍi-tanka*, *saskāni-tanka*, *sonna-tanka* etc., some of the *tankas* that were in circulation in our period. *Venḍi* and *sonna tankas* indicates the *tankas* that were issued in gold and silver respectively. It is evident from this that the donors while donating the *tanka* coins were very particular in making a reference to the metal that was used for the manufacturing of the *tankas*. Mention may be made in this connection that the reference to the metal is invariably made as for the coins which were styled *tankas*.

Thirdly *bhīragoṇṇapu gadya* and *Matsya gadya* are referred to in the inscriptions under our question. *Bhīragoṇṇapu-gadya* indicates the *gadya* coins that were in circulation in a territorial division by name in *Bhīragoṇṇa*. Here *goṇṇam* may be equated with *Koṇṇamu* which signifies a territorial division. The *Koṇṇamu* as a territorial division was introduced in the Coastal Andhra during the reign of the Chālukya-Chōla emperor, Kulōttunga-Chōla I. The *matsya-gadya* was invariably the *gadya* that was introduced by the *Matsyas* of Oddadi, a feudatory family which came to limelight after the 13th century A.D., in the Coastal Andhra. It is very interesting to mention in this connection that in some inscriptions reference is made to *Varāha gadyālu*. This cannot be a combination of *Varāha* and *gadya*. It is likely that the donor in this case donated *Varāhas* and *gadyas*. Similarly in another inscription a reference is made to *gadya-māḍalu*. Here again the same interpretation may be right.

There is also a reference to a coin by name *Chinna* in the inscriptions. But the paucity of the references to *Chinna* indicates that it occupied the lowest place in the monetary transactions of the period.

In conclusion we may state that normally the money gifts or donations were deposited in the temple treasury and the interest accruing from it was projected to be spent on the conduct of various rituals and festivals in the temple. It may be also presumed that there was a monetization of the economy in this period but it is not wrong to state that the barter system was replaced by the monetary transaction only.

The inscriptions that are found in the Sīmḥāchalam temple complex give us information regarding the types of land, land measures and weights. Regarding the types of land *jalakshetramu*, *mena-bhūmi*, *vūdupu-bhūmi*, *chavuka-bhūmi*, *tonṭa-gaṭṭu* etc., are found referred to in the inscriptions. *Jalakshetramu* indicates wet land. This is supposed to be most fertile and fit for continuous cultivation. *Mena-bhūmi* refers to high land. This can be cultivated through lift irrigation. Most probably this was used for growing dry crops like maize, black-gram, green-gram, rāgi etc. In some of the inscriptions it is recorded that the *meṭṭa-bhūmi* was donated for the maintenance of the cattle. This undoubtedly indicates that it served the purpose for grazing the cattle. In modern times it is called *banjaru-bhūmi* or fallow land. *Vūdupu-bhūmi* indicates land under cultivation. This invariably applies to wet land. Even in modern times, particularly in the Coastal Andhra, this type of description of land is in common use. The other type of land that is referred to in the inscriptions is *Chavuṭa-bhūmi*. Sometimes it is also referred to as *chavuka-bhūmi*. This is in reference to its saline soil. This is not fertile but grass used to grow aplenty on it. Thus, like the *meṭṭa-bhūmi* this might have been used for providing grass to the cattle. The reference to *tonṭa-gaṭṭu* refers to garden land. Very often gardens bearing fruit, flowers and

various types of sacred plants, like *tulasi* were gifted to the temple. The fruit, the flowers and the leaves of these sacred plants were used as part of the offerings to the deity.

Several land measures are found in the inscriptions of the period under study. *Puṣṭi*, *khaṇḍika*, *pandumu*, *tūmu* are found prominently. They were neither chains nor measuring rods. The terms denoted the yielding capacity of land. Thus, when *puṣṭi* is referred to, in the inscriptions, it implies the land which could yield grain to the tune of a *puṣṭi*. *Tūmu* and *pandamu* were supposed to be the sub-divisions of a *puṣṭi*. It is of considerable interest to state here that the *puṣṭi* and its fractions are being used in modern Andhra. *Khaṇḍika* as a land measure is conspicuous by its absence in modern times. It is of interest again to note here that some of the land measures were named after some of the fertile villages. Some prominent instances of such nomenclature are : *tāṇḍrūṅgiyuvvāla-puṣṭi*, *kummarapalli-puṣṭi*, *oḍḍādi-puṣṭi*, *kankaṇatuniya-puṣṭi*. *Kummarapalli puṣṭi* indicates the *puṣṭi*, measure that was used in the village by name Kummarapalli. It is likely that naming the land measure *puṣṭi* by the name of the village tends to surmise that this land measure varies from village to village, which, in turn, points to the absence of a state-wide standardisation of mensuration.

The Sīmhāchalam inscriptions also give us significant information regarding weights and measures. These weights and measures were used for measuring and weighing milk, ghee, food-offerings (*prasāda*) and grains of various kinds. They are *puṣṭi*, *tūmu*, *kumcha*, *māna*, *mānika*, *adda*, *phala*, *krōḍlu*, *viśa* and *sōla* etc. The fraction of a *sōla* by name *arasōla* was also in vogue in this period. The most interesting feature of these weights and measures is that they are not referred to against the names of the regions and the villages where they were in use but they were named after Lord

Narasimha. Thus, *narasimha-mānika*, *narasimha-kumcha*, *narasimha-tūmu* etc., are found to figure prominently in the inscriptions.

The inscriptions of the Simhāchalam temple not only give us some interesting information regarding the coins, the land, land measures and measures of weight but also give us some significant information regarding the donation of villages and cattle. The land and the villages donated to the temple generated interest in the temple authorities to go in for intensive and extensive agricultural operations. This is also evident from the much prevalent tendency to donate cattle. However, it should be observed that the sheep and the goats donated to the temple were mainly intended to supply milk, curd and ghee. The cows, buffaloes and the bullocks donated to the temple served a different purpose. Here again the cows and bullocks served a dual purpose. The cows supplied the requires milk, curd and ghee. At the same time the cows and bullocks were used for multiplying the cattle wealth. It should be noted here that the cattle donated to the temple were not meant for sacrifice. Thus, temples became the breeding spots of cattle. The cattle wealth was used for the promotion of agriculture. It is of considerable interest to note in this connection that sometimes provision was also made for appointing certain individuals to look after the material prosperity of the cattle. The increasing cattle wealth and the extensive application of the same for enlarging cultivable land by bringing waste land under the plough, paved the way for land reclamation. Thus, the land reclamation and the development of agriculture in turn set a foot the development of a new agrarian economy. Thus, the temple promoted economic activity.

The inscriptions at Simhāchalam very often refer to the donation of various jewels. These jewels were made out of either gold or silver but studded with precious stones like

diamonds, sapphire, emeralds, etc They were in the form of a necklace, a necklet, a crown and long and flowing garlands These flowing garlands were sometimes referred to as *Vakula-māla*, *Vaijayanti-māla*, etc Sometimes *sankha* and *chakra*, the two attributes of *Vishnu* were also in the form of jewels The *Keyūras* were the shoulder plates made out of gold and studded with precious stones as ornaments to enhance the splendour of the deity A reference is made to the Vijayanagara emperor Krishnadevaraya's donation of the famous sapphire garland to the god Narasimha at Simhāchalam It may be stated that various plates, vessels of various sizes and shapes and lamp-posts of captivating beauty were donated to the temple with the express desire to use the same while celebrating various rituals and festivals They were normally made out of either copper or bronze It is evident from the above discussion that the temple promoted the cause of native industry Further the *chāmaras* or flywhisks were used prominently while celebrating all the rituals and festivals It may not be out of place here to state that Andhra established its glory and reputation, since the early centuries of the Christian era for the promotion of artists and artisans This is evident from that the donations made to the Simhāchalam temple in the medieval and the modern period That the same ancient economic activity was promoted, preserved and even patronised upto the early modern period is without doubt In conclusion we state that the Simhāchalam temple promoted the cause of industrial and economic activity

It is evident from the above discussion that the temple inscriptions of Simhāchalam throw a flood of light on the economy of the times, the types of land donated, land measures, measures of weights, development of the agrarian economy and the promotion of native industry

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CHAPTER - IV

TEMPLE STAFF

We have discussed in the preceding chapters the importance and the significance of various rituals and festivals conducted in the Sīmhāchalam temple complex. In that connection the epigraphical wealth information had been analysed to make a historical study of the impact of the religious centre on the socio-economic-cultural growth and development of the region. It is known from the information that the Sīmhāchalam temple not only spread its ritualistic influence but also improved its economic stability of region through ages. To organise the temple administration and to supervise the conduct of various rituals and festivals the Sīmhāchalam temple required a hierarchy of priests and Vedic scholars - not to speak of a large number of servants. In this chapter a detailed discussion is attempted to bring into focus the learned and the lay staff of the Sīmhāchalam temple complex.

As evidenced by a plethora of inscriptions found engraved in various temples of the medieval times the Sīmhāchalam temple can rightly be regarded as one of the largest employers. This holds good particularly with the big temples like the Varāhanarasīmhasvāmī temple at

Sīmhāchalam. Many inscriptions found in this temple bear testimony to the fact that a good number of persons were closely associated with the temple in different capacities. Thanks to the increase in the religious services through gifts, the temple came to provide employment opportunity to a large number of servants in different capacities. They had to attend to various kinds of work like conducting worship, preparation of offerings, sandal, perfumes, etc., decoration, reciting of sacred texts, entertainment, lighting, running choultries and *maṭhas*, maintaining *Vedic* schools, providing accommodation and comforts to the pilgrims, repairs and renovation, distributing of *prasādam*s, management of properties, keeping of accounts, safe-keeping of jewels, maintenance of watch and ward, etc., besides the celebration of festivals and other services of the temple. For the sake of convenience the temple staff may be broadly classified into three groups

- I Those who attend to the religious duties like worshipping the god.
- II Those who attend to the menial part of preparing for the worship
- III Those who were connected with the administration, supervision, maintenance of accounts, etc., of the temple

I. THE FIRST GROUP INCLUDES PRIESTS, NAMBIYARS, PARICHARĀKAS, RECITERS OF SACRED TEXTS AND SĀNIS

PRIESTS .

Naturally it is the *Śrīvaiṣṇavas* who were associated with the worship of the god. However, it may be noted that we do not have many references to the priests who were associated with the daily worship of the god. The priest or

pūjāri, was an important functionary in the temple for conducting worship. An inscription, dated 1265 A.D., records that Vallabhasāhasamalla, a subordinate of the Ganga king Sri Vira Bhanudeva, made provision to one named Anjanapuchingunayaka, a *pūjāri*, for worshipping the god daily¹. This record mentions that Chingunayaka was a *Nitya utsava dāsi* of the temple. Another important record, dated 1273 A.D., states that the chiefs of Chondanadu, made provision for the maintenance of the same priest. In this record Chingunayaka was called *nitya utsava dāsi* and *tiruvārādhana āchāri*². In another record, dated 1274 A.D., a certain Srijiyyana made arrangements to the same priest for worshipping the god³.

It is of interest to note that one of the inscriptions, dated 1292 A.D., records that the Oddavadi chief Jayantaraju made the gift of a garden land to Naraharītirtha śrīpādālu for facilitating daily worship and reciting sacred texts in the presence of god (*Narasimhanāthuni anu sandhānamu, nityārchana nimittamu*)⁴. The king Pratapavira Narasimhadeva made arrangements in 1390 A.D., to Raghavabharatī Śrīpādālu for worshipping the god in *ubhayadhūpas*. This inscription mentioned that the Raghavabharatī Śrīpādālu was a disciple of the great saint, Vasudeva Śrīpādālu⁵.

These were the local officiating priests of the Varāha Narasimha temple referred to in the inscriptions. Some other priests, who might have hailed from Tirupati, the great Vaishnava centre in Andhra Pradesh, also worked in the temple. These priests were called *Tirupati Śrīvaishnavas*. Two epigraphs of the 14th century referred to about these priests. But the inscriptions are lacking in details about the *Tirupati Śrīvaishnavas*. In these two instances the devotees made arrangements to *Tirupati Śrīvaishnavas* for conducting worship in the temple⁶.

Another type of Vaishnava priests mentioned in inscriptions is the *Ekāki Vaishnavas* or the priests who were unmarried. Two inscriptions of the period of our study, record the provision to *Ekāki Vaishnavas*.⁷ The *Ekāki* priests are also referred to in the inscriptions of Tirupati.

The above epigraphical information helps us to note that the Sindhāchalam temple was served by various types of priests. They were distinguished by the type of duties they were expected to discharge. For example *nitya utsava dāsi* is invariably a reference to the priest who conducts worship to the deity regularly. *Tiruvārādhana āchāri* invariably indicates the priest who performed the ritual by name *tiruvārādhana*. The reference to *Tirupati Śrīvaishnavas* is of absorbing interest in this connection. This interesting piece of information invariably indicates that the Vaishnavaites of Tirupati used to come to Sindhāchalam to conduct the worship. This will tempt us to state that in the medieval times *there was considerable regional mobility of the priestly class*. The reference to *Ekāki vaishnavas* or unmarried priests indicates that sometimes the priests either voluntarily or involuntarily followed the policy of celibacy.

NAMBYALURU :

The priests who conducted the smaller items of worship in the temple premises were called *nambyālu*. An inscription, dated 1535 A.D., refers to the consecration of the god Hanumanta at Bhairavadvāra and provision was made to the person who worships the Lord daily. This inscription mentions the priest who was to perform worship to the Lord described as *nambī (Devaraku pūja chese nambyārki)*.⁸ Three more inscriptions of 1389 A.D., records that the members of the family of the king Gajapati Narasimhadeva, made arrangements for maintaining a *bhōga* to the Lord. They further proceed to state that a share in the consecrated food was allotted to a *nambī* for conducting the above *bhōga* to

the Lord Narasimha daily⁹ These *nambis* also participated in the other services of the temple like *ālavattaseva* in the presence of the god and supplying flowers to the temple¹⁰ One of the inscriptions of the 13th century states that the *nambyārs* worked in the temple gardens as supervisors¹¹

Nambyāluru or *nambyālu* referred to in the inscriptions of our period, invariably belong to the lesser priestly class, for it is evident that they were in charge of the worship of the lesser deities. It may be stated here that they were also expected to do the duty of waving fly-whisks to the god at the time of worship. This duty was in reality expected to be discharged by a servant of the lower order. But it should be remembered here that they were entrusted with the work of supervising the agricultural operations of the garden lands of the temple.

PARICHĀRAKAS :

Parichārakas were the attendants of the officiating priests. Their main duties were to supply water for the holy bath and other sundry items in the conduct of the ritual. These *parichārakas* are referred to, in an epigraph dated 1350 A D. It records that four persons were engaged in bringing water for the holy bath of the Lord. In it the *parichārakas* were referred to as *nambyālu parichārakulu*¹². A number of inscriptions mention provision to *parichārakas* for doing sundry items in the conduct of worship. Chiefly, they clean all the temple premises everyday with consecrated water, clean the vessels and other objects used in the daily ritual services, wash and dry up the drapery, wave whisks, prepare the required quantity of the sandalwood paste etc. It would thus appear from the above references that the *parichārakas* are the menial priestly class of the Sindhāchalam temple. The reference to *nambyālu-parichārakulu* may indicate that *nambyālu* and *parichārakulu* may be the priestly class.

enjoying the same status and rank in the Simhāchalam temple complex

RECITERS OF SACRED TEXTS :

One of the important and interesting activities in the temple is associated with the recitation of religious and holy texts like the *Vedas*, the *Purānas*, *Vishṇustotra*, *Puruṣasūkta*, etc. Many devotees made arrangements to the reciters of these texts. In 1373 A.D., *Champusenapati* made a provision in the temple treasury for the maintenance of a *brāhmaṇa* named Odyā Peddi Bhatlu for the recitation of the *Vedas* in the temple¹³. Arrangements were also made for the recitation of the *purānas* before the god. An inscription, dated 1417 A.D., states that a *senapati* of Bhanudeva made provision to one Gopaladasu for the recitation of *Narasimhakavacha* daily. It further states that another provision was made to one Sri Ranga Jiya for the recitation of the *Narasimha purāna* daily in the temple¹⁴. Equal importance was attached to the recitation of the *Narasimhakavacha*, *Sahasranāma* and gifts were made for the maintenance of the persons who recited them¹⁵.

Various *stotras* like *Vishṇustotra*, *Puruṣasūkta* were also chanted in the temple. The devotees made arrangements to persons for their maintenance. In 1350 A.D., provision was made for the recitation of *Puruṣasūkta* at the *abhishēka avasaramu* daily in the temple¹⁶. Another record, dated 1390 A.D., states that provision was made to an individual for reading *Vishṇustotra* daily¹⁷.

The devotees also gave importance for the recitation of *sankīrtanas* in presence of the god. In 1390 A.D., Govindajiyana, appointed a person Garuda Dāsu and made arrangements to render the *sankīrtana* from the time of *tirumañjana* till the sandalwood paste was applied to the image daily. It is interesting to note that it was specified that

Garuda *dāsu* was to render *nāmasankīrtana* according to the Oriya tradition¹⁸. Another inscription, dated 1359 A.D., states that Narasimhabharati Śrīpādalu appointed two flutists, eight women singers, to form into two batches and made arrangements for rendering *sankīrtanam* daily at the time of *dhūpa* offering¹⁹. Yet another inscription of 1421 A.D., is of considerable significance. It refers to a Ranganatha and describes him as *abhinava-bhāratachārya chappana beyakāra* and *vāggeyakāra*. These titles testify to the proficiency of Ranganatha in dance, music composing songs²⁰.

There is a wealth of epigraphical information, as evidenced above, that extra-ordinary importance was given to the recitation of the *Vēdas*, the *Purāṇas*, *sankīrtanas*, *nāma-sankīrtanas*, etc. It is likely that by these activities the temple might have promoted the cause of religious literature of various types. It is singularly interesting to note in this connection that some of the *nāma-sankīrtanas* were recited according to the Oriya tradition. This is due to the geographical proximity of the location of the Simhachalam temple to the Oriya region.

SĀNIS :

It is known that *sānis*, a term generally used to denote the women who performed dance in the presence of the god. The term *devadāsī*, means a maid-servant of god in Sanskrit. But this term is not referred to in the epigraphs of our period. During the period under review *sānis* played an important role in the temple activities for they particularly performed dance and song in the presence of the god. A number of inscriptions refer to many *sānis* who were associated with the Narasimhasvāmi temple. Although the term *sāni* and many of its synonyms are taken to be derogatory in the modern times, it never carried such a meaning in the medieval times. That the temple dancers were looked upon with respect is

evidenced by the fact that even women of a high social status exhibited their talents in music and dance in the temples to attract more people into the divine fold.

From a number of inscriptions in the Simhāchalam temple we may note the following as the duties of the *sānis*.

- 1) Performing dance and music.
- 2) Singing *mangalagānas* and *nāma-saṅkīrtana*.
- 3) Waving fly-whisks in the presence of the god.
- 4) Decorating and cleaning the temple premises.

In this context it may be noted that the Simhāchalam temple inscriptions are silent about the administrative responsibilities of the *sānis*. It is wellknown that the *sānis* of some of the temples like those of Bhimesvara at Drakshārāma, Malleśvara at Vijayawada were charged with important administrative responsibilities²¹.

Let us now examine the acquirement of the *sānis* to the temple. There are two means of acquiring *sānis* for the temple. (i) through purchase or gifts and (ii) by voluntary dedication. For example, in 1264 A.D., the Ganga king Narasimhadeva I, gifted 100 beautiful *sānis* to the temple for rendering music and dance in the presence of the god²²

During the period under review the inscriptions of the temple refer to two categories of *sānis* who worked in the temple viz., *sānis* and *sāṃpradāya sānis*. According to C.V. Ramachandra Rao, the *sāṃpradāya sānulu* who were attached to the temples remained unmarried²³. He further states that those who were mentioned simply as *sānis* lived independently married but were employed by the temples on a part-time basis. It is of interest to note that the term *sāṃpradāya sānulu* is found mentioned only in the inscriptions coming from the Kalinga region of the Andhra country.

The following is a brief account of the *sānis* mentioned in the Simhachalam temple inscriptions.

The earliest inscription which refers to the *sānis* belongs to the reign of the Eastern Ganga king Narasimhadeva I dated 1264 A.D. This inscription is very important because it records that the king endowed as many as 100 beautiful women for rendering music in the presence of the god (*Narahareḥ saingīta hetor adāt Śrī Viranarasimhadevanripate syāyur-yasō vṛiddaye nityam vānavilochanas śatamitas chandrārka taravādhi*)²⁴. That at least some of them were dancers, is suggested by the inclusion *naṇṇava* (dance teacher) in this group. Thus undoubtedly this inscription testifies to the temple's role in promoting the twin fine arts namely dance and music, of course under royal patronage. Another inscription, dated 1350 A.D., is also interesting in that it mentions many of such women but only eight of whom were specified as dancers. Among the remaining women some were experts in playing on different musical instruments and some were serving the Lord as fly-whisk bearers. It also appears that they were provided with residential quarters²⁵. Another record, dated 1299 A.D., registers an endowment made by Śrivaradagiri Śrīpādālu to a *mukhārī* and two *laṅjas* (a synonym of *sāni*) for singing *maṅgalagītas* in the presence of the god while offering *dhāpa* both in the morning and evening. This *mukhārī* and the *laṅjas* were stated to belong to the *sāni sāmpradāya* (*Narasimhanāthuni sannidhini ubhaya dhāpāvasaramāndu maṅgalagītāḥ pādūṇaku sāni sāmpradāyamāndu okha mukhārī ki niddhesi laṅjahukūṅga*)²⁶. Yet another inscription of 1359 A.D., refers to some *sānis* who were to perform *nāma-saṅkīrtana* while offering *dhāpa* during both morning and evening²⁷.

Thus the above account clearly shows that the main duties of the temple *sānis* were singing, dancing and playing

on musical instruments in order to entertain the gods and goddesses and to attract the people into divine fold.

As we have seen above, there are many inscriptions of the temple, belonging to our time, which register grants to the *sānis* to do specified services in the temple such as cleaning, sweeping, etc. Among the services rendered to the Lord by the *sānis*, waving of fly-whisks was also one. A number of inscriptions record the endowments made for maintaining *vinjāmaraseva*. The large number of such gifts suggests that *vinjāmaraseva* was one of the important duties of the *sānis*. This *seva* was also rendered to the god even when he was taken out in procession. For example, one of the inscriptions, dated 1367 A.D., records the endowment made to a *sāni* for waving fly whisks to the god during both the *sandhyas* as well as when he was taken out in procession²⁸. This tradition was introduced with the express desire to attract the pilgrims, the devotees and the general public to participate in the procession, for the fly-whisk wavers were supposed to be the most enchanting and young *sānis* of the times.

The practice of decorating the floor of the temple with various designs and of coloured powders was a custom of holy activity in the temple. Inscriptions of the period under study refer to this custom. An inscription, dated 1381 A.D., records the provision made by the wife of Sureswarajiyana, for the maintenance of a woman who decorated the floor with pleasing designs before the god²⁹. A gift was made to Jannama in 1387 A.D., for decorating the temple premises daily³⁰. Another inscription mentions that a person was appointed in 1376 A.D., to decorate the temple with *kolamu* or coloured designs once in a week³¹.

Many of the inscriptions make it clear that the *sānis* who were appointed to maintain various services in the temple were paid remuneration by way of allotting shares in

the *prasāda*. Instances of paying cash and land as their remuneration to them are also not wanting.

A few inscriptions record that the *sānis* were endowed by the kings and chiefs. We have already seen above that king Narasimha endowed as many as 100 women for rendering dance and music in the Simhachalam temple. Probably in many instances women who were proficient in dance and music voluntarily offered their services to the temples. From these inscriptions it appears that marriage was not a taboo to the professional excellency and the beauty of the temple dancers.

We understand from these inscriptions that many women proficient in playing on different musical instruments and in singing with melodious voices and graceful dances rendered by these beautiful artists par excellence. In this context K. Sundaram's observation deserves a careful consideration. He states, "The account of the temple in medieval times would not be complete unless a survey is made of the cultural role which *devadāsīs* or *sānis* played in the life of the temple. The practice of appointing dancers in the temple goes back to the eighth century. Since this particular section (caste) of the medieval society were the custodians of the art of dance and music, their services were needed for the *rangabhōga* of the Lord. Even at an early age, they were betrothed to the Lord of the temple by a special ritual and they spent their lives by singing devotional songs and dancing religious themes in the temple"³². According to K. V. Raman "whatever might have been the defect in the *devadāsi* system, it cannot be gainsaid that the *devadāsīs* were good exponents of dance and music who did much to preserve the traditional dance forms for generations. The temple was the greatest single agent which extended patronage to them and utilised their services during the festive occasions"³³.

II. THOSE WHO ATTEND TO ANCILLARY / PREPARATORY WORK FOR WORSHIP

Besides those engaged in the purely religious duties, a number of persons were also employed for rendering various other menial services to the temple. The following are the various other servants employed in the temple to discharge specific duties.

BRAHMANAS :

As in the case of many other temples, in the temple of Sīmhāchalam also a number of *brāhmanas* actively participated in various activities connected with the worship at the temple. Some of the *brāhmanas* who were highly proficient in both the religious and the secular duties, taught disciplines to the students attached to the temple school³⁴. Some of the *brāhmanas* were employed by the temple in ordinary jobs like fetching garlands, water-pots, holding an umbrella, bearing a torch or *ākavaṇṇa*, etc., to the god. This statement is attested by an inscription dated 1375 A.D. It records that a provision was made to seven *brāhmanas* for rendering seven different services to the god³⁵. *Brāhmanas* of both these groups did not form part of the administrative machinery. However, it may not be improper to state here that the *brāhmanas* who belonged to the former category played some part in deciding the religious as well as the administrative issues of the temple. The later group naturally did not have any say in the temple matters and their job did not require any professional excellence. So far, the duties of the *brāhmanas* are discussed. The discussion reveals the variety and the integration of the duties of various specialists, not only in relation to their performance of the various ritual services in honour of the Lord but also in relation to the sacred specialists themselves for organising them as a body of ritual functionaries of the temple.

The details of the academic accomplishments of the scholarly *brāhmaṇas* are discussed elsewhere in the dissertation under the title education (see Chapter V). The members who belonged to the other sections of the society also discharged various duties in the temple. Though they were less varied, their services were indispensable to the functioning of the temple.

COOKS :

Preparation of the *prasāda* of Lord is an important task in the temple. The cooks were regular employees of the temple getting remuneration both in kind and cash. An inscription, dated 1389 A.D., refers to an endowment made for maintaining the cooks who cooked the *bhōga* offerings³⁶. Another inscription of 1415 A.D., records the gift to a person who cooked the *śrībali* (*śrībalini vanḍi peṇṇuṭaku*)³⁷.

WATER CARRIERS :

The supply of water received considerable attention. A number of devotees made arrangements to the persons for supplying water daily to the temple. In 1291 A.D., a person was appointed for supplying one *Kāvaḍi* of bathing water to the god³⁸. Another record of 1360 A.D., mentions the gift to a certain Jagannadha for bringing water daily to the temple³⁹.

GARDENERS :

We have already discussed that the temple received land donations for raising gardens. To cultivate these gardens many people were attached to the temple. They received *vr̥ttis* of *prasāda* for their maintenance. An inscription, dated 1291 A.D., records the provision made to two *dāsaris* for cultivating the garden and for supplying different types of flowers to the temple⁴⁰. Another inscription of 1285 A.D., mentions the gift to seven *dāsaris* to cultivate the gardens situated in Adivivaram village⁴¹.

SUPPLIERS OF FLOWERS AND GARLANDS :

Many people were appointed for the supply of flowers and garlands to the deity. In 1381 A.D., Visvanatha *mahāsenapati* made arrangements for a woman to supply one *donḍavanamāla* daily to the god⁴². Another inscription dated 1430 A.D., mentions the arrangements made to a woman who supplied *tulasi* garland to the god⁴³.

POTTERS :

Pots of various sizes and kinds were required for use in a temple. A number of inscriptions refer to the provision made for their supply. An inscription dated 1291 A.D., refers to the gift made to the potters⁴⁴. They were described as *Kummaris*. Another inscription, dated 1417 A.D., mentions that provision was made to the potters for supplying six pots in connection with the Sankrānti celebrations⁴⁵.

FUEL SUPPLIERS :

Fuel suppliers were also referred to in the inscriptions. In 1291 A.D., provision was made for fuel supply to the temple kitchen⁴⁶.

GOLDSMITHS :

The preparation and repair of numerous ornaments and utensils used in the temple required services of goldsmiths. A record, dated 1381 A.D., refers to the *uttama-śringāra-pariksha*⁴⁷. A few inscriptions of the temple also mention artisans like *Prōlōju*, *Appōju* and *Jantōju*⁴⁸.

BEARERS OF FLAGS, TORCHES AND UMBRELLAS :

Umbrellas, flags and torches were carried by servants during the procession of the god and provision was made for their maintenance. Arrangements were made in 1378 A.D., by Madhavasēnāpati for the maintenance of the bearer

of flags⁴⁹. Another inscription of 1461 A.D., records the gift to the bearers of torches⁵⁰ These are some of the references found in the inscriptions regarding the bearers of flags, torches and umbrellas

WATCH AND WARD :

Several people worked in the temple for keeping watch at the gates. An inscription dated 1374 A.D , refers to the arrangements made to one named Bodiga to keep watch at the *dharmadvāra* of the temple which was built by Dharmadasajiyana⁵¹

REPAIRERS AND RENOVATORS :

Several artisans and skilled workers were employed in the temple and provision was made for their maintenance⁵² Architects, sculptors and artisans were also maintained by the temple. They were in charge of constructing new temples and repairing the old ones Chiefly their duty was to keep the physical structure of the temple complex compact and safe.

The available evidences clearly show that the creature comforts of the temple servants of all classes were well taken care of. A share in the *Prasāda* or wages in cash is given to them for their maintenance It is very interesting to note here that an inscription, dated 1296 A D , records the provision made for removing the vegetation that grew on the *śrīvimāna* of the temple The person who was to do this duty was given one sweet cake every day⁵³

CATTLE MAINTAINERS :

A number of devotees instituted some services in the temple like the lighting of lamps, celebration of festivals etc. To meet its expenditure animals like cows, goats, sheep and buffaloes were presented to the temple. The cattle were

placed in charge of individuals subject to the condition that they were to supply the required quantity of ghee or curd to the temple. Such people were called intermediaries between the temple and the donor. Hundreds of examples are found in the inscriptions about the maintenance of cattle.

It is evident from the above discussion that the functional specialization of the sacred specialists reveals great diversity. Some were priests. They perform various ritual services in honour of the deities. Some were cooks and caterers. They prepare holy food and cater that food for the deities in accordance with the directions of the priests. Some were reciters of the sacred texts. They recite the verses, the psalms and the hymns from different holy texts such as the *Itihāsas*, the *Purānas* and the *Vedas*. Some were garland makers. They made garlands according to the direction given by the priests. There were several other functionaries such as poets, the watch and ward staff, potters, lighters, *ākavaṭṭam* bearers, goldsmiths, cattle maintainers, etc., who were expected to function according to the terms and conditions laid down in the ritual manuals and certain conventions followed over several generations.

III. THOSE WHO WERE CONNECTED WITH THE ADMINISTRATION, SUPERVISION AND MAINTENANCE OF ACCOUNTS, etc., OF THE TEMPLE :

K. Sundaram observes that in the beginning the temple administration must have been a simple affair⁵⁴. The general practice during this period seems to have been depositing the endowments, both in cash and kind in the temple treasury called *śrībhaṇḍāra* which was under the care of the *śrīvaiṣṇava* priests. It appears that in the very early days of its administration the temple was managed by those who were responsible for the performance of the *archana* of the god. This statement is attested by an inscription of the 13th

century. It states that a share in the *prasāda* was allotted to *bhaṇḍāri Chingunāyaka*⁵⁵. This Chingunāyaka was an *archaka* of the temple as evidenced by three inscriptions of the thirteenth century⁵⁶. Almost all the inscriptions of this period contain the statements viz., “*I dharmamu śrivaishṇavula raksha*” (i.e., this gift was under the protection of the Vaishnava priests). Thus, during the period under review the Sindhāchalam temple maintained its own treasury and received deposits from the devotees for the conduct of services instituted by the donors. One of the early records of the temple, dated 1099 A.D., and in the Tamil language, refers to the gift of the officers of the king to *śrībhaṇḍāra*⁵⁷. This inscription also states that the endowment is placed under the protection of the vaishnava community of the place. This evidence also shows that in the early centuries the vaishnava priests managed the *śrībhaṇḍāra*. This type of administration continued almost upto the last quarter of the 13th century A.D.

By the end of the 13th century and the beginning of the 14th century the successive Ganga kings, their officials and feudatory chiefs enriched the temple liberally. Thus the temple acquired a vast amount of property both in cash and kind. So the establishment of the temple grew considerably. The growth of the temple in richness and popularity seems to have necessitated some kind of royal interference in its administrative matters. It is significant that many inscriptions of the 14th century before registering the various gifts and endowments name the officer of the Gangas, i.e., the *Kalinga-pariksha*. We see in the later centuries royal officials acting as temple officials also.

BHOGA PARIKSHA :

The highest official of the Sindhāchalam temple, is *adhikāri* and he is styled in the inscriptions as *bhoga-pariksha*. K. Sundaram has the following to say with regard

to this office "the *bhōga-parīksha* was the religious administrator of the temple. He was also the superintendent (*adhikāri*) of the temple. The earliest inscription to refer to the office of *bhōga-parīksha* is dated in 1307 A.D.⁵⁸. Another record of 1359 A.D., offers a clue to the nature of this office⁵⁹. It states that one Narasimha-bhārati was acting as *bhōga-parīksha* of the temple when the area was under the jurisdiction (*veharana*) of an office of Gangas, described as *Kaṭṅga-parīksha*. Thus, the word *parīksha* refers to the designation of a supervisory officer in the administrative system of the Gangas. A *bhōga-parīksha* is thus a person who supervised over the rituals of the temple. The emergence of this office shows the direct influence of the administration"⁶⁰.

However, Dr C V Ramachandra Rao observes as follows. "As in the present day temple administration, during the later Ganga and Gajapati times, the government appears to have appointed an executive officer, who was in over-all charge of the temple administration and to whose authority all the temple employees, including the trust board of Vaishnavas, were responsible. The executive officer who represented the government of the administration of the temple was called *bhōga-parīksha*. The officer of *bhōga-parīksha* to be in overall charge of the affairs of famous temples like those at Sīmhāchalam and at Srikūrmam appears to have been created during the time of Bhānudeva I, for this office appears in the inscriptions of the later Gangas of Sīmhāchalam and Srikūrmam, from the time of Bhānudeva I only Bhānudeva I who was credited with the reorganisation of the administration of the empire, appears to have brought the temple also under his purview. The temple, with its employees running to several hundreds, being a state within a state, the government might have felt the need to appoint its own representative on the temple administration. That the *bhōga-parīksha* was a Government Official is evident

from the fact that sometimes we find *Kalinga-pariksha* officiating also as the *bhōga-pariksha* of the temples at Sindhāchalam. As the representative of the government and the trust board of the temples, the *bhōga-pariksha* might have seen to the proper utilisation of the temple funds and took measures against misappropriation and embezzlement⁶¹.

In this context we may also note that *sthānāpati* was the highest officer of many temples in the Andhra country, as evidenced by a number of inscriptions⁶². It is interesting to note that there is only one inscription in the Sindhāchalam temple which mentions *sthānāpatis (sthānāpatulu)*⁶³. Here also the term *sthānāpati* occurs along with *Tirupati Śrivaishṇavulu*. As K. Sundaram suggests the *bhōga-pariksha* was an over-all officer in charge of the temple administration and acted also as the *sthānāpati*. At least one inscription shows that the *bhōga-pariksha* had the power to appoint the temple servants. This inscription, which is partly damaged, records that *bhōga-pariksha* Sri Narasimhabhārati śrīpādālu appointed a woman as a temple servant in the vacancy caused by another woman leaving the temple service. Unfortunately the details with regard to the nature of the duties of the temple servant in question are not specified in the record. This inscription is dated 1359 A.D.⁶⁴ It may further be noted here that Sri Narasimhabhārati śrīpādālu was serving the temple as the *bhōga-pariksha* when a certain *mahāsenāpati* was *Kalinga-pariksha*.

Some records of the period register the gift made to *bhōga-pariksha* obviously as an agent of the temple. An inscription of 1307 A.D., mentions a gift made to the temple under the jurisdiction of the *bhōga-pariksha* named Śrivaradagiri śrīpādālu⁶⁵. Another record of 1376 A.D., registers the gift made to the temple by a *Kalinga-pariksha* under the administration of *bhōga-pariksha*⁶⁶.

We have already noted above that Ramachandra Rao considered *bhōga-pariksha* as an officer appointed by the king. He has also shown the evidence that one and the same individual acted as a *Kaṭṭiṅga-pariksha* and *bhōga-pariksha*. An inscription, dated 1357 A.D., purports to record the grant of land when Dharma *mahāsenāpati* was the *bhōga-pariksha* and the *Kaṭṭiṅga-pariksha* as well⁶⁷. Another inscription, dated 1375 A.D., records a provision made for maintaining a *sāni* when Dharmadāsajīya was the *bhōga-pariksha* and *Kaṭṭiṅga-pariksha*⁶⁸.

Following is a brief account of the *bhōga-pariksha* of the Narasiṃhasvāmī temple at Sīṃhāchalam.

Date in A D	Name	Designation
1307 ⁶⁹	Varadagiri Śrīpādāmulu	Bhoga-pariksha
1350 ⁷⁰	Janārdana senāpati	-do-
1350 ⁷¹	Narasimha Bhārati śrīpādālu	-do-
1357 ⁷²	Dharmamahāsenāpati	Kaṭṭiṅga and Bhoga-pariksha
1371 ⁷³	Chūlasahāsamlla	-do-
1375 ⁷⁴	Pātradharmadāsajīya	Kaṭṭiṅga and Bhoga-pariksha
1382 ⁷⁵	Bittara Buḍāyīlenka sahasra jīya	Bhoga-pariksha
1402 ⁷⁶	Narāyaṇasenāpati	-do-
1415 ⁷⁷	Haridāsa sāhasamallu	-do-
1421 ⁷⁸	Parasurāmu jīya	-do-

The foregoing study leads us to the following conclusions. The office of *bhōga-pariksha* is referred to in the inscriptions covering a period of about a century. The earliest reference to this office can be traced in an inscription dated 1307 A.D., while the latest belongs to 1421 A.D. The

names of the *bhōga-pariksha* occurring in early inscriptions suggest that in the beginning the Madhwa-brāhmins were in charge of this office. In later stages the Vaishnavas replaced them. It is of significance to note that at times *Kalīnga-pariksha*, who was a royal official, acted as *bhōga-pariksha* of the temple. It is also of considerable interest to state that some of the *bhōga-parikshas* were *patras* and *senāpatis* which indicates their position in the government. These instances appear to support the statement of Ramachandra Rao that the government appointed the *bhōga-parikshas*. It may not be wrong to postulate that the *bhōga-parikshas* enjoyed shares in the *prasāda*⁷⁹. During the period under review the work of the *bhōga-pariksha* consisted mainly of accepting endowments both in kind and cash and distributing the *vr̥tti* or *nibandhana* of *prasāda* (fixed by the donors) to persons for whom the endowment was made.

The above epigraphical information will enable us to draw the following conclusions. An official by name *bhōga-pariksha*, as evidenced by the above table, came into existence in the first quarter of the 14th century A.D. His main purpose or duty was to supervise the various *bhōgas* that were conducted or celebrated in the Sindhachalam temple complex. From this it is evident he was purely an officer in charge of religious endowments and also an officer in charge of supervision of the execution of various religious festivals in the temple. This post was created by the Eastern Gangas, for they wanted to have their control over the general administrations and as well as economic control of the temple organisation. But it is evident from the inscriptions that there occurred some sort of change in the official designation namely *bhōga-pariksha*. It may be stated in this connection that an official by name *Kalīnga-pariksha* figured in the administrative organisation of the Gangas. It is known from the epigraphical information that this officer was originally

in charge of the administrative matters of the Kalinga-region. Hence he was called the *Kalinga-pariksha*. But it appears that there was a change in the designation, status, privileges and the duties entrusted to this officer. The epigraphical information clearly shows that the office of the *Kalinga-pariksha* and the *bhōga-pariksha* were combined and came under the control of one officer. This change will tempt us to state that in the first instance that the *bhōga-pariksha* was incharge of the various *bhōgas* might have misused his power. In the second instance the Eastern Ganga king with the intention of tightening his grip over the administration and the economic organisation of the temple combined the powers of the *Kalinga-pariksha* and the *bhōga-pariksha* and finally brought it under the control of one officer. This reflects not only the economic stability of the Simhāchalam temple but also about the anxiety of the Ganga monarchs to establish their control over it. It may be stated here that after 1371 A.D., some amount of relaxation was evident in the control exercised by the Eastern Gangas over the administrative organisation of the Simhāchalam temple. This is very clearly evident from the fact that *bhōga-pariksha* was allowed to enjoy freedom and autonomy in the administration of the Simhāchalam temple right from 1371 A.D. It is likely that the temple administration was thoroughly streamlined and hence this relaxation of the royal control over the combination of *Kalinga* and *bhōga-parikshas*.

BHAṆḌĀRA MUDRADHĀRI :

Another official of *śrībhāṇḍāra* in the temple who bears the seal of the *bhaṇḍāra* described as *bhaṇḍāra-mudradhāri*. This very designation *mudradhāri* makes it clear that he is responsible for the safety of the cash, gold, precious stones, etc., deposited in the temple treasury. However, in this case we have only one reference and it does not give details with regard to this office⁸⁰.

BHŌGA-KARAṆAMU :

Three inscriptions of the 14th century dated 1389 A.D., refer to another official *bhōga-karaṇamu* who was to maintain the accounts of the temple. The inscriptions make it clear that *bhōga-karaṇamu* received remuneration in the form of a share in the *prasāda* as well as money which was paid annually¹¹.

It may be stated here that we have made a reference above to an official by name *bhōga-pariksha* who was in charge of the general administration of the temple. It is again stated there that in later times a royal official by name *Kalinga-pariksha* was appointed to supervise the work of *bhōga-pariksha*. Now it is evident from the epigraphical reference that from the last quarter of the 14th century *bhōga-pariksha* was allowed to discharge duties without the royal interference. In the same period a separate official by name *bhōga-karaṇam* came into existence. His main duty was to look after the successful maintenance of the accounts of the *bhogas* instituted by the royalty. It should be noted here that it was not his duty to maintain the accounts of the *bhogas* instituted by the other donors. It is also interesting to note that *bhōga-karaṇamu* was expected to discharge his duties under the active supervision of *bhōga-pariksha*.

ŚRIKARAṆAMU :

Karaṇamu means document and obviously therefore *Karaṇam* was in charge of the drafting of the documents and the proper upkeep of accounts. Numerous grants made by the various donors and their allotment under various heads of expenditure paved the way for the appointment of an accountant in the temple. We have a couple of epigraphical references to *śrikaraṇamu*. A record, dated 1416 A.D., refers to one *senāpati* who acted as *śrikaraṇamu* and also as *Kalinga-*

*pariksha*⁸³ Another record of the same date also refers to another *senāpati* as *śrīkarana* and *Kalinga-pariksha*⁸⁴.

It is interesting to note that in both the instances *śrīkaranamu* had also as *Kalinga-pariksha*, a royal official, at times officiated as *śrīkarana* in the Narasimhasvāmi temple. This attests to the control exercised by the royal authorities in maintaining the temple accounts

From the above epigraphical information we can draw the following conclusions Firstly, *Śrīkaranamu* was in charge of the entire accounts of the temple Secondly this post was enjoyed by *senāpatis* or military commanders Thirdly the post of a *senāpati*, *Kalinga-pariksha* and *Śrīkaranamu* were combined It is likely that there must have been some occasional fraudulent practices like embezzlement by the accountant of the temple It is also probable that the offence must have been very serious Hence the fact that *senāpati* was made to act as *śrīkaranamu* and *Kalinga-pariksha* Mention may be made here that *bhōga-karanam*'s jurisdiction over *śrīkaranamu* is not stated in any of the inscriptions that are found at Sindhāchalam but we may surmise that a *senāpati* while acting as a *Kalinga-pariksha* might have extended his jurisdiction over both *bhōga-karanamu* and *śrīkaranamu*. But at present it lacks epigraphical confirmation

We have discussed so far the principal officers who were in charge of major departments in the administration of the temple Besides these officials there were many minor officials who were in charge of minor functions They are discussed in the following pages

KOṢṬHA-DEVULA-PARIKSHA :

The term *Koṣṭha-devula-pariksha* probably denotes the office of the supervisor of the temple-stores where different

kinds of articles like rice and pulses were stored. The official *Kōṣṭha-devula-pariksha* is mentioned in an epigraph dated 1359 A.D.⁸⁵

KOṢṬHA-KARAṆAMU :

Only one epigraph of the period dated 1281 A.D., refers to the official *Kōṣṭha-karanamu* obviously who worked in the store room of the temple⁸⁶. He was to maintain the accounts connected with the temple store.

UTTAMA ŚRĪṄĀRA PARIKSHA :

We have only one inscription mentioning *uttama śrīṅāra pariksha*. The term *śrīṅāra pariksha* may be taken to be the 'supervisor of the decorative articles such as jewellery of the god'. The objective *uttama* perhaps suggests that he was an adept in examining the quality of the precious stones and metals used in making the jewellery. A record dated 1284 A.D., mentions Brahmanadāsa-panḍya as the *uttama śrīṅāra pariksha* of the *śrībhāṇḍāra*⁸⁷.

TONṬA PARIKSHA (GARDEN SUPERVISOR) :

A number of inscriptions refer to the gifts of garden lands made to the temple for supplying flowers, garlands and fruits for the daily worship, as well as during the festival days. These garden lands were situated in different places which were sometimes far away from the temple. The supervision of such lands was done by the local agents appointed by the temple. This is evidenced by an inscription dated 1288 A.D., which records that the Oddadi chief Mankadityadevaraja gifted some land in Pulluvadadhara to the temple for supplying different types of flowers and fruits⁸⁸. For the cultivation of this land he appointed a supervisor *Jihari nambyālu*, described as *tonṭa-pariksha*. This evidence clearly shows that supervisors of the land were

appointed by the donor. They received the remuneration either in kind or cash from the donor who deposited it with temple. In this record the donor gifted some land to the *tantrapariksha*.

In conclusion we may state that we have discussed the innumerable number of officials, both religious and secular which were connected directly to the administration of the temple. They were not only in charge of the over-all administration of the temple but also looked after the safe conduct of various rituals, the preservation of the temple treasury, keeping the accounts, looking after the garden lands and the cattle-wealth and the supply of the various articles like jewels, flowers, *prasadam*, fruits, etc.

It is of considerable interest to state here that there is a definite evolution in the hierarchy of officials who were in charge of the temple administration. This is very well evident from the epigraphical information that before the dawn of the 14th century the temple administration was simple and the administrative staff of the temple were very much limited. It is obvious that the economic stability of the temple at this time was not up to the mark. But the temple administration became complex and also very much widen after the 14th century A.D. The reason is that in the 14th and the 15th centuries, countless number of grants, giving information regarding the donation of the land, money, cattle, oil, villages and other articles came into existence. In this the Eastern Ganga kings, the later Gajapati kings and their feudatories took particular interest by making donations referred above to the Simhachalam temple complex. This was mainly responsible in promoting not only the economic stability of the temple but also in the expansion of the administrative machinery. It may not be out of place here to state that due to the overwhelming economic expansion of the temple resources monetary embezzlements took place. This in its

turn brought changes in the administrative structure of the temple. This is very well supported by the institution of an officer like *Kalinga-pariksha*. Besides, a *senapati* was allowed to enjoy the office of both the *bhoga-pariksha* and the *kalinga-pariksha* as well as *srikarapa* and *kalinga-pariksha*.

We may now proceed to discuss the duties, privileges and the remuneration paid to the temple officials and servants. It is clearly evident from the inscriptions that the donors while instituting various festivals, ceremonies and rituals to be performed in the temple by the staff, a clear reference was also made regarding the remuneration or the salary paid to the temple staff for execution of the instituted rituals and festivals. It is known from the epigraphical evidence that the temple staff was allowed to have the remuneration in the form of a piece of land, cash, *prasadam*, etc. It should be noted here that it was the liability of the donor. Never were remuneration and salaries paid from the monetary deposits of the temple or from the income accruing from the temple land.

Mention may be made in this connection that enjoyment of any sort of privileges was perhaps granted to the temple staff for there is no epigraphical evidence of it. Yet there is a solitary epigraph which refers to the donation of a land and also provision for the construction of a house to a *sani* or temple dancer⁹⁹. By taking this evidence into consideration we may state that similar provisions and privileges might have been extended to the other temple staff. This assumption is further corroborated by the fact that during the time of the Kākatiyas of Warangal, the Reddis of Kondavidu and the Eastern Gangas of Kalinga, provisions were made for allotting houses to the temple staff. But in the context of the Simhachalam temple we have to wait for further epigraphical confirmation.

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- 11 *Ibid*, No 975
- 12 *Ibid*, Nos 1052 and 890
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- 21 For details see A Suryakumari, *The Temple in Andhradesa* (Ph D thesis, unpublished, S V University, Tirupati, 1967) ff 224
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- 31 *Ibid*, No 1128
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78 *Ibid.*, Nos 779, 1048 and 1091
79 *Ibid.*, No 876
80 *Ibid.*, No 1205
81 *Ibid.*, Nos 1006, 1007, 1008 and 1009
82 *Ibid.*, No 1046
83 *Ibid.*, No 707
84 *Ibid.*, No 721
85 *Ibid.*, No 1097
86 *Ibid.*, No 1118
87 *Ibid.*, No 947
88 *Ibid.*, No 975
89 *Ibid.*, No 1052 and 1202



CHAPTER - V

FUNCTIONS OF THE TEMPLE

IN the preceding chapters we have discussed the historical evolution of the temple through the ages. Further, various rituals and festivals and their significance both in the secular and in the sacerdotal aspects were studied. The growth of the economic stability of the Simhāchalam temple complex was also discussed by taking into account not only the number of donations but also the nature of donations, made to the temple. Then, the temple's administrative staff as it grew over the years was studied in detail, with reference to their hierarchy in the administrative set up of the temple, their remuneration and their privileges. In the following pages an attempt is made to study in detail the role played by the Simhāchalam temple in the economy and the cultural development of the contemporary society.

The temple in ancient, medieval and modern times served as a great centre for social, economic, religious and cultural activities. It acquired through donations large economic resources and assets. This enabled it to play the role of an employer. The economic stability of the temple and the large number of cash donations impelled the temple

to act as a banker. Besides the temple also promoted education and the fine arts like music, dance, architecture, sculpture etc. It is evident from the Hindu tradition that the construction of a temple was an act of piety which would bring religious merit to the builder. It is on account of this that the construction of the temple was considered one of the *sapta-santānas*. There is a wealth of epigraphical information available in the Simhāchalam temple complex to attest all these activities.

TEMPLE AS A REPOSITORY OF FINE ARTS :

The temple in India is not only a religious centre but also a great centre for the promotion of fine arts. Art and religion are inseparable. Art and religion are as old as man. Man, in his quest for new modes of making the earthly installed god happy by providing him different kinds of offerings and entertainment, discovered music and dance, dramaturgy and other fine arts as best suited for worship. Therefore, the religious necessity and human urge played an important part in the evolution of fine arts. Especially, with the advent of the Bhakti cult, music and dance became part and parcel of worship. Thus, approved and sanctioned by religion, the fine arts thrived well under the patronage of the temple and the temple itself became a repository of fine arts.

C V Ramachandra Rao rightly observes, "The twin fine arts of music and dance were greatly patronised by the rulers, the dignitaries and the temple management. In the temples one of the important services offered to the deity by devotees was entertainment by way of music and dance¹. According to K. Sundaram just as the royal court of the medieval times gave patronage not only to men of learning but also to the cultivation of liberal arts, so also the medieval temple extended its patronage to music and dance"².

Thus, the comparison of the daily routine of a deity enshrined in a temple to that of a king was not limited to the food, entertainment and other personal habits alone, but it also extended to the patronising of fine arts. Just like a magnanimous and munificent king, the deity in a temple was also a great patron of music, dance, drama, art, sculpture, painting and other kindred arts. Like the king's court, the temple had on its pay-roll musicians - both vocalists and instrumentalists, beautiful dancers, dance masters and literary luminaries and thus shows the extent to which the temple went in fostering and encouraging fine arts. Now let us proceed to discuss in detail the contribution made by the Sindhachalam temple complex for the preservation and promotion of fine arts.

A good number of inscriptions from the temple record the gifts by the devotees to maintain the musicians and dancers for the promotion of the twin fine arts. Many of the records refer to the construction of dancing halls (*nāṭyamandapas*) to the temple. We find particularly in the 13th and the 14th century inscriptions that the later Eastern Ganga kings and Gajapatis largely contributed to the development of fine arts through the temple. The earliest inscription which refers to the temple dancers belongs to the reign of Eastern Ganga king Narasimhaḍḍa I. This epigraph is very important in that it records that the king endowed as many as 100 beautiful women (*sānis*) to the temple for rendering music and dance in the presence of the god Narasimha (*Narahareḥ-saṅgīta-hetor-adāt-Vīranarasimhaḍḍa-nṛpati-svā-āyā-yasō-vṛddhaye nityam vāma vilōchanas śatamitas chandrārkatāravadhī*). It further states that a *naṭṭava* (*dance teacher*) was also included in this group³. Another inscription, dated 1268 A D, which belongs to the same king records that one Aktaṇḍi *sēnāpati*, a minister, on the orders of the king constructed a *nāṭyamandapa* (dancing hall), along with the *mukhamandapa*,

śrīvimāna and *tiruchuṣṣumālya* to the *Simhādri* temple. This inscription testifies to the royal patronage to the temple and its contribution to the development of music and dance⁴.

Music occupied an important part in the temple worship. A variety of vocal and instrumental music was provided by different kinds of specialists both male and female appointed in the temple service. An inscription, dated 1290 A.D., records that *Dāsa Paṇḍita*, who was the *antaranga mahāpātra* of the Eastern Ganga king Narasimha II, paid 20 *gaṇḍa-mādas* into the temple treasury for maintaining two flutists and four *sānis* (*Varanāri*) for rendering music in the temple⁵. Another inscription, dated 1349 A.D., records that one Amarapadi *rāyudu* who was a *vaṣya* and belonged to the village Potnuru, made provision for maintaining four women musicians of whom two were experts in playing on the *vīṇa*⁶. These musicians were to render music in the presence of the god both in the morning and in the evening. Another epigraph, dated 1374 A.D., records the provision made by *pātra* Dharmadāsa jīyana, a *Kaṭiṅga-parikṣha* for maintaining a group of *sānis* of whom some were to render music on the *vīṇa* in the presence of the god Varāhanarasimha⁷.

It is known from another inscription, dated 1350 A.D., Gangadevi, the queen of Narasimha instituted a *bhōga* in the name of herself and her husband and made arrangements for rendering music and dance during the conduct of the *bhōga*⁸. This inscription is of inestimable importance, for it gives detailed information not only regarding the position of music and dance in the second quarter of the 14th century A.D., but also throws lucid light on the composition of the orchestra. It states that the musical party consisted of 18 beautiful women who were to sing and dance accompanied by the orchestra. The details of the music troupe are as follows.

Sl No	Particulars	Number of persons
1	Dancers (<i>pātralu</i>)	8
2	Women players on drum (<i>mudalikattelu</i>)	2
3	Songstress (<i>gāyani</i>)	1
4	Players on an instrument-by name <i>tūkhinamu</i>	1
5	Players of bronze symbols (<i>Kamsatālamu</i>)	1
6	Players of conch and bronze cymbals	1
7	Drummers and kettle drummers	1
8	<i>Mukhāri</i>	1
9	<i>Brahma mukhāri</i> and <i>Sūmantakāhali</i>	1
10	<i>Kāhali</i>	1

Another inscription of 1376 A D , refers to two flutists who were to provide music while singing *mangalagītas* in the temple during the early morning time (*Prabhāta samayamandu*)⁹ It is of interest to note that one of the inscriptions, dated 1390 A D , records that one Garuda *dāsu* belonging to the Oriya tradition was to render *nāmasankīrtana* daily from the time of *tirumañjanam* till the sandalwood paste was applied to the image of the deity '*Oḍya sāmpradāyamuna Ojja Śrīrāma Vaiṣṇavuni koḍuku Garuḍadāsu nāmasankīrtanamulu gānamcheyanu*'¹⁰ Another inscription, dated 1421 A D , mention the provision made to the dance master named Ranganatha *vāggeyakāru* who had the titles *abhinava bharatāchārya*, *chappanam levakāra* and *tōdaramullu*¹¹ Yet another damaged inscription, dated in the 3rd regnal year of the Eastern Ganga king Bhānudeva, records that one Srīramavaishnava and his son Purayivaishnava were appointed as the player of *mukhāri* and the dance teacher (*naṭṭava*) respectively¹² Both were expected to render services during the conduct of the special offering *Ganga-*

narasimha-bhōga There are numerous inscriptions, which record donations made to *sānis* attached to the temple for singing and dancing in the presence of the Lord¹³

We have discussed so far the epigraphical evidence regarding the contribution made by the Simhāchalam temple for the promotion of arts. With the help of the above epigraphical wealth of information we can very well draw the following conclusions

There are epigraphical references to the construction of the *nāṭyamandapas*. These *nāṭyamandapas* became the architectural adjuncts of the main temple complex. Thus in one way the temple promoted the architectural activity of the age.

The construction of separate dancing halls and the profuse donation of temple dancers, popularly known as *sānis*, gave a new direction and dimension to the fine arts. These *sānis* were of two types, i.e., dancers and singers. It is known from this that not only dancing received recognition and patronage but also singing to a considerable extent. It should be noted here that singing and dancing always go hand in hand.

It is very interesting to note that the donors were not only interested in providing for the promotion of music and dance but also gave the required assistance for the maintenance of *naṭṭavas* or dance teachers. In one of the inscriptions, dated in 1421 A.D., a reference is made to a dance master by name Ranganatha¹⁴. He has been referred to in that inscription as *Vāggeyakāru* and *abhinava bharatāchārya*. These two references show that Ranganatha was not only an accomplished scholar but also a master of the *nāṭyasāstra* of *Bharata*. This shows that the donors were very much interested in appointing experts in music and dance as the *naṭṭavas*.

It is known from an inscription, dated in 1350 A.D., that instrumental music received due recognition and importance in the period under our consideration¹⁵. The drums, cattle drums, cymbals, flute, *mukhāri*, *kāhali*, etc., are referred to, in inscription mentioned above. There is a reference to musical instruments like *tūkinamu*, *mukhāri* and *kāhali*. It is difficult to find out their modern equivalents. However, it is likely that they were stringed instruments. *Mukhāri* and *kāhali*, it appears, had their variations. *Brahma mukhāri* and *sumantakāhali* are examples of it. But at present the purpose and the significance of these musical instruments, can only be conjectured.

It is of absorbing interest to note in this connection that in one of the inscriptions, dated 1390 A.D., a grant was made to sing *nāmasankīrtanas* according to the Oriya tradition. It is likely that musical and dance recitals in the Oriya tradition played an important part at the time of conducting rituals and festivals in the Sīmhāchalam temple complex.

In conclusion we may state that the patronage extended for the promotion of the fine arts gained a new momentum in the 13th and the 14th century A.D. The most powerful historical factor for this change in the history of the temple and also in the development of the fine arts was the patronage extended by the Eastern Ganga and the Gajapati kings. The ostentatious as well as the munificent donations and the grants made by the Gangas and the Gajapatis increased the economic stability of the temple. This change reflected in the patronage extended to the preservation, promotion and the propagation of the fine arts. It may not be out of place here to state that it was the patronage extended by the Oriya kings, the Gangas and the Gajapatis, that was responsible mainly for the introduction of the Oriya tradition in the promotion of the fine arts. This is very well attested by the

inscription found in the Siṃhāchalam temple complex and also dated in 1390 A D ¹⁶

In the Siṃhāchalam temple several sculptures are carved on the exterior and in the interior of the temple. They give us a wealth of information about the evolution of the dance postures enunciated in the *Nāṭyaśāstra* of Bharata. We have stated above that Ranganatha enjoyed the title of *Abhinava Bharatāchārya*. The various dance postures that are depicted in the temple sculptures are nothing but those enunciated in the *Nāṭyaśāstra* of Bharata. In this connection the observations of K. Sundaram are valid. He states ; “The sculptural wealth of the Siṃhāchalam temple is replete with panels depicting musicians and dancers. On the outer walls of the *vimāna*, is depicted a female dancer dancing to the tune of a male drummer. Panels depicting dancing party consisting of four female drummers, a male dancer and three female dancers, are carved around a pillar in front of the *mukhamandapa*. What is today called *Kalyāṇa mandapa* was in fact *nāṭyamandapa* of the medieval times. On the pillars of this *mandapa* and on the other compartments of the plinth are depicted scenes of song and dance”¹⁷

CENTRE FOR EDUCATION :

The Siṃhāchalam temple played an important role in the development of education. Many kings contributed to the development of education through the Siṃhāchalam temple. That liberal endowments were made for the maintenance of teachers and students, is evidenced by many inscriptions. As already noted above there were dancers and musicians in the Siṃhāchalam temple to serve the god Varāhanarasimha. To impart training to students in these fields the temple maintained *naṭṭavas* (dance teachers) of great eminence and they, (dance teachers) were endowed with the high-sounding title *Abhinava Bharatāchārya*. It is also evident from the inscriptions that a number of musicians and dancers

were attached to the temple which testifies to the patronage extended to the twin fine arts, music and dance. Here we may note that dancers in particular were expected to have a thorough knowledge of not only the treatises on dance but also of the *purāṇas*, *kāvya*s and *aesthetics*. Therefore, it is well nigh certain that the temple had able scholars on its staff.

In this connection C V Ramachandra Rao observes "Next to the *agrahāras*, education was greatly fostered by the temple. Where as in the *agrahāras*, instruction might have been confined to the study of the *vedas* and Sanskrit learning in general, in the temple provision was made for the study of several branches of knowledge including fine arts like music, dance, sculpture, etc., besides the traditional Sanskrit lore. Like the *agrahāra*, each major temple was a porch of higher education where facilities existed for the instruction of pupils in several branches of knowledge including the fine arts. Both in the *agrahāra* and in the temple education was free, sometimes provision being made for the board and lodge of both the teacher and the taught"¹⁸

A few inscriptions from the Sindhachalam temple record the endowments made for maintaining the teachers to teach the *Vedas* and other disciplines. The earliest inscription which refers to the teaching of the *Vedas* in the Sindhachalam temple, is dated 1201 A D. It records that Narasimhanāyaka, a *karana* of the village Gannikota made provision for the maintenance of the teachers who were to give instructions in the study of *Yajurveda* in the temple (*Vedādhyayanamu cheyinchedi upādhyāyulaku prasādapaḍi idi bhuktigā Yajurvedamu adhyayanamu sēyimpagalaru*)¹⁹

Another inscription, dated 1291 A D, records that one Narayana *senapati*, who was a *Kalinga-pariksha* during the 15th regnal year of the Eastern Ganga king Pratapa Viranarasimhadeva, gifted 140 *gaṇḍa-māḍas* for conducting

different cultural activities in the temple²⁰ In this *three nibandhas* were provided to two scholarly *brāhmanas* described as *ghaḍiśāsulu* to give training in *Kāṇḍava* and *Taittiriya* branches of the *Yajurveda* (*Kāṇḍava taittiriyaśāsthalu chadivincheḍi ghaḍi śāsulaina brāhmanulaku iddaraku mūḍu nibandhālu*) It further states that five *nibandhas* were given to three more scholarly *brāhmanas* (*Vidvat brāhmanas*) to give training in *purāna-kāvya*, *vyākaraṇa*, *nāṭaka*, *alankāra*, *abhidāna* and *chandas* (*Purāna kāvya nāṭaka alankāra chandō vyākaraṇa abhidānālu paṭhumpincheḍi vidvat brāhmanulu muvvuraku nibandhālu ayidu*). Here the term *ghaḍiśāsulu* is note-worthy It is the corrupt form of Sanskrit *ghaṭiśāsī* which means the chief of a *ghatika* As is well known *ghatika* was an educational institution and found mentioned in some copper plate charters of the Vishnukundis and the Eastern Chalukyas In the present context it is probable that a *ghatika* was attached to the Simhāchalam temple

Another inscription, dated 1383 A.D., records that Champu *Mahāsenapati* appointed Oḍya Peddi *bhatlu* and made provision for maintaining him and his group of scholars (*veeru veeri vargamu vāru*) to give training in *Vedic* studies to all the *brāhmanas* residing in Śrī Narasimhaksetra, i.e., Simhāchalam (*Narasimha ksetramandu sakalamaina brāhmanulaku vēdādhyayanamu cheyincheḱorakai Oḍya Peddi bhaṭlukunu nnyaminchi*)²¹. The descriptive term Oḍya of the *brāhmana* is significant that it suggests that the scholar migrated from the Odhra country

The inscriptions that are found in the Simhāchalam temple give some interesting information regarding the promotion of learning and education The reference to *ghaḍiśāsulu* implies that there were *ghatikas* attached to the Simhāchalam temple. The *ghatika* was invariably an educational institution in the form of *ghatikas* in an

embryonic stage, started by the Satavahanas. The Vishnukundis, the Eastern Chalukyas of Vengi and the Kakatiyas of Warangal extended uncommon patronage for the promotion of this educational institutions. We may state in this connection that in an inscription, dated 1383 A.D., and also records a grant for the maintenance of the group of scholars to give training to the students²². There is a definite reference to the educational institutions that prevailed during the period under our study.

It is known from the epigraphical information that *Yajurveda*, *Purānas*, *Kāvyas*, *Vyākaraṇa*, *Nāṭaka*, *Abhidhāna*, *Alankāra*, etc., were taught in the educational institution of the period. This religious education was exploited at the time of reciting *Puruṣasūkta*, *Narasimhakavacha*, *Sahasranāma*, *Vishṇustōtra*, *Purāna paṭhana*, etc.²³ The subjects that were included in the curricula of these educational institutions clearly indicate that it was dominated by the priestly class. It is known from the subjects taught in the educational institutions like *ghaṭikas* attached to the temple that the privileged class dominated the educational system of the times. This receives further confirmation from the language used in the inscription that are found in the temple complex under our survey. Most of the inscriptions were composed either in Sanskrit or in Oriya which was not the language of the masses. It was the language of the aristocracy. Thus, the entire educational system of the period under our consideration, was aimed at promoting the cause of the privileged classes the priestly and the ruling classes. It is highly doubtful whether the people belonging to the lower social orders were admitted to the educational institutions of the period. There is neither epigraphical nor literary evidence to confirm this fact. Thus, in conclusion we may state that the entire educational system of the period was

dominated by sacerdotal priorities rather than by secular ideas. Mention may be made here that this was the general feature prevailing in India as a whole.

TEMPLE AS PROMOTER OF AGRICULTURE :

Agriculture is the basic occupation on which the vast majority of the population depends for its livelihood. As evidenced by the inscriptions, the Simhāchalam temple as the biggest land-owner and occupied a very important place in the agrarian economy of the region. Right from the Chalukya Cholas, this temple had considerable landed property. Both royal benefaction and patronage took the form of land grants.

The temple acquired lands around the hill as a result of the endowments instituted by the devotees. Early inscriptions invariably refer to the acquisition of the land near the tank at Adivivaramu. The earliest inscription of the temple, dated 1087 A.D., mentions that a merchant of Penugonda purchased the land near the tank and made it over to the treasury of the temple²⁴. In course of time even the lands or villages in distant provinces like Jantarunadu²⁵, Kailampadu²⁶, Bobbili²⁷, Tengada²⁸, Velanadu²⁹, Potnuru³⁰ and Odyadesa were granted to the temple. A number of inscriptions in the temple belonging to the 13th, the 14th and the 15th centuries record the endowment of land to the temple for several purposes. Sometimes whole villages and other times portions of villages or some plots of land, either irrigated or unirrigated were gifted. But unfortunately, no accurate record is available for the total landed property of the temple in medieval times. However, from the inscriptions, it is evident that the landed property increased considerably during the reign of the Eastern Gangas and the Gajapatis. According to *Narasimha sataka* of Gogulapati Kurmanatha kavi, 865 acres of land were under the control of the temple at the beginning of the 16th century³¹.

How could the temple authorities manage the agricultural operations in the lands distributed over so many villages, far and near? The inscriptions give us many details of endowments of land and money by various donors. They also reveal in detail the mode of the utilisation of land and the money. As evidenced by the inscriptions of the 12th and the 13th centuries, the temple invested its money received from the devotees, in the form of silver and gold coins for the development of the temple lands near the tanks and streams of the region. There are many inscriptions of the temple belonging to the 12th and the 13th centuries which specifically give details about the nature of the investments to be made out of the capital endowment of the donor and the specific utilisation of the returns on it. For example, one of the inscriptions, dated 1207 A.D., records that one *Srīrama Chatopadhyaya* gifted 10 *bragoṇṇapu-māḍas* for maintaining an *akhaṇḍadīpa* in the temple and that the same money was spent on deepening a tank at Duttanda. It further proceeds to state that the extent of one *puṣṭi* and five *tūmus* of land irrigated by the aforesaid tank, was set apart and out of the income accruing from it, one *māna* of ghee was supplied daily to the temple for maintaining the *akhaṇḍadīpa* set up by the donor³². Another inscription, dated 1210 A.D., records that the amount of 10 *tyāgi-māḍas* gifted by one *Narasimhanāyaka* for maintaining a *Veda khaṇḍika* was utilised for excavating a tank. This inscription further states that, the produce of the land of one *puṣṭi* and five *tūmus* in extent, which was irrigated by the above tank was utilised for offering *naivedya* to the god. This inscription further proceeds to register that the *prasāda* of the god was made over to a teacher who was to teach *Yajurveda*³³. There are many such inscriptions which give same details³⁴. In such cases the temple authorities themselves took the responsibility of maintaining a service as stipulated by the donor. In the course of time, the temple appointed supervisors or certain

local agents who took every precaution during the cultivation and the harvest and saw to it that after paying all wages and other dues to the farmers, the produce was brought to the temple. These agents were appointed by the temple or by the donors. This is evidenced by an inscription, dated 1288 A.D., which records that a certain Oddavadi chief by name Mankaditya Devaraja gifted some land in Pulluvadadhara to the temple. For the cultivation of this land he appointed a supervisor Jihari *nambyālu*, described as *tonṭa-pariksha*. He received remuneration from the donor who deposited it with the temple. In this record the donor gifted some land to the *tonṭa-pariksha*³⁵

The foregoing discussion will enable us to draw the following conclusions

We have discussed so far the temple as a promoter of agriculture by taking the land grants into consideration. The kings, the queens, the merchants, the feudatories and the philanthropic public donated land profusely to the temple. The inscriptions will give us interesting information regarding the historical evolution of these land grants. Plots of land, villages and garden lands were normally donated to the temple. In the first instance the land and villages situated in and around the temple complex were donated. Afterwards lands and villages located in different parts like Jantarunadu, Velanadu, Odyadesa, etc., were donated to the temple. The land donations to the temple, though started from the 11th century A.D., it extended upto the 16th century A.D. It is known from the epigraphical evidences that a maximum amount of land donations accrued during the rule of the Eastern Gangas and Gajapatis of Orissa.

Inscriptions also give us information regarding the nature of the donations. Individual plots and complete villages were assigned to the temple. In some instances, certain portions of villages were granted. In some instances,

land under cultivation and also fertile land lying waste were donated. The later method was used only under the policy of land reclamation or the extension of agriculture to the fertile lands lying waste.

The inscriptions also give us very interesting information to the effect that the donors and the temple had provided for irrigational facilities. Mention may be made here that often provision was made for the excavation of tanks and also for the judicious distribution of water to the fields.

It is also clear from the above epigraphical references that the donors took very keen interest not only in the maintenance of the lands but also for the successful exploitation of the fertility of the soil. In this connection the donors appointed supervisors to look after the agricultural operations at different stages of cultivating various crops. It is of interest to state here that in one of the inscriptions referred to above, there is a reference to an official by name *tona-pariksha*. *Pariksha* was the designation of an official appointed by a king. Thus, it is likely that some of the supervisors were even appointed by the king. In this connection we may state that these royal officials were in charge of looking after the agricultural operations over the lands and gardens donated by the royalty. Hence we may state that *tona-pariksha* was a royal official in charge of supervising the gardens donated by the kings or their kith and kin. In any case these officials or supervisors were maintained by the donations made by the donors but not by the temple treasury.

- i) The innumerable donations of land and villages made to the temple by the kings, the nobles and other wealthy people etc., literally converted the temple into a landed magnate.

- ii) The lands donated to the temple were located in the proximity of streams, tanks and were adjacent to the villages. This facilitated a great deal to carry on the agricultural operations unhampered.
- iii) Further, it is evident from the epigraphical evidence that along with land, cattle also came to be donated to the temple. These cattle were not meant for sacrifice. Thus the cattle wealth improved and this in turn facilitated growth in agriculture.
- iv) The epigraphs also give us information regarding land measurements. Land was measured in terms of the yielding capacity like *puṣṭas* and *tūmus*.

It is thus evident that the temple promoted agrarian economy to a very great extent.

TEMPLE AS AN EMPLOYER :

The temple in the ancient and medieval times played the role of a big employer. The rituals, festivals and the allied services rendered in the temple were conducted on a large scale. For the safe conduct of these ceremonies and rituals the temple required the services of a large number of people.

The temple in the ancient and medieval times acted as a promoter of fine arts and also helped in the diffusion of learning and education. Thus the temple recruited dancers, musicians, teachers, etc., on a large scale.

The temple to run the administration required the services of different types of people like the priests, the supervisors, the garland makers, the basket makers, the cooks, etc. It may be stated here that this temple personnel were maintained by the temple treasury and also by the donations made by the donors in either cash or in kind. However, it is beyond dispute that the temple generated not only

employment facilities but also opened new avenues of employment.

In conclusion we may state that the priests, reciters of various religious texts and hymns, teachers, etc , might have been recruited from the priestly class This is very well attested by the names of these persons that are recorded in the inscriptions referred to above The menial servants of the temple like the garland makers, the potters, the jewellers, the water carriers, the carriers of the god during the processions and festivals, etc , were invariably recruited from the unprivileged classes The same is the case with regard to the dancing girls (*sānis*) singers and the musicians In the end we may state that the temple without doubt acted as a great employer. But it is likely that it also promoted social fragmentation.

BANKER :

As evidenced by the inscriptions the Simhāchalam temple received grants directly and entrusted them to some individuals on condition that the interest accruing from the grants, should be utilised for providing some service to the temple instituted by the donor The temple also invested its money received from the devotees, on the temple lands and out of the yield from the invested money, the specific service (instituted by the donor) was maintained without interruption Thus, the temple was responsible for these monetary transactions. To effect these transactions and to maintain the services the temple had its own accountants Sometimes the *pūjāris* or *sthānikas* would be entrusted with the grants and asked to arrange certain services to the god out of the interest from these grants. We have innumerable examples found in the inscriptions to attest these transactions³⁶

It is evident from the epigraphical references that the temple received innumerable cash donations and deposits

The donors who made monetary grants specified in many cases that the interest accruing from the principle was expected to be spent on the services instituted by them. It may be surmised that the temple might have invested the deposited amount not only for the extension of the temple but also used it for other monetary transactions which could bring monetary benefit to the temple. This is exactly what the modern banks are doing. Thus, the medieval temples in one way acted as the forerunners of the modern banks.

TEMPLE AS UNIFYING FACTOR :

The ceremonies, rituals and the festivals occupy a position of paramount importance in any temple. They normally attract people belonging to different castes and different levels of economic income. Thus, the temple festivals and rituals become a source of inspiration and attraction to the people. Further, most of the temple festivals are organised and designed in a such a way that they should become an attraction to the people of all classes. It was perhaps with this intention that music, dance and singing had become part of the temple rituals. By and large, the anthropomorphic nature of the Hindu *śāgamas* that systematized worship in the temples, sought to do unto the Lord's image what the devotees would do unto themselves for soulful pleasure. With many of these festivals and ceremonies thus, the large scale participation of people in the celebration of these temple festivals and rituals ought to have contributed largely to social unity and national integration. The best example at present to illustrate to point in focus, is that not only the Simhāchalam temple but also the Tirupati temple complex became a centre of attraction to the people belonging to different regions, adopting different creeds and following different traditions. Thus, the Tirupati temple complex promoted not only religious unity and cultural integration but also has come to remain the Vatican

of India. It is likely that the Simhachalam temple might have served the same purpose in the medieval times. It is historically significant to note that medieval Andhra had never experienced social tensions and sectarian conflicts.

TEMPLE AS PROMOTER OF INDUSTRY :

The temple also played a very important part in promoting industry. It is known through the inscriptions that the donors donated oil, camphor and various jewels to the god. This in its turn promoted the cause of oil industry and jewel making of jewels industry. References to several jewels and oil sellers and guilds confirm the above statement.

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CONCLUSIONS

The foregoing study of the Simhachalam temple inscriptions embody the results of the present research work on the cultural activities of the Varahanarasimhasvami temple at Simhachalam. The temple inscriptions have rich information regarding the social, economic, religious and cultural history of the Kalinga region in general and Andhra in particular. The temple has more than 500 and odd inscriptions which help us to understand the pristine glory of the temple. On the basis of the inscriptions we understand that by about the 11th century itself the temple became very popular and one of the important pilgrim centres in South India.

The earliest inscription found in the temple which is dated 1087 A.D., belongs to the Chalukya Chola king Kuloṭṭunga I while the latest, is dated 1798 A D During this long period of about 700 years kings of several dynasties who ruled over the Andhra country greatly contributed to the economic growth of the Simhachalam temple by their lavish gifts. The gifts were made for conducting festivals, rituals, cultural activities and different services to the god

Varāhanarasimha. We have also valuable information in the inscriptions with regard to the religious as well as the administrative staff of the temple. Since the Sindhachalam temple is close to Orissa the latter's influence is clearly seen in the inscriptions.

It is known from the epigraphical information that the Sindhachalam temple became very famous right from the 11th century onwards for the celebration of festivals like *Akshayatritya*, *Kalyāṇotsava*, *Narasimha-Jayanti*, *Janmāṣṭami*, *Dīpāvali*, etc. On the festival days one could see the blend of deep devotion and mood of festivity in the pilgrims who were attracted even from far off places. Of the festivals *akshayatritya*, which falls on the third day in the month of Vaiśākha, is of special significance for the Sindhachalam temple. The *Kalyāṇotsava* of the Lord Narasimha was celebrated with great pomp and splendour for five days. It resembles the wedding ceremony that one sees in the Hindu household. The *Kārtika dīpāvali* and *Janmāṣṭami* were also observed in the Sindhachalam temple. In fact, except for one or two festivals like *Kumāra-punnami* almost all the festivals are being celebrated with pomp and grandeur even today. This speaks volumes of the popularity of festivals through the ages.

Apart from the festivals, the inscriptions furnish us detailed information regarding the mode of worship that was in vogue in the Sindhachalam temple. Usually in Indian temples the daily worship begins with the chanting of *suprabhāta* and ends with *śayanaseva*. The same procedure was known to have been in practice in the Sindhachalam temple also. In the proceedings of the daily rituals food offerings and different services were to be offered to the god at specified times. To maintain these rituals the devotees donated a number of gifts to the temple over centuries. Apart

from these daily proceedings the kings, the queens and the chiefs instituted some special services (*bhogas*) to the god in their names.

The kings, the queens, the chiefs, the rich as well as the common people made liberal endowments, both in cash and kind, for maintaining different services. The revenue from all these sources was generally made over to the temple treasury, which, in its turn, paid for different services either in cash or in the form of a share in the *prasāda* or both by the temple authorities to the persons who were appointed to perform the specified services. The number of cash endowments testify to the monetary economy of the period under our study. The money deposited in the temple treasury was treated as principle amount and only the interest accruing from it was utilised for the services. In some very rare instances the principle amount was utilised, specially for the development of irrigational works and agriculture. In such cases the temple authorities themselves took the responsibility of maintaining the service as stipulated by the donor. The judicious utilisation of the deposited principle amount and the interest accruing from it for the various developmental activities in the temple show that the temple authorities gave a lot of importance to the balanced budget.

Cattle was frequently gifted to the temple because it would get multiplied in course of time and thus increase the cattle wealth. The endowed cattle was for the express purpose of supplying milk, curd and ghee for maintaining food offerings and *akṣapādas*. The frequent donations of cattle would give us a clear picture of the cattle wealth and the economic stability of the temple. Land assured a permanent source of income and donating land was considered highly meritorious. Land was gifted to the temple for various purposes like maintaining services, food offerings, musicians, dancers, educational institutions and for maintaining the

cattle belonging to the temple. By the land endowments the temple economically became very strong in course of time and was able to maintain its activities to the fullest extent. Like land, villages had also assured uninterrupted income to the temple. The villages were granted by the king or with his permission by others. This shows that royal patronage was extended to the Simhāchalam temple for increasing its fame and popularity in the Kalinga region. The kings and the queens gifted different types of jewellery to the god Varāhanarasimha. This holds good particularly in case of the Eastern Ganga kings and the Vijayanagara king Sri Krishnadevaraya. The description of the various jewels found in the inscriptions attests not only to the wealth of temple but also to the artistic skill of the contemporary goldsmiths.

As mentioned above, with the lavish gifts made by the people belonging to different strata of society, the temple became quite rich and was in a position to conduct various kinds of religious services and observe many festivities. Consequently many people were associated with the temple administration and the Simhāchalam inscriptions bear eloquent testimony to this. The temple staff mentioned in the inscriptions can be divided into three sections, (1) those who were connected with the rituals and religious services, (2) those who were engaged in supervisory duties and were involved in the administrative activities and (3) others who perform menial works. The *Brāhmanas and Nambis*, who were Vaishnavas, participated in the conduct of services like worshipping, supplying water and garlands, etc., to the god. The *Boyas, Nayakas, Dāsaris, Khilāris and Sānis* who belonged to the fourth caste were associated with the temple to serve the god in one way or the other. The *Boyas and Khilāris* were entrusted with the maintenance of cattle endowed to the temple. The others were engaged in the cleaning of the temple premises. The *sānis* who were beautiful and skilled in music and dance were drawn from all the

sections of the society. To maintain all these functionaries the devotees richly endowed the temple with munificent gifts like money, land, etc. From this we can state that the temple promoted and patronised cosmopolitan activities.

It is evident from the inscriptions that during the early period the temple administration was a simple affair. Many inscriptions of this period which purport to record endowments made to the temple, end with the statement *dharmamu trivaishnavula raksha*, implying that the local *Vaishnavas* connected with the temple should protect the charity. From the time of the later Eastern Gangas the official *bhoga-pariksha* came into prominence in the temple administrative structure. With the advent of the Eastern Gangas the government officials came to be associated with the temple administration because of the growth in the activities of the temple which by that time developed into an important pilgrim centre attracting devotees from far and wide. The Sinhachalam temple inscriptions of the medieval period clearly point to the important role played by the temple as one of the biggest employers.

Although adequate information is not available about the role played by the temple in promoting education the extent evidence is of considerable significance. As in the case of any other big temples, the Sinhachalam temple also played a significant role in promoting the twin fine arts of dance and music. The Kings and the rich gifted a considerable

and dance, to the temple. To impart training to the temple dancers, dance masters (*nayanas*) were employed by the temple. Dance and music formed part and parcel of daily services and in fact they were included among the 16 kinds of *upacharas*.

A few inscriptions attest to the fact that the temple had many scholars on its staff. Among the subjects taught in the *ghaṭika* attached to the temple, were the *Yajurveda*, the *purāṇas*, the *kāvya*s, the *nāṭaka*, the *alankāra*, *chchandas*, *abhidhāna*, etc. Thus, sacerdotal and secular education was imparted by the temple to the students.

In conclusion we may state that a detailed and analytical study of the epigraphical wealth of the Simhāchalam temple, enable us to state that the temple under our study played a very vital role in social, religious and cultural history of medieval Andhra. Though the present work is the first genuine attempt in this direction, yet there is scope for further analytical studies on the same lines. Thus it should be noted in the end that the epigraphical wealth of the Simhāchalam temple is a most fertile and fruitful source for researchers to make their intellectual excursions.



GLOSSARY

ARCHITECTURE :

- Asthana maṇḍapa - Assembly hall
Bhoga maṇḍapa - The hall of enjoyment
Dhara maṇḍapa - Kitchen
Dvāra - Door way
Gah gopuram - Main pagoda
Garbha grha - Inner sanctum
Garuḍa stambha - Garuḍa pillar
Jaya stambha - Pillar of victory
Kalāśa - Vessel - Finial
Kalyāṇa maṇḍapa - Marriage hall
Maṇḍapa - A porch
Mukha maṇḍapa - Entrance hall
Nāṭya maṇḍapa - Dancing hall
Prākāra - Compound wall, enclosure
Śikhara - Crown
Tiruchupumala - A cloister of the temple
Vimāna - Tower

FESTIVALS :

Akshayatriya - 3rd day of the bright fortnight of the month Vaishika

Amāvāsyā - Full moon day

Ekādasi - Eleventh day after the full moon

Makara Sankranti - Winter solstice

Dakṣiṇyāyāga Sankranti

Mēṣa Sankranti - Jupiter's entry into the sign of aries

Tirunāl - Festival

Uttarīyāga Sankranti - Summer solstice

Vikṣa Sankranti - The day on which the Sun enters a particular rāśi

Utsava - Festival

JEWELS AND ORNAMENTS :

Bilāṣaramalu - Short garlands

Kaṭṭiyānu - Wrist ornament, A bracelet

Kaṣhamala - Garland for the neck

Paṭhakam - Pendant

Paṭṭāḍi Pogaḍa Puvāla Mala - A garland of mumsops clangi flowers

Puṣpamālā - Garland of flowers

Śaṅkha cakrāla paṭhakamu - Garland with Śaṅkhas and cakras

Śikha nāgaśaṅkṣam - Serpent ornament stuck in the tuft of the hair

Tṛṣṇā antyālachara - A garland of gold with three strings of pearls

Vajraṁśūkyāla Kaṭṭiyāla Joga - Ornaments for the Ankles set with precious stones.

Vajrayāntimālā - A garland hanging below the knees

OFFICIALS :

Adhikari - Superintendent

Bhāṣṭarādihikari - An officer-in-charge of the treasury

Bhoga-parikṣa - Supervisor of temple worship

Bhoga-karṇam - Accountant of the temple

Kaliaga-parikṣa - Supervisor of the Kaliaga region

Koṣṭha-devula-parikṣa - Officer-in-charge of stores

Koṣṭha-karṇamu - Accountant of the store

Mahapātra - A district officer of the administrative system of Gaṇapatis of Orissa.

Pradhāni - Minister

Senapati - Commander of the military

Śrīkaṣṇam - An accountant of the Treasury

Śrīgata-parikṣa - Supervisor of the temple jewels and articles

Sthānapati - An official-in-charge of the temple

Totṭa-parikṣa - Garden supervisor

PERFUMES :

Agaru - A kind of sweet scented wood

Chandana - Sandal

Gandha - Smearing of Sandal wood

Karpāramu - Camphor

Kuṅkumapāvu - Saffron

Kastūri - Musk

Pachchakarpāram - Refined camphor

Palugu - Castor oil paste

Paladaṣṭa - Garland

Tīrta - Holy water

Pāṇṇu - Rose water

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES - COINS :

Aṣṭa - Both Liquid and unit measure in medieval times

Chinnāla - A unit of measurement equivalent to a grain

Gadhya - A coin used in the medieval times

Kuṇḍa - A measure used for liquid

Māṣa - A coin in the medieval times

Manika - Liquid measure

Puṣṭi - Land and grain measure

Tatka - Coin of the medieval times

Tāmu - Land and grain measure

GENERAL :

Abhiṣeka - Sacred bath to the deity, ablution

Āchārya - Preceptor

Achamanya - Taking in a quantity of water

Adhyayana - Learning, study specially on vedas

Āgamas : Sacred texts related to the conduct of worship

Āgāhara : Educational institution in Ancient and medieval times

Akātavāṣī A heavenly voice
Akhaṇḍādīpa Perpetual lamp
Alvar Vaishnava Saint
Āga māga bhoga Bodily and external enjoyment
Ankurarpaṇa Sowing of seeds
Ārḍhantmu A period of one and half hours of sunset
Archaka Priest
Archana Worship
Ārgya Washing the hands
Āsana Offering of a seat
Avahana Localisation
Avatāra Incarnation
Avasara Worship offering at certain times
Bhakti Devotion
Bhaṇḍāra, Sribhaṇḍāra Treasury
Bhoga Food offering to the deity
Chāmara, viśāṃara Fly whisk, chauri
Chāmara seva Waving fly whisk
Chandanālāgi Application of sandalwood paste
Darśana Audience, seeing the god
Dāsaris Gardeners, Garland makers
Dāsī A servant maid
Dharmamu Charity
Devasthānam Temple complex
Dharma Righteousness
Dhvaja sthambha Flag staff in the temple
Dhyāna Contemplation
Dhūpa Incense
Digvijaya Conquest
Dīparādhana Lighting lamps
Doṇḍavanamālā Garland reaching up to the feet
Dvāra pālaka Door keeper
Gotra Endemic group
Itihāsa Traditional story, legend
Jāna Right knowledge
Kāma Satisfaction of physical desires
Kavāḍī Scales carrying on one's shoulder

Kavya A poetical work
Kolanu Coloured design
Kolupu A service offered to the god
Madhyahna Midday
Mala (Puspa), Malika Garland
Manya Land
Maagalagatlu Auspicious songs
Mapaḷi Evening
Mukhari Blower of the bellows
Maṭha Monastery
Moksha Salvation
Narvedya Food offering made to the deity
Nambi A Non-brāhmin Vaiṣṇava priest
Nāṛyacharya Dance master
Nibhandakapṛu Functionaries
Nibandha A share in the consecrated food
Nijarūpa The real form
Paścāmr̥ta abhiṣeka Ablution with five liquids viz., milk, honey, curds, ghee, coconut water
Paricharika An attendant
Payasamu A liquid food prepared with milk and other items
Pradakṣiṇa Circumambulation
Prasadam Food offered to the deity
Paja Worship
Pajari Priest
Purāṇa A mythological story
Puspa A flower
Rāja bhoga Midday offering
Repaḷi Worship offered in the morning
Sahasradhara Taliyapatra A plate with one thousand holes
Śaka A calendar reckoning starting from 78 A D
San̥i, Devadasi A dancing girl attached to the temple
Sandhya Conjunction between the day and night
Sannidhi A shrine
Saptasantan̥a Seven kinds of children, viz., tank, well, garden, temple, literary work, treasure and son
Sarvamānya Exclusive gift of land

Śataka A collection of one hundred
Saṭhagopa A replica of the feet of the deity
Satra Choultry
Seja avasaramu Food offering made to the deity at the time of bed
Śribali A food offering to the deity
Tiruchupumahdevulhu Subsidiary deities, Parvāradēvatas
Tiruvāṭika kola Torch
Drvya kōṭa
Tiru-ardhaṭamu One night part of a day
Tiruvīdhi Taking procession around the temple street
Tiruvārādhana The sacred ritual
Tribhāṅgi A dancing posture
Tulasī The holy basil held in veneration by the Hindus, esp. worshippers of Viṣṇu
Utsavamārti Processional image
Vāṁsakāra Flutist
Veda khaṇḍika Land gifted for vedic learning
Viṭṭiyamu Betel leaves along with arecanut
Viṭṭiyamu
Vṛitti A share in the consecrated food
Yajñopavīta Sacred thread across the shoulder
Yuga Period of time according to Hindu tradition



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