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# TEMPLES OF TIRUMALA, TIRUPATI AND TIRUCHANUR

- Dr. M. Rama Rao, M.A., Ph.D.

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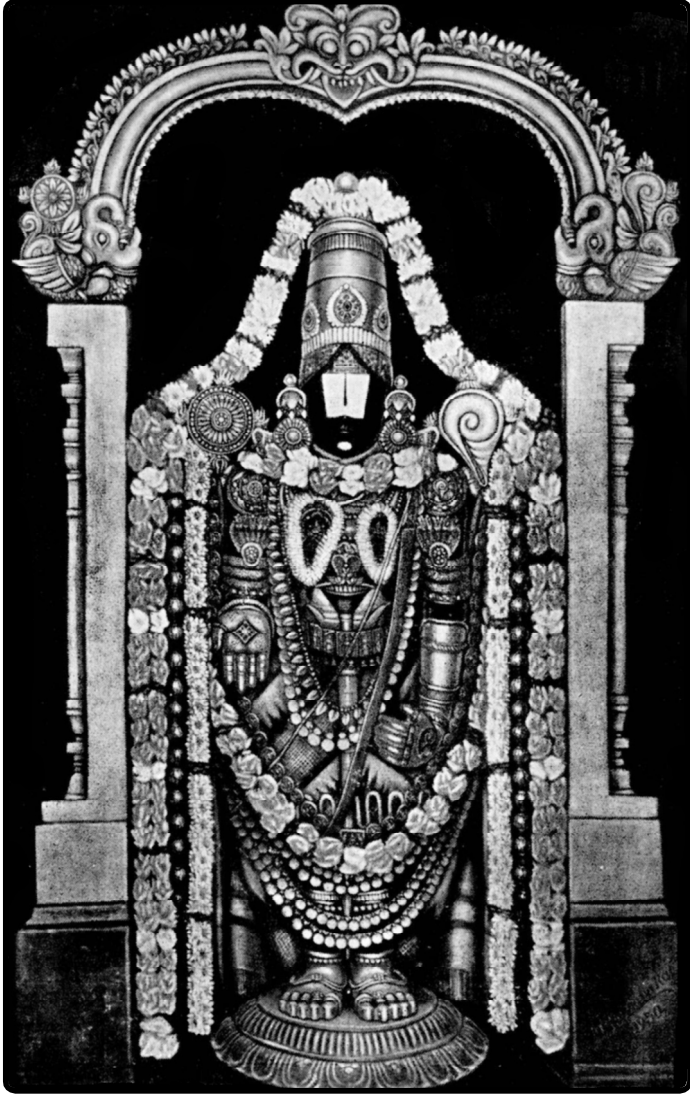
**TEMPLES OF  
TIRUMALA, TIRUPATI AND  
TIRUCHANUR**

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**2013**



*Sri Venkateswara Swami*



*Sri Padmavati Devi*

# TEMPLES OF TIRUMALA, TIRUPATI AND TIRUCHANUR

By

**Dr. M. RAMA RAO**, M.A., Ph.D.

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## FOREWORD

Under religious execution Tirumala, Tirupati, Tiruchanur formulate into a divine unit with approachability to lakhs of devotees as a holy grid of temples. In and around these blissful places of worship are there number of other temples serving devout visitors and faithful followers.

Sri Venkateswara Swami temple on Tirumala hills, Sri Govindaraja Swami temple at Tirupati, Sri Alamel Manga temple at Tiruchanur are the chief triple temples of this sacred area. Sri Kalyana Venkateswara Swami temple at Srinivasa Mangapuram, Sri Kapileswara Swami temple in Alipiri locus and Sri Kodandaramalayam in the town are three more important and busy temples annexed to T.T.Devasthanams.

There are modest temples in side all the capital temples and within the compound walls of the temples. There are some more lively temples connected to the temple city of Tirupati. And all such temples have due and respective description and details bestowed in this book, in addition to the legendary account and architectural construction of the main temples.

Dr. M. Rama Rao who authored this publication of T.T.D. in 1963, having proficiency in the faculty of History, had gathered historical, ephigraphical and inscriptional evidences about the establishment, maintenance, support and practices of all the chief temples in Tirupati region. The findings are aligned in a befitting, brief and appropriate sequence to make this book a handsome one.

To put it in nutshell, this is a worthy book to be taken as a guide to view the background and growth of temple culture



developed around Vengadam, otherwise known as Venkatachalam and its surroundings down below the hill.

Tirupati

-3-2013

In the Service of the Lord

  
**L.V. Subrahmanyam**, I.A.S.

Executive Officer,  
Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams,  
Tirupati.

## PREFACE

No explanation is needed for the writing of this small book after the publication of two books, of two volumes each, entitled HISTORY OF TIRUPATI. Dr. S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar's pioneer work contains much of contemporary history and many inconclusive discussions. Sri T.T.K. Viraraghavacharya's book is really brilliant and contains many new facts stated boldly and with considerable authority. It includes, however, several sections relating to temples, agamas, modes of worship etc., in too much detail. Further, neither of the two writers mentioned above have included in their books even a brief description of the temples in and round Tirupati. Hence this third attempt.

This account of the temples of Tirumala, Tirupati and Tiruchanur is based mostly upon the inscriptions found in the temples in these places. The Puranic sources have also been utilised wherever helpful. The history of each temple has been traced with the aid of the inscriptions that it contains and all important monuments have been described with particular emphasis on their architectural features and artistic contents. The Parasaresvara temple of Jogi-Mallavaram, which was for a long time part of the bigger village of Tiruchanur, has been described here fully. The same is the case with the Kapileswara temple, Tirupati.

It is hoped that this small book gives the general reader a fairly good idea of the temple and their importance and helps him in studying their architecture.

I am thankful to Sri C. Anna Rao, Executive Officer, T.T. Devasthanams, for kindly suggesting to me the desirability of writing a book of this kind and arranging for its publication. My thanks are also due to Sri. P.U.Subrahmanyam, Superintendent, T.T.D. Press for evincing keen interest in the printing of this book.

Tirupati

4-1-63

**DR. M. RAMA RAO**

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## **CHAPTER I**

### **History of the Tirumala – Tirupati Region**

TIRUMALA and Tirupati are places well known all over India. Sri Venkatesvara, presiding deity of Tirumala or Vengadam, is revered by lakhs of people all over the country who visit His famous temple throughout the year, travelling long distances.

The chief centres of pilgrimage in this region are Sri Venkateswara's temple on the Tirumala hill, the shrine of Govindaraja in the town of Tirupati and the shrine of Padmavati, situated in Tiruchanur, three miles to the south of Tirupati. Of minor temples, mention may be made of the Kapilesvara temple at Kapilatirtham, the Rama temple in the town of Tirupati and the Parasaresvara temple at Jogi-Mallavaram, situated a furlong to the west of Tiruchanur.

### **Location**

The Eastern Ghats run close to the coast up to the river Krishna and then take an inward bend. They then break off into three ranges, one running along the coast up to Ponneri, another running into the Kurnool and Anantapur districts and the third or central range starting in Kurnool and meeting the hills round about Tirupati. These ranges form almost a mountain wall stretching from the Mysore plateau in the west to Ponneri in the east. This constituted the ancient border between the Tamil country in the south and *Vadugu*, by which name the modern Kannada and Telugu speaking region, to its north, was then known. *Vengadam* or the Tirumala hill was a prominent outpost on this border. The puranas compare the central range, mentioned above, to a huge recumbent serpent and locate the Mallikarjuna temple of Srisailem on its tail, the Narasimha temple of Ahobalam on its back, the Sri Venkateswara temple of Tirumala on the back of the hood and the Kalahastisvara temple of Kalahasti at the opening of the mouth.

Tirupati and Tiruchanur are located in a big circular plain surrounded by a chain of hills on all sides. The Tirumala hills form the northern part of this chain and the town of Tirupati is about two miles to the south of these hills.

The hill on which the temple of Sri Venkatesvara stands, popularly known as *Venkatachalam*, is low and surrounded by many hills of a higher altitude, as is the case with the hill on which is located the Mallikarjuna temple of Srisailem. The hill to the north is 3426' high, the hill to the east is 2750' high, the hill to the south is 2920' high and the hill to the south-west is 3620' high.

There are five well known paths leading to the temple. Of them, two routes start from the town of Tirupati, the stepped pathway, seven miles long and the motor road, twelve miles long. The third route is from Chandragiri. The fourth starts from the Mamandur Railway station and the fifth passes by Nagapatla.

Of the three important centres of pilgrimage in this region, Tirumala is the oldest and its god finds mention in Tamil literature of the early centuries of the Christian Era. Tiruchanur comes to notice from about the beginning of the ninth century A.D. The Govindaraja shrine of Tirupati was founded about 1130 A.D. and the town grew up round this temple subsequently.

## Early History

The Tirumala-Tirupati region is situated in what was familiarly known as Tondamandalam for a long time and as the Carnatic in later times. The early history of this region is lost in obscurity and only a few glimpses can be obtained.

*Tamilaham* or the Tamil country stretched over a wide area in the early days. Its northern border lay between the Mysore plateau and the Bay of Bengal. In the south it extended up to Kanyakumari or cape Comorin. Tirumala in the interior and Pulicat on the coast

were two prominent outposts on the northern border. The country north of this border was known as *Vadugu* and included both the Kannada speaking area and the Telugu speaking area to today. The people to the north were called the *Vadugar* and the road leading to their country was known as the *Vadugavali*. *Tamilaham* was divided into thirteen *Nadus* of which the *Aruvanadu* was in the basin of the South Pennar and the *Aruvavadadalainadu* lay further north in the basin of the Palar. These two divisions were together known as *Mavilankai* and had Kanchi for their capital. Vengadam or Tirumalai lay further north. This region was inhabited by the *Aruvalar*, a nomadic tribe and the *Tiraiyar*, who migrated here from Lower Burma. In the first century A.D. it was divided into twenty four *Kottams* and seventy five *Nadus*. Of these, the *Tiruvengadakkottam* which included the *Kadukurainadu*, *Pottapinadu* and *Tondamannadu*, was very important being on the frontier.

Vengadam was inhabited by an uncivilized tribe of hunters known as the *Kalvar*. Their chieftain was Pulli, who was a fierce and powerful master. He and his people spoke a language which was different from the language of *Tamilaham*. The Vengadam hill was known to many poets of the *Sangam* age as famous for its forests, for its elephants, for its streams and for its drunken bouts.

The *Tiraiyar* seem to have migrated here very early and settled down among the *Aruvalar*, the original inhabitants. One of their chieftains, known as *Tiraiyan*, ruled over a wide territory with Pavittiri, identified with the village of Reddipalem in the Gudurtaluk of the modern Nellore district, as his headquarters.

About the middle of the first century, another chieftain, named *Ilam-Tiraiyan*, occupied the Chola country to the south for some time but had to give it up on account to the rise of the Cholas under Karikala. This Chola monarch is said to have subjugated the *Aruvalar*

and extended his territory. Ilam-Tiraiyan ruled over Todamandalam from Kanchi as the contemporacy of Karikala.

The *Periplus*, a work assigned to about this time, mentions along the east coast the Pandyan kingdom in the south, the Chola country to its north, with *Aragaura* or Uracapura or Orayur for its chief place, and *Maisolia* or the district round Masulipatam, farther north.

To the north of Tondamandalam there flourished the great Andra-Satavahana empire. Gautamiputra Satakarni, the greatest king of this family, ruled between 78-102 A.D. He was a great conqueror and governed a vast empire which included the entire Deccan, parts of Eastern Rajputana in the north and the whole of the modern Mysore State and the Rayalasima districts in the south. The steeds of this monarch are said to have drunk the waters of the three seas and this implies that he must have lead some expeditions across Tondamandalam into the Tamil country. This is corroborated by the find of a large number of Ship Type coins of his son and immediate successor, Pulumavi, on the Coromandel Coast between Madras and Cuddalore. The death of the great Chola king, Karikala, and the chaos the engulfed the Tamil country thereafter, render the southern campaigns of this Satavahana king probable and possible. It may, therefore, be taken that Tondamandalam was included in the Satavahana empire towards the end of the first century A.D.

The *Geography* of Ptolemy, which is ascribed to the middle of the second century A.D., throws interesting light on the condition of Tondamandalam during this time. Among the principalities on the east coast, mention is made of the country of the *Pandiones* or the Pandyas with its capital at Madoura or Madura. North of it was the district of the *Batoi*, with its capital at *Nissama*. To its north was the territory of the *Soringoi* or Cholas, with its capital at *Orthoura* or Uraiur. Further north was the area known as *Arouarnoi* or

Aruvanadu, with its capital at *Malanga* ruled by *Basoranagas*. Higher up was *Maisoloi* with its capital at *Pityndra*. It is evident from this that Tondamandalam was at this time known as the country of the Aruvalar, that Kanchi lost its importance as the capital of this region and that the Nagas were the rulers of this area.

During the last days of the Satavahana empire, i.e. in the second decade of the third century A.D., while the last Satavahana king, Pulumavi III, was ruling, a *Mahasenapati* Skandanaga was the governor of a vast *Mahajanapada* in the south. It is likely that the southern and south-eastern provinces of the empire were included in this *Mahajanapada*. To the west of this area was the viceroyalty of the Chutu-Nagas who governed it from Vanavasi. Further north on the east coast, the territory was constituted into another viceroyalty governed by the Ikshvakus from Vijayapuri, in the modern Nagarjunakonda valley. Thus by the beginning of the third century A.D. Tondamandalam and its neighbourhood were under the domination of the Nagas.

### The Pallava period 260-900 A.D.

The age of the Pallavas constitutes the first important landmark in the history of Tondamandalam and the Tirumala-Tirupati region which was included in it. These Pallavas were originally the inhabitants of the south-eastern part of the Satavahana empire, bordering upon Tondamandalam. The founder and first ruler of this dynasty, Simhavarman *alias* Virakurcha, married a Naga princess from the kingdom of Vanavasi and inherited a kingdom and royal status through his wife. As the son-in-law of the most powerful Naga family of the time, he might have been easily recognized as the leader by the other Naga tribes inhabiting Tondamandalam. He then invaded the coastal region, brought about the end of Ikshvaku rule and annexed the Guntur and Nellore districts and the districts of Rayalasima. He

revived the old glory of the city of Kanchi by making it his capital. This vast kingdom founded by him flourished for a long time and was ruled over by his successors till the end of the ninth century A.D. It was then conquered by the Cholas.

There are two records (I-1 and 2) of the first of the last three rulers of the Pallava dynasty in this region. This king is mentioned as Ko-Vijaya-Dantivikramar and is identified with Dantivarman (775-826 A.D.). These inscriptions contain gifts made not to the temple on Vengadam but to a proxy or representative temple and its god, situated in Tiruchanur.

This area was included in the fief of the Banas, a family of Pallava feudatories. A Bana Vijayaditya figures in two inscriptions (I-3 & 4). This Vijayaditya seems to have flourished in the early half of the ninth century A.D. After two more generations of Pallava kings ruled, the Chola king, Aditya I, invaded Tondamandalam, defeated the Pallava king, Aparajita, and conquered it. Thus ended Pallava rule over this region.

### **The Chola period 900-1250 A.D.**

Tondamandalam became part of the Chola empire after its conquest by Aditya I and remained so till about the middle of the thirteenth century.

The earliest record available here is that of Parantaka I (I-12) (907-955) dated in the 29th year of this reign. His son, Parthivendravarman *alias* Aditya II, was viceroy of Tondamandalam for nearly fifteen years commencing from 956 A.D., Samavai, the wife of a Pallava subordinate, consecrated in the temple of Tirumala a silver image named *Manavalpperumal*, a replica of the original deity and instituted festivals (I-8, & 9). There are three inscriptions of Rajaraja I (985-1014) in this area of which one (I-14) from the

temple on Tirumala states that a queen of Parantaka II gifted a *pattam* of gold.

Of the next king, Rajendra Chola, two records are available. One of them mentions the construction of the Kapilesvara temple at Kapilathirtham (I-20).

There are eleven inscriptions of Kulottunga I. (I-21-32) (1070-1120) in the temples of Tirumala and Jogi-Mallavaram and one record of Vikrama Chola (I-33).

Of the next king, Rajaraja III, there are seven inscriptions. It is necessary to refer here to an event which changed the character of the temples of this region and gave them the present complex. Vaishnava saints, popularly known as the *Alvars*, preached devotion to god and inspired many honest souls to take to Vishnu worship. After them came the *Acharyas* who gave this early Vaishnavism a definite shape and form and put it on a firm basis. The greatest of these was Ramanuja. He made Srirangam his headquarters and carried on missionary activity. His new interpretation of Vedanta, popularly known as *Visishtadvaita*, was making rapid progress. Acharya Nadamuni, who restored the practice of reciting the Tamil *Prabandham* in the temples, visited Tirumala during the course of a pilgrimage. Alavandar, the next *acharya*, also paid a visit to the hill temple. He deputed one of his grandsons, Tirumalai Nambi, to go and reside on the hill and attend to the pious task of supplying holy water and flowers to the temple. Tirumalai Nambi migrated to Tirumala and spent his life there in god's service. Next was Ramanuja. This teacher is said to have visited Tirupati thrice. On the first occasion, he spent about a year with his uncle, Tirumalai Nambi, learning the esoteric meaning of the Ramayana. His second visit was for settling a dispute that arose between the Saivas and the Vaishnavas regarding the nature of the image set up in the Tirumala temple. During the last visit, which was at the advanced old age of

102, the *acharya* installed the image of Govindaraja and laid the foundations of the present town of Tirupati.

### The Pandyan interlude

The power of the Cholas declined about the middle of the thirteenth century and the Pandyas, under Maravarman Sundara I, became aggressive. This king invaded Tondamandalam, subjugated all the Chola subordinates in this region and reached as far north as Nellore and performed *Virabhiseka* there. There are several records of this Pandyan king in the Tirumala temple (I-44-50 and 56).

### The Transitory period 1260-1360 A.D.

Tondamandalam was included in the Vijayanagara empire from the very time of its foundation in 1336 A.D. Still, the earliest Vijayanagara record found in the Tirumala-Tirupati region is dated 1359 A.D. The period intervening between the time of Sundara Pandya and this Vijayanagara record is a period of transition. During this time various Chola subordinates took advantage of the weakness of the Cholas and assumed independence. They figure in this region without acknowledging the suzerainty of anybody.

Of these chiefs, two Pallavas, father and son, named Kopperunjinga, created considerable trouble. The elder Kopperunjinga or Kadavaraya ruled over a small chieftaincy round about Sendamangalam. He raided Tondamandalam in 1220 A.D. and held a part of it. His son, the famous Kopperunjinga, *alias* Khadgamalla, crowned himself in 1243 A.D., invaded Tondamandalam and fought a battle at Urattur with Narasinga Yadavaraya, the local chieftain. He went further north along the coast up to Draksharama, in the East Godavary district, received a rude shock at the hands of the Kakatiya king, Ganapatideva and returned home humiliated. Later, he was subjugated by Sundara Pandya I. Two records of this Kopperunjinga are found at Tirumala. (I-10 & 11).

A number of Telugu Pallava chiefs were governing parts of Tondamandalam as Chola subordinates. They held the modern Nellore, Cuddapah, Kurnool, Chittoor, North Arcot, South Arcot and Chingleput districts. They too assumed independence on account of the weakness of the contemporary Chola kings. When the Pandya entered the field, they acknowledged his suzerainty for the time being. Vijayagandagopala, Rajagandagopala and Tripurantaka are chieftains of this line represented in the records of this region. (I-59 to 80).

Nellore was the headquarters of a line of Telugu Chola family which too exercised considerable influence in Tondamandalam. Allun Tirukalattideva of this family held even the city of Kanchi for a time. He figures in the records at Tirumala.

The Yadavarayas were the most important local chieftains in the Tirumala-Tirupati region. They were intimately connected with the temples of this area and made valuable benefactions to them. They governed the Venkatagiri, Kalahasti and Chandragiri taluks of the Nellore and Chittoor districts. The earliest known member of this family was Ghattideva, who flourished between 1184 and 1227 A.D., as a Chola subordinate. He is also stated to have invited Ramanuja to settle a dispute that arose between the Saivas and Vaishnavas at Tirumala. This view is untenable because Ramanuja is said to have passed away soon after 1130 A.D. and Ghattideva did not become a ruler till 1184 A.D. Ghattideva's son, Rajamalla, lived and ruled between 1208-1237 A.D. He is supposed to have consecrated a deity named Yadavanarayana. The next chieftain was Tirukalattideva who is assignable to 1191-1246 A.D. He governed a large area extending from Tiruvannamalai to Kalahasti. His son was Virarakshasa, who flourished in the reign of Kulottunga I. Then came Vira Narasingadeva, the greatest chieftain of the Yadavaraya family. He ruled between 1209-1262 A.D. He was a great benefactor of the temples of Tirumala and Tirupati. Vira Narasinga's

son, Tiruvenkatanatha, governed between 1310-1336 A.D. This was the time when remarkable events took place outside Tondamandalam. An independent Muslim kingdom, popularly known as the Sultanate of Delhi, was established in northern India towards the end of the 12th century and embarked upon a career of rapid expansion. Both Hinduism and lingering Buddhism and their institutions suffered terribly at the hands of these Muslim rulers. The Khalji dynasty established itself on the throne of Delhi towards the end of the 13th century. Two great Hindu kingdoms flourished at this time in the Deccan, the Yadava kingdom with its capital at Devagiri or modern Daulatabad and the famous Kakatiya empire which embraced the entire Telugu speaking area. To the southwest there was the kingdom of the Hoysalas with its capital at Dvarasamudra, in the Mysore state. In the Tamil country, the Pandyas were powerful and ruled from Madura. Alauddin, the Khalji governor of Kara and Allahabad, led an unprovoked invasion against Devagiri in 1296 A.D. and obtained great wealth. Very soon thereafter he usurped the throne of Delhi and became the Sultan. He sent an invasion in 1303 A.D. against the Andhra country but it was repelled. He sent another expedition in 1309 A.D. under the lead of his famous general, Malik Kaffur. Malik Kaffur besieged Warangal and extracted immense wealth from its ruler, Kakatiya Prataparudradeva. He then marched in a south-western direction, entered the Hoysala territory and plundered it. The Muslim general then entered the Tamil country and harassed the Pandyan kingdom. He returned home in 1310 A.D. carrying much wealth and many precious stones obtained from the Hindu kingdoms of the Deccan and south India. The Tirumala-Tirupati region was saved from the ravages of this Muslim invader because he took a south-western direction and did not march due south from Warangal through the heart of the Andhra country.

The *Koil-Olugu*, a traditional account of the famous Ranganatha temple of Srirangam, mentions an important event which seems to have taken place about this time. It is stated that in 1327 A.D., during the course of his campaigns in the Tamil country, Malik Kaffur reached the neighbourhood of Srirangam. The local people were then engaged in celebrating the annual festival for the god and neglected the information conveyed to them. When, however, they found that the information was only too correct and that the Muslim was too near, they took some emergency measures. The sanctum of the temple was walled up and all the jewels were hidden. The processional image of Ranganatha was smuggled out of Srirangam by Pillai Lokacarya and other devotees. These fugitives wandered from place to place and ultimately reached Tirumala. There the image was held suspended before a ravine and kept for a long time. The date mentioned by the *Koil-Olugu* is obviously wrong because Malik Kaffur's invasion took place in 1309-1310 A.D. and not in 1327 A.D. Nor was there a Muslim invasion of the Tamil country in 1327 A.D. The incident mentioned in this temple history must be ascribed to 1310 A.D.

The troubles of the Hindu kingdoms of the Deccan and south India were not over with the return of Malik Kaffur to Delhi. The Khaljis were succeeded by the Tughlaks as rulers of the Sultanate of Delhi. Ghjasuddin, the first ruler of this family, sent a strong expedition against the Kakatiya kingdom and the Andhra country in 1321 A.D. under the lead of his son and crown prince, Ulugh Khan. The Andhra generals offered stiff resistance and repelled this invasion. Ulugh Khan renewed his attack in 1323 A.D. when the Kakatiya ruler was completely unprepared. A serious battle was fought and the king was defeated and captured. After his victory at Warangal, the muslim general marched through the Cuddapah and Kurnool districts and penetrated into the districts farther south. He too marched



in the south-western direction and conquered the area lying between Nellore in the east and Quilon in the west, known as Ma'bar. He returned to Delhi through the coastal districts of Andhra and Orissa. Thus for a second time the Tirumala- Tirupati area escaped certain destruction and misery at the hands of the Muslim invaders.

Ulugh Khan left the area conquered by him in the charge of efficient governors. After returning to Delhi, he killed his father and ascended the throne, assuming the title of Muhammad-bin-Tughlak. Very soon after this, the people of the Andhra country recovered from the shock of this Muslim invasion and made successful attempts at shaking off the Muslim yoke imposed upon them. The old generals and feudatories of Kakatiya Prataparudradeva gathered the people behind them and liberated large areas driving away the Muslim governors of the Sultan. Thus, coastal Andhra, Telegana and Rayalasima soon recovered their independence. Among those that fled from Warangal after its capture by Ulugh Khan were two brothers, Harihara and Bukka, sons of Sangama and guards of the treasury of Kakatiya Prataparudradeva. These brothers went to the small kingdom of Kampila, situated on the back of the Tungabhadra and obtained employment under its Hindu ruler. Muhammad Tughlak sent an expedition against Kampila in 1327 A.D. The ruler of the kingdom was killed and a few men were taken prisoners. A Muslim governor was appointed to administer the Kampila region. Very soon, however, the local people rebelled and drove away this governor. Among the men captured in the siege of Kampila were the two brothers, Harihara and Bukka. The Sultan released these two brothers, nominated Harihara as the governor and Bukka as the commander and sent them both to Kampila in order to restore peace and order. These brothers subjugated all unruly elements and soon consolidated their position in the modern Rayalasima area. They then came into contact with the famous saint, Vidyaranya, and developed, under his inspiration, the idea of founding a new kingdom

which would protect the country, the religion and the culture of the Hindus from the destructive activity of the Muslims. They founded the city of Vijayanagara on the southern bank of the Tungabhadra in 1336 A.D., made it their capital and proclaimed the establishment of an independent Hindu kingdom. The Sultan was preoccupied with more serious troubles and could not do anything to check this insubordination of Harihara and Bukka.

### **Period of Vijayanagara rule 1336-1680 A.D.**

Tondamandalam was included in the kingdom of Vijayanagara from the time of its foundation and continued as part of it till the time of its fall. The period of the rule of the Sangama, Saluva, Tuluva and Aravidu dynasties of Vijayanagara constitutes the most brilliant epoch in the history of the Tirumala-Tirupati region and of its temples.

*The Sangama Dynasty*:- The earliest record of this dynasty found in this region belongs to the time of Harihara I, the second ruler (1335-1377). One important event of the time which is not known from the inscriptions but is mentioned in the *Koyil-Olugu* is the removal of the processional image of Ranganatha from the Tirumala to Srirangam. Kumara Kamaparaya, a Vijayanagara prince, lead an expedition against the Muslim Sultan of Madras and put an end to his rule. Gopanna, a Brahman general of this prince, got this image re-installed at Srirangam in 1371 A.D. The idol was taken to Ginjee and kept there for some time and then finally restored to the Ranganatha temple. In all probability, it was removed from Tirumala in or about 1368 A.D. The next ruler, Harihara II, is mentioned in an inscription from Tirumala.

Devaraya II (1406-1447), the greatest ruler of the Sangama dynasty, was a great devotee of Sri Venkatesvara. He visited the temple and worshipped the god the November, 1428 A.D. and made a substantial gift for the restoration of Vedaparayanam in the Tirumala temple.

Mallikarjuna, the last king of the Sangama family, is represented in the records from both Tirumala and Tirupati. Other important persons that figure in this region are Saluva Gopayya, Saluva Timmaraja, Saluva Parvataraja, Saluva Tirpurantaka, Kampayadeva, Saluva Erramaraja, Tammayadeva Coda and Vallabhayadeva. Saluva Narasimha, who was the generalissimo and the *de facto* ruler during the last days of the Sangama dynasty, was a great benefactor of the Tirumala and Tirupati temples. His institution of the *Anna-unjal-Tirumal* in the temple of Sri Venkatesvara in a mantapa specially constructed for the purpose was a valuable benefaction.

### Saluva Dynasty

Saluva Narasimha set his master aside and usurped the throne of Vijayanagara. As the sovereign he installed an image of god Lakshminarasimha by the side of the pathway leading up the hill. (II-82)

### Tuluva Dynasty

The temple of Sri Venkatesvara reached the acme of its glory in the region of the illustrious emperor, Krishnadevaraya of the Tuluva of third dynasty of Vijayanagara (1509-1529). Sri Venkatesvara was the patron deity of this monarch. On every important occasion the Raya visited Tirumala and obtained the blessings of the god. His first visit to the temple was on 10th February, 1513. Inscriptions record eight visits of this monarch in 1513, 1514, 1515, 1517, 1518 abd 1521 to the temple, each of which resulted in substantial and valuable presents being made to Sri Venkatesvara.

Krishnaraya was succeeded by his brother, Achyutaraya (1529-1543). Achyuta was confined to the palace at Chandragiri during the period of his brother's rule. Immediately after the death of Krishnaraya, he came to Tirumala and had himself coronated there,

being bathed with water poured out of the conch held in the hand of Sri Venkatesvara. He too was a great devotee of this god. The emperor visited Tirumala in 1533 A.D. accompanied by his queen, Varadaji and son, Kumara-Venkatadri, and presented many valuable jewels to the god. He presented some more costly jewels on another occasion (III-17). On 26th December 1535, he instituted a special festival, named the *Lakshmidēvi* festival, for Sri Venkatesvara and his consort, Alarmelmanga.

Sadasivaraya succeeded Achyutaraya. He seems to have visited Tirumala on two occasions. He came here once on 3rd February, 1554 and again in July of the same year and made some gifts to the temple. The rarity of his visits and comparative poverty of his gifts is due to the fact that he was dominated by Aliya Ramaraya and was therefore a virtual back number though for some time he was kept up as the sovereign. Later, Ramaraya was the real ruler and Sadasiva had to languish in prison.

### Aravidu dynasty

Aliya Ramaraya, who usurped the throne of Vijayanagara casting Sadasiva into prison, played high politics with the contemporary Sultans of the Deccan and exasperated them with his arrogance and illtreatment. The Sultans combined their armies and invaded the Vijayanagara empire. Ramaraya opposed them between two villages, named Rakkasi and Tangadi, in 1565 A.D. In the battle that ensued Ramaraya was killed by an accidental shot and the Vijayanagara armies ran helter skelter. The Muslims pursued these armies and routed them. Tirumala, a brother of Ramaraya, escaped from the battle-field and rushed to the capital. There, instead of gathering fresh forces and offering another resistance to the invaders, he organised an exodus from the capital. He gathered whatever valuables he could lay hands upon and taking his own family and the

unfortunate phantom emperor, Sadasiva, with him he fled to Penugonda. The Muslims reached Vijayanagara, camped there for six months and destroyed the great capital city to their heart's content. Krishnappanayaka, commander of the fortress of Ginjee, and son of Visvanathanayaka, the governor of Tiruvadi-rajya, seized parts of Tondamandalam during this troublesome period and harassed it.

The battle of Rakkas- Tangadi was a turning point not only in the fortunes of the Vijayangara empire but also in the history of the entire Deccan and south India. The unexpected success that fell to their lot in the battle, the prevalence of disorder and confusion in the empire, the recalcitrant attitude and treasonable activity of the leading feudatories and frequent disputes for succession in the Aravidu family, all these encouraged the Sultans of Bijapur and Golconda, whose territories lay across the northern border of the empire, to lead frequent attacks against the empire and appropriate its territory. The orders issued by the Mughal Emperor, Sha Jahan, gave them further encouragement. The Vijayanagara empire came to be known at this as the Carnatic Empire. The Sultans of Bijapur concentrated their attacks on western Carnatic while the Sultans of Golconda chose eastern Carnatic as their target.

Very soon, however, Tirumala assumed the government of the empire and set matters right. He made his eldest son, Sriranga, the viceroy of the Telugu speaking area in the empire with his headquarters at Penugonda and installed two other sons as viceroys over the Kannada and Tamil areas. Venkatapati, the youngest son, became viceroy of the Tamil area with Chandragiri as his headquarters.

Tirumala crowned himself, assuming the title Tirumalaraya, and thus began the rule of the Aravidu family in 1570 A.D. His name is associated with part of the *Unjal-mantapam*, known as the Tirumalaraya-mantapam in the Sri Venkatesvara temple at Tirumala. Muslim attacks started even during the short rule of Tirumalaraya. The armies of Bijapur attacked Anegondi, Adoni and Penugonda

but Tirumala, following the policy of Ramaraya, played the Sultans against each other and averted danger.

Sriranga I (1572-1585) succeeded him. Six inscriptions of this ruler's time are found in the temples of Tirumala and Tirupati. All of them register gifts made by private individuals. Sriranga had a busy time. The Sultans of Bijapur and Golconda, who were two participants in the fatal battle of Rakkas-Tangadi and who were neighbours of the Vijayanagara empire in the north, pursued a policy of consistent aggrandizement and attempted to annex as much of the empire as possible. The Bijapur forces invaded Adoni and Penugonda during the reign of Sriranga I and the emperor shifted his capital to Chandragiri. He could repel this invasion with the help of the Sultan of Golconda. Later, however, the Sultan of Golconda changed his attitude and sent two invasions against the empire. The first attack was made in 1579 A.D. and the Muslims plundered the Kurnool district and captured the famous temple of Ahobalam. They were repelled by Kondaraju Venkataraju. Invading again in 1589 A.D. they captured many strongholds in the Guntur and Nellore districts including the fortresses of Udayagiri and Kondavidu. To make matters worse, the feudatories and officials of the empire fomented frequent troubles. Sriranga had to contend against all these troubles and could hardly find any time for peaceful pursuits and visits to temples.

Venkatapati (1585-1614) was the next ruler. He was the governor of Chandragiri during the two preceding reigns and was also in additional charge of Udayagiri and Kondavidu. After his accession, he shifted the capital from Penugonda to Chandragiri. He was a great devotee of Sri Venkatesvara and set up in the temple at Tirumala statues of himself, his father, Tirumala and mother, Vengalamba. This monarch is mentioned in fourteen inscriptions from Tirumala and Tirupati. Muslim invasions from the north and rebellions

of feudatories continued in this reign also and there was considerable disorder and confusion. Venkatapatiraya had to encounter two invasions. On the first occasion, the Golconda armies took Nandyala, Gutti and Gandikota and invested Penugonda. They were repelled. On the second occasion they were able to come up the Pennar. They were defeated once again and made to acknowledge the Krishna as the boundary.

The next ruler, Sriranga II (1614), was very unfortunate. His wife's brother, Jaggaraya, imprisoned him and murdered him while in prison.

Ramadevaraya (1614-1630) was the only child of Sriranga that could be rescued from the slaughter perpetrated by Jaggaraya. Yacamanayaka of the Velugoti family of Vijayanagara subordinates rescued him by a ruse and took him from place to place and ultimately sought asylum at the court of the Nayaka governor of Tanjore. This Nayaka fought a battle with Jaggaraya at Topur, destroyed him and crowned Ramadevaraya. There is only one record of this king in this region. Ramadevaraya had to contend against Muslim invasions from the north and the determined opposition of the Nayakas of Madura and Ginjee in the south. The Bijapur armies led two invasions into western Carnatic during the reign of Ramadevaraya in 1620 and 1624 A.D. These resulted in the loss of a good part of the Kurnool district for the empire. The armies of Golconda marched along the east coast up to Armugam in 1624 A.D. and were opposed by the emperor. The Vijayanagara armies were defeated and further losses were averted on account of the withdrawal of the Muslim armies due to other circumstances.

Venkata II (1630-1642) the next ruler, also had a bad time. There was a dispute for the succession to the throne and the fight lasted for five long years. There was anarchy and confusion all over

the empire during this period. The Sultans of Bijapur sent repeated invasions against the Cuddapah, Kurnool, Anantapur and Mysore region. The emperor's nephew, Sriranga, created trouble from within. The Sultans of Golconda sent expeditions which reached as far south as Pulicat. Unable to contend against all these odds, the emperor sought refuge in the hills of the Chittoor district. There are two records of his reign at Tirupati.

Sriranga III (1642-1681) was not more fortunate. He made tremendous efforts at restoring peace and order and preserving the empire. But the odds were too many. The armies of Bijapur attacked the Mysore area again and again. A powerful feudatory, named Damerla Venkatadri, became the sworn enemy of the emperor and caused great loss and worry. The Sultans of Golconda were active appropriating much territory on the east coast. The Nayakas of Ginjee and Madura refused to recognise the great danger that threatened the empire and fought the emperor and resisted all his attempts to rally all the available strength in making one supreme effort at saving the empire. Shah Jahan, the contemporary Mughal emperor of northern India, commanded the Sultans of Bijapur and Golconda to annex as much territory of the Hindu empire in the south as possible. This led to another spate of Muslim invasions which proved too much and Sriranga escaped to Mysore. With this even the phantom of the Vijayanagara empire disappeared.

### **Period of Muslim rule 1650-1800 A.D.**

The Tirumala-Tirupati region came to be conquered by the Sultans of Golconda by about the middle of the 17th century and remained under Muslim rule for about a century and half. This was a period of confusion, chaos and disorder and there was practically no government worth the name in this region. The Hindu empire of Vijayanagara had vanished and various interested parties like the Qutub Shah, the Mughals, the Nizam, the Marathas, the Nawabs of

Arcot, Hyder Ali, the English and the French entered the arena and added to the confusion and misery of this area.

### **Qutub Shahi rule**

The Vijayanagara emperor, Venkata II, granted to the English East India Company a small site on the east coast in 1640 A.D. on which was built the Fort St. George. Further south, the French established a settlement at Pondicherry and the nationals of these two European states rapidly increased their strength and exploited the rivalries of the local princes in their own wars during the next century. Qutub Shahi expansion into the districts of the eastern Carnatic assumed a serious phase in 1646 A.D. when the celebrated general, Mir Jumla, led a number of raids. He soon took Tondamanad, Tirupati and Chandragiri and devastated the Chittoor and North Arcot districts. He penetrated further south and captured Ponneri, Poonamalli, Kanchi, Gingee and Wandiwash. Soon after this, he deserted Golconda and walked into the Mughal camp. Shah Jahan, the Mughal emperor, conferred the Carnatic as a Jagir on Mir Jumla and Tupaki Krishnappa Nayaka managed the jagir for the general. After Mir Jumla's death in 1663 A.D., the jagir was given to Neknam Khan who managed it through a representative, named Chintapalli Mirza. Sivaji, the celebrated Maratha ruler, passed through the Kallur pass, near Tirupati, in 1676 A.D. while on his way for the conquest of Arni, Vellore and Gingee. Five years later, the Golconda minister, Akkanna, was at Tirupati, trying to set matters right. Aurangzeb, the son and successor of Shah Jahan, conquered the Qutub Shahi kingdom and annexed it to the Mughal empire. With this the Carnatic and the Tirumala-Tirupati region, which was included in it, passed into the hands of the Mughals.

### **Nawabs of Carnatic**

This change of control created great confusion in eastern Carnatic. Many people fled to the English settlement for safety. The

Subedars of the Deccan exercised power over this region. Several Mughal and Maratha armies ravaged this area. The Mughal emperor, Shah Alam I, constituted the Carnatic into a separate Nawabi and appointed Sadatulla Khan as its Nawab in 1710 A.D. This Nawab's adviser, Todar Mal, visited Tirumala and set up there statues of himself, his wife and his mother. Asaf Jha Nizam-ul-Mulk, the Mughal Subedar of the Deccan, began independent rule in 1724 A.D. and claimed authority over the Nawabs of Carnatic. This was also the time when the Peshwas became powerful in Maharashtra and the Carnatic soon came to be involved in the struggles between the Nizam and the Peshwa. Asaf Jha appointed Dost Ali as Nawab of Carnatic in 1733 A.D. A Maratha army invaded this region under Raghoji, seven years later, killed the Nawab in a pitched battle fought at Damalacheruvu, near Tirumala, and looted the country around. The mother and the wife of Bajji Rao, the Peshwa, visited Tirumala about this time. Safdar Ali now succeeded to the Nawabi. He paid fifty thousand rupees from the treasury of the Tirumala temple, which was under his control and got rid of the Marathas. Anwaruddin became the Nawab in 1744. Very soon, however, the Nizam of Hyderabad and this Nawab of Carnatic died and their successors started a war of succession. This was also the time when, in accordance with a war declared between their home countries, the English and the French started fighting in India. Mahammad Ali, son of Anwaruddin, who was championed by the English for the Nawabi, sent two lakhs of rupees from the treasury of the Tirumala temple to the English Commander, Clive, who was besieged at Arcot. About 1750 A.D. he assigned the revenues of the Tirupati-Tirumala temples to his allies and supporters, the English East India Company. The next twenty years witnessed terrible disorder and confusion in the Tirupati region. An adventurer, named Mahammad Kamal, ravaged this area but was driven out by an army of the Company. The

Zamindars of Venkatagiri, Kalahasti and Karvetinagar, created trouble. Nazibullah, a brother of the Nawab, advanced upon Tirupati and threatened it. Abdul Wahab, another brother, followed his example. Both of them were repelled by the Company's forces. Two Maratha generals Gopalarao and Narayanarao, occupied the Tirumala temple but were dislodged. Later, Hyder Ali, who usurped power in Mysore, created trouble here. The Nizam and the Company had to fight bitterly with Hyder and his son, Tipu. During the time of the Mysore wars, the Company took over the management of the Carnatic.

### **Rule of the Company**

After the Mysore wars, the Company tried to restore order in the Carnatic. The successors of Mahammad Ali opposed it. The Company forced the Nawab to retire on a pension and took over the administration of this area in 1801 A.D. Not willing to undertake the management of Hindu temples, the Company handed over the temples of Tirumala-Tirupati to the Mahants in 1843 A.D.

The Government of Madras took over the temples in 1933 A.D. and put them under the management of a Board of Trustees. With the formation of Andhra Pradesh, these temples came under the control of the government of this new state.

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## **CHAPTER II**

### **History of The Temples of Tirumala**

There is no definite evidence to show when and by whom the temple of Sri Venkatesvara was built. Nor is architecture a reliable guide because the temple was reconstructed by a visiting pilgrim in the 13th century. The original shrine must have been altered or replaced by a new one in this century. The Sangam literature of the early centuries of the Christian Era mentions the Vengadam hill but not its god. The Alvars have sung the praise of the god, considering him Krishna, Rama, Trivikrama and so on and describing Siva as part of the deity but are silent about the temple of the god. A statement of Tirumalisai Alvar may be taken to mean that the image was, at the time of his visit, installed in an open mantapa. By the time of Kulasekhara Alvar the image seems to have been enclosed in a shrine. Sri Venkatesvara *alias* Tiruvengadamudaiyan came to be known in the ninth century through a proxy temple built at Tiruchanur. This state of affairs continued in the early half of the tenth century. The earliest inscription found in the Tirumala temple mentions the birth of a Bana prince, named Vijayaditya, who flourished in the early half of the ninth century. (I-3) This prince made a gift to Sri Venkatesvara at Tiruchanur. (I-4)

### **The Chola period**

The Chola conquest of Tondamandalam in the ninth century brought about many changes and the temple on the Vengadam hill obtained wider popularity. An important event took place in the temple during the viceroyalty of Parthivendravarman *alias* Aditya II and in the reign of his father, Parantaka II. In 970 A.D., a lady, named Samavai, *alias* Kadavanperundevi, had special worship offered to the god and got a silver image of his installed in the temple and named it Manavalapperumal. She presented to this image many

costly jewels like *tirumudi*, *malas*, *udarabandham*, *tirumarai-pattikai*, *bahuvalayam*, *tiruchchandam*, *vadiyal*, *karai*, *padachayalam* and *prabha*. She also arranged for the daily offering of a plate of cooked rice and holy bath on the occasion of the two *Ayana-samkrantis* and the two *Vishusamkrantis*. The celebration of the *Purattasi* festival for nine days, beginning with *Ankurarpanam*, on the day of the *Chitra* star, and another festival of two days duration before it, was also instituted. (I-8) Samavai also gifted land for the expenses of a festival to be conducted twice a day for seven days prior to *Mukkoti-dvadasi* for Manavalapperumal (I-9). The next record is dated in the 16th year of the Chola king, Rajaraja I. It mentions that Parantakadevi-amman, the queen of Parantaka II presented to Sri Venkatesvara, a *pattam* weighing 52 *kalanju* of gold and set with six rubies, four diamonds and twenty-eight pearls (I-14). In the first year of the reign of Rajendra Chola, a local officer held an enquiry regarding the non-performance of the duty of lighting 24 oil lamps and one light of camphor by the *Sabhaiyar* of Tirumundiyam and set matters right (I-19). A queen of Kulottunga I made arrangements for the offering of milk and curds in the temple (I-27).

### The Pandyas

There are some records in the Tirumala temple which belong to the reign of Sundara Pandya (I-44 to 56). They do not contain any interesting information. Some of the local chieftains of this region who were subjugated by him, like the Telugu Pallavas, Telugu Cholas and Yadavarayas also figure in these inscriptions.

### The Yadavarayas

The Chieftains of this family, who governed part of Tondamandalam first as Chola subordinates, then as Pandya

feudatories and subsequently as independent rulers, were ardent devotees and patrons of Sri Venkatesvara. Vira Narasingadeva is the earliest member of this family to be connected with the temple of Tirumala. This chieftain gifted a village to the temple for the supply of rice, vegetables and ghee every day. (I-44) Tirukalattideva, another member, assigned some land in the village of Avilala to the temple. (I-81) Virarakshasa Yadavaraya also granted some land. (I-82) The queen of Viranarasinga presented 64 cows and two bulls for setting up two perpetual lamps. (I-84) In the 40th year of the rule of Viranarasinga, a certain Tiruppullanidasar, a visiting pilgrim, obtained the ruler's permission and renovated the shrine of Sri Venkatesvara. (I-88) This chieftain performed the *Tulabhara* ceremony at Tirumala and made Venkatagiri equal to mount *Meru*. (I-91). Another chieftain of this family, Tiruvenkatanatha, gifted a village as sarvamanya for conducting the *Adi-tirunal* for the god. (I-99) His father-in-law and *mahapradhani*, Singaya-dannayaka, instituted an offering named *Sitakara-sandhi* in the temple. (I-102) A record dated in the third year of the rule of another member of this family, Sriranganatha, refers to flower gardens, mathams etc., on the hill and mentions the Hunting festival of Sri Venkatesvara. (I-104) Another record dated sixteen years later, mentions the metallic image, Malaikiniyaninra-perumal and his Nachchimar. (I-106) One more record mentions the Vasantha festival. (I-113) Hobala Yadavaraya presented to the god an ornament for his )hand, obviously to the lower right hand which is in the varada pose. (I-117)

### The Vijayanagara period

The establishment of the Vijayanagara empire in 1336 A.D. was a turning point in the religious and cultural history of south India. The temples and gods of this region passed through critical days during the first three decades of the fourteenth century on account of frequent Muslim invasions. The new Hindu empire offered them

all the needed protection and extended to them zealous patronage. The Sri Venkatesvara temple of Tirumala received the devoted attention of the various royal families that ruled over the empire and entered upon a phase of unprecedented glory.

### Sangama dynasty

Bukka I is the first ruler of this dynasty that figures in the inscriptions from Tirumala. He gifted two villages for two offerings to be made to the god. (I-178) Mahamandalesvara Mangideva, a prominent feudatory, set up a golden *kalasa* on the *sikhara* of the *vimana* of the temple in 1369 A.D. (I-179) after gilding the sanctum (I-180). A minister of Kumara-Kampa gifted 28 cows and a bull (I-181). In 1388 A.D. a certain Mullai Tiruvenkata Jiyyar instituted the *Masi-tirunal* in the temple in the name of Harihara Raya, the then reigning king. (I-185) A record of 1390 A.D. mentions the *Tiruppavai* or the festival during which psalms were sung within the hearing of the processional image and his consort. (I-187) Another record, dated three years later, refers to the *Vidayyarri* day of each of the festivals celebrated at Tirumala (I-190). The *Kadai-tirunal* is referred to in an inscription of 1404 A.D. (I-191) King Devaraya II arranged on the *Uttana-dvadasi* day, in 1429 A.D., for offerings to be made during a special festival to be conducted in the month of *Asvayuja* commencing from the day of the *Punarvasu* star and ending with the day of the *Svati* star and for the supply of civet to be smeared on the body of the god during this festival (I-193). In 1417 A.D. a certain Madhavadasar, resident of Chandragiri, dedicated to Sri Venkatesvara, the Tirumamani-mantapam which he got built at his own cost. (I-196) Mention is made in a fragment of this time of repairs and embellishment of the *Anandavimana* of the temple by this Madhavadasar (I-198). Another great benefaction of Devaraya is recorded in four inscriptions. It seems that the practice of *Vedaparayanam* observed in the temple, ceased for some time.

A certain Alagappiranar brought this to the notice of the king and suggested that the practice may be restored. He then obtained from the king half share of a village as *srotriyam* and made it over to twenty four brahmans for their doing the Vedaparayanam. Later, he made a gift of 200 *panam* for the same purpose (I-199). Two of these brahmans were asked to recite the *Veda* each day before the god (I-200-204). A record of 1445 A.D. refers to the seed-sowing day, *Adhivasam* day and Tirthavari day during each of the nine festivals constituting the *Tirukkodi-tirunal* (I-213). Mahamandalesvara Siru Mallayadeva instituted a *Rayar-sandhi* in 1450 A.D. (I-218). An inscription of 1445 A.D. mentions the *Bukkarayan-sandhi* (I-219). One record of 1446 A.D. mentions the *SriPushpayagam* day at Tirumala during the seven festivals conducted with the commencement of *Dhvajaroohanam*, beginning with the *Adi* festival and lasting till the *Chittirai festival* (I-219). It also refers to the practice of Malaikiniyaninra-perumal and Nachchimar hearing the *Tiruvaymoli* while seated in a mantapa (I-220). Another record of the same year mentions the custom of putting on the bracelet round the wrist of Malaikiniyaninra-perumal after the *Tirumanjanam* (I-221). An inscription of the next year mentions the *Kaiyarchakram* day during the nine festivals (I-222).

### Saluva Dynasty

A *sandhi* was instituted in the name of Saluva Narasimha in return for the gift of the *Svarnadaya* tax from a village (II-4). Provision was made by a donor in 1461 A.D. for burning a lamp on every Saturday (II-10). Mention is made in a record of 1464 A.D. of the *Tirupavitratirunal* or Pavitrotsavam (II-18). One inscription of 1468 A.D. states that Saluva Narasimha constructed a gopuram and arranged for feeding visitors in a choultry near it (II-34). A record of the next year refers to the practice of offering *Dadhyodanasandhi* to Sri Venkatesvara after his feet are washed at the commencement



of the daily *Thomalaseva* and to the practice of conducting *Tirumanjanam* on the days of *Panguni-amavasya* and *Vasantapurnima* to god Narasimha (II-38). It is known from another record that a choultry was maintained for ten days on the bund of the *Narasingarayakoneri* during the *Purattasi-tirunal* (II-51). An inscription dated 1473 A.D. mentions the *Dola-mahotsavam* or *Anna-unjal-tirunal* instituted by Saluva Narasimha (II-50). Another record of 1476 A.D. refers to the practice of Malaikuniyaninra-perumal going to a mantapam in the Varaha temple, to the car procession during the *Panguni* and *Purattasi* festivals and to the custom of the Nachchimar receiving a bath after being smeared with turmeric on the occasion of *Kanuppadi* (II-68). An offering, named the *Alarmelmangai-Nachchiyar-Sandhi*, comes to notice in a record of 1477 A.D. (II-69). A fragmentary record mentions the *Papavinasa* festival, (II-71). An inscription dated 1482 A.D. states that Narasimha Raya gifted a village on the occasion of *Uttanadvadasi* in 1472 A.D. and that he stipulated that the income from the village should be utilised for the construction of gopurams on Tirumala and at Tirupati and the Narasimharaya mantapam at Tirumala (II-79). One record of 1486 A.D. mentions the *Tiruppulli-eluchchi* or the Dhanurmasam festival conducted during the month of *Margali* (II-86). Another inscription mentions a procession taken through the streets on the *Uttama-dvadasi* day and the *Sri Jayanti* festival (II-91). Another, dated 1491 A.D., mentions the practice of decorating Sri Venkatesvara with two round garlands resembling the Sun and the Moon on the Yugadi and Deepavali days (II-94). It is stated in an inscription of 1491 A.D. that the path way leading to the Akasaganga was being repaired on the day prior to that of Tiruvadhyayanam in the month of Margali (II-95). A record of the same year refers to the practice of Malaikuniyaninraperumal and his consort having a galloping ride on the eighth festival days (II-96).

Another record, dated two years later, mentions the festive days of *Sri Jayanti*, *Sri Ramanavami* and *Vasantapanchami* (II-101). Narasamma, wife of Kommaraja Periya Timmaraja, rebuilt the *Anandampillai mantapam* in the same year (II-103). The *Tiruvadhyayanam* festival conducted during the month of *Margali* is mentioned in a record of 1493 A.D. (II-107). The practice of conducting a car festival during the *Tirukkoditirunal* comes to notice in an inscription of the same year (II-109). Mention is made of the *Arpasitirunal* and *Masitirunal* in a record dated 1494 A.D. (II-112). Another record of the same year mentions the *Adiyanam* and the practice of Sri Venkatesvara hearing the *Kasikapuranam* on the *Uttanaekadasi* day during the *Chaturmasyam* (II-115). An inscription of 1495 A.D. states that Narasimharaya issued an order authorizing Kandadai Ramanuja Ayyangar to carry on necessary repairs to the temple jewels and gold and silver vessels and to be in hereditary charge of the jewellery store room (II-133). A record of the next year refers to the procession taken to the *Navalurru* mantapam and refers to the temple staff which included the *Tiruppanipillai*, *Lachchinaikkarar*, reciters of the *Prabandham*, *kanganiappan*, bearers of the *vahanams*, the *Adhikari*, *Pachchadikkarars*, lamp lighters, *Vinnapamseyvars* suppliers of fire wood, proclaimer, dance-master, time-keeper, dancers, drummers, pipers, songsters, potters, sculptors and watchmen (II-135). A record of 1496 A.D. mentions the practice of smearing *Pulugukappu* to the bodies of Sri Venkatesvara and Alarmelmangai Nachchimar during the *Pulugukappumurai* on alternate Fridays, (II-136). Another, dated 1504 A.D., mentions the *Rayarmantapam* in the *Sampakachchurru* (II-138).

### Tuluva dynasty

The temple of Tirumala received liberal patronage during the period of the rule of this dynasty. Two famous rulers of this family,

Krishnadevaraya and his brother, Achyutadevaraya, were ardent devotees of Sri Venkatesvara and gave him many valuable presents. Krishnaraya visited the temple on 10th February, 1513 and presented to the god many costly jewels like a *kirita* of gold, set with various precious stones, a three-stringed necklace, a garland of pearls and a silver plate (II-32-39). On the same occasion his queen, Chinnajamma presented a gold cup, weighing 374 units, for offering milk after the night worship (III-40-49). His other queen, Tirumaladevi, presented a gold cup of the same weight and a gold plate (III-50-59). Other records of the same date mention the emperor's other gifts like a big *Vaidurya* ornament set with precious stones, three swords and sheaths, set with costly stones, a garland, a pair of *Bhujakirtis*, a bracelet, and two *haras* to the processional image of Sri Venkatesvara (III-60-64). He gifted some more jewels and villages for the merit of his parents (III-65). The emperor visited the temple for the second time on 65th July, 1514 and performed *Kanakabhishekam* to the god with 30,000 *chakram pon*, presented a three-stringed ornament set with precious stones and gifted a village (III-66-68). On the same occasion, queen, Chinnajidevi, presented to the god one *Kanthamala* set with precious stones and gifted also a village (III-70-72). Queen Tirumaladevi gave the god a *Chakrapatakam* set with diamonds, rubies, emeralds and pearls and also gifted a village (III-73-75). Krishnaraya visited Tirumala again on 25th October, 1515 and presented to the god a *Prabhavali* containing nine kinds of precious stones (III-76-79). His next visit was on 2nd January, 1517. On this occasion he presented one necklace and one pendant and got the *vimanam* of the temple gilded with the gold of 30,7000 *varahas* and gifted 1,000 *varahas* for the expenses of *Pulikappu* conducted to the god on every Thursday (III-80-82). He was at Tirumala again on 17th February, 1521 and on this occasion presented to Sri Venkatesvara a silk cloth set with gems, a cape similarly set with valuable stones

and two *chamaras*. He also gave 10,000 *varahas* (III-83). His queen, Tirumaladevi, presented a *padakam* set with precious stones (III-80). The work of gilding the vimana was completed on 9th September, 1518 (III-81). A record dated 1515 A.D. mentions the *Gaurakkuli-vasanta* festival (III-105). Another, belonging to the next year, mentions the *Brahmotsava* conducted in the months of Purattasi, Tai and Panguni (III-113). A record of next year states that the *Gaurakkuli-vasanta* festival was conducted on the day next to the day of the *Floating festival*. (III-127). It is known from a record of 1519 A.D. that the image of the god was being seated in the shrine of Varahasvami on forty days during the eight *Brahmotsavams* (III-132). It is also stated that the god went on slow walking in the evening hearing Sri Suktis on the *Brahmotsavam* days (III-133).

One record of 1530 A.D. belonging to the reign of Achyutaraya, enumerates a number of festive occasions like the nine *Brahmotsavams*, *Garudavahanam*, *Rathotsavam*, *Achyutaraya's Brahmotsavam*, the procession to the *Samkirtanabhandaram*, the *Summer festival*, *Adhyayanotsavam*, the *swing festival*, *Pavitrotsavam*, *Sahasrakalasabhishekam*, *Vasantotsavam*, the *New Moon day*, the *Full Moon day*, the *Dasami*, *Ekadasi* and *Dvadasi days*, the *Tiruonam day*, *Uttiram day*, *Deepavali*, *Yugadi*, *Sri Jayanti*, the *Uri-adi*, *Kartikai*, the *Hunting festival*, the *Kanuvu festival*, *Uttana-ekadasi* and *Mukkoti-dvadasi* (IV-6). Another record of 1532 A.D. refers to the practice of offering three *Yajnopavitams* to the god at the time of *Alagappiranar-tirumanjanam* (IV-14).

Achyutaraya visited Tirumala on 31st January, 1533 and himself had the Srinivasa *Sahasranamarchanam* performed to Sri Venkatesvara and presented a number of costly jewels and dresses

(IV-16 and 17). A record of 1532 A.D. refers to the setting up of stone steps to the tank on the hill and the building of a compound wall and a mantapa (IV-20). Another record of the next year refers to the *Achyutarayan-Koneri* (IV-24). An inscription of 1534 A.D. mentions three *avasarams* or offerings named after Krishnaraya, his brother, Achyutaraya, and the later's queen, Varadaji-amma (IV-29). Tallapakam Tirumalayyengar, son of Annamayyengar, set up steps of granite stone to the *Svamipushkarini*, erected the *Niralimantapam* in the middle of it, built a *Pradakshina-mantapam* on its four sides, constructed *Prakara* walls to the temple of Varahasvami and raised the eastern gopuram to the temple of Sri Venkatesvara (IV-40,41). A record of 1535 A.D. mentions the *Tirukalyanam* festival during the nine *Brahmotsavams*, the recitation of *Kausikapuranam* in the month of *Kartikai*, and the cradle festival, celebrated for Krishna, in the *Tirumamani-mantapam* (IV-46). In the same year, Achyutaraya instituted the *Lakshmidēvi-mahotsavam* to be celebrated for five days to the god and his consort and gifted the *Uttarayam* of 300 *pon* to meet the expenses of this festival (IV-54). An inscription of 1536 A.D. mentions the *Vannimaram* or *Vijayadasami* festival (IV-69). Several records of this time enumerate the festivals celebrated in the temple (IV-81-86,110,158). In 1540 A.D. Achyutaraya sent a dancer, named Hanumasani, to serve in the temple of Sri Venkatesvara (IV-142). A record of 1541 A.D. mentions the *Sankirtanabhandaram*, in which the copper-plates containing the *kirtanams* composed by the members of the Tallapakam family were kept, in the first *prakara* of the temple (IV-155). Another record of the same year mentions the Narasanayakar street at Tirumala (IV-159). One inscription of 1541 A.D. states that Salakaraju Siru-Tirumalaraju constructed the *Varadaji-ammattiruvudhi* to the west of Tirumalayyengar's house in the west Mada street at Tirumala (IV-168).

A record of 1543 A.D. states that Alarmemangai-Nachchiyar adorns the bosom of Sri Venkatesvara (V-5). Another mentions that musk and refined camphor were being used to decorate the forehead of the god (V-2, 8). A third record, belonging to 1543 A.D., refers to the reading of the *Srinivasa puranam* in the temple (V-10). One record, dated two years later, mentions the *Chunabhishekam* festival celebrated to the god in the Tirumanimantapam (V-41). Another of the same year mentions the *Tirukalyanam* day, the bed chamber arranged inside the shrine of Sri Venkatesvara, the practice of the god honouring the Sankirtanams of the Tallapakam family during the twenty days of the summer festival and the practice of reading of the *Sribhashyam* of Ramanuja before the god during the sixty *tirumanjanam* days (V-47). Another inscription mentions the *Vanabhajanam* festival conducted on the day of the *Sravanam* star during the month of Kartika (V-47). An inscription of 1545 A.D. mentions the *Pallavotsavam* (V-51). Tallapakam Periya-Tirumalayyengar, son of Annamayyengar, instituted in 1546 A.D. the *Vaivahikotsavam* to be celebrated for the god for five days in the month of Panguni (V-71) in the Tirumanimantapam. A record of 1551 A.D. refers to Alagapparanar or *Koluvu-Srinivasa* in the sanctum of Sri Venkatesvara (V-129). An inscription of 1561 A.D. states that Aravidu Tirumalaraya constructed an *Unjal-mantapam* in the *Sampangi-pradakshinam* and that Salva Narasimha instituted the *Unjal-festival* (V-168). This record enumerates the festivals celebrated in the temple at this time viz., *Pavitrotsavam*, *Sahasranamarchanam*, *Sahasrakalasabhishekam*, *Adhyayanotsavam*, *Vasantotsavam*, *Damanarohanam*, *Unjal* festival, *Pendli-tirunal*, *Lakshmidēvi* festival, *Kodai tirunal*, Floating festival, *Pallavotsavam*, *Phalotsavam*, *Mesha-samkramanam*, festival conducted on *Amavasya*, *Purnima*, *Dasami*, *Ekadasi*, *Dvadasi*, *Rohini*, *Mrigasirsha*, *Punarvasu*,

*Uttara, Mula, Purvashadha, Uttarabhadra, Sri Jayanti, Urai-adi and Uttana-dvadasi, Arpasi-puradham, Deepavali, Yugadi. Kartikam, Makara-sankramanam, Padiyavettai, Tai-pusam and Tanniramudu* (V-168). One record of 1564 A.D. mentions the *Rathasaptami* festival (V-173).

It is known from an inscription dated in 1586 A.D. that a certain Avasaram Chennappa constructed the *Kalyanamantapa* (VI-7). A record of 1614 A.D. mentions the Ramapattabishekam festival at Tirumala celebrated in the Venrumalaiyittanmantapam on the day next to the *Sri Ramanavami* day and the practice of reading the *Vayupuranam* during the festival (VI-18). Two records of 1623 A.D. state the Mala Anantaraja presented several vehicles like the *Svarnasva, Gaja, Samarabhupalavahana, Padmapitha* and *Unna-tukkelimantapa*, and that he built the Galigopuram on the stepped pathway (VI-25-26). The same chieftain is said to have built the Kotta-gopuram near *Alipiri* (VI-27).\*

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\* This account of the history of the temple is based upon the T.T.D. inscriptions and the figures within brackets refer to the number of the volume and number of the inscriptions concerned.

### CHAPTER III

#### Legends about Tirumala and its God

There are numerous collections of legends and stories about Tirumala and its god, Sri Venkatesvara or Srinivas. These are to be found in many of the *Puranas*. All these have been collected and edited in a book, entitled the *Venkatachalamahatmyam*. An inscription from Tirumala mentions a *Venkatachalamahatmyam* read in the temple before the god. It is not known if the work of this name, now available in print, is the same as the one referred to in the inscription. Probably, it is not the same work because the printed work does not indicate the name of any compiler. The printed work contains extracts from the *Varahapurana, Padmapurana, Garudapurana, Brahmandapurana, Markandeyapurana, Harivamsa, Vamanapurana, Brahmapurana, Brahmottarapurana, Adityapurana, Skandapurana* and *Bhavishyottarapurana*. Most of these extracts describe the sanctity and greatness of the hills round Tirumala and of numerous *tirthas* situated on them. The following legends taken from the extracts from the *Harivamsa* and the *Brahma, Brahmanda* and *Bhavishyottara puranas* are of particular interest:

#### Why the Lord came to Seshachala

There are two stories which explain the reason for Srinivasa's presence on this hill.

Once, Vishnu wanted to have a change from his usual abode in *Vaikuntha*. He asked Narada to suggest a place on this earth which would be suitable for diversion and sport. Narada suggested the neighbourhood of the place where *Seshachala* came to be located, later on. Subsequently, Vayu and Sesha disputed their relative strength and entered into a serious dispute. Sesha wound his long body round a part of Meru and challenged Vayu to move it. Vayu did his best to

shake the hillock but could not. Ultimately Sesha opened his mouth to breathe and taking advantage of it, Vayu entered his body and blew off part of the hill. After the hill had travelled a long distance, Meru interfered and requested Vayu to leave it there and the later did so. Ashamed of his defeat, Sesha did penance thinking of Vishnu. Vishnu appeared before him and offered a boon. Sesha, assuming the shape of a hill, requested the Lord to stay on his head, wanted the hill to be known as *Seshachala*. Vishnu thought of Narada's suggestion, made previously, and agreed to live on *Seshachala*. This story is found in the *Brahmapurana*.

The *Bhavisyottara purana* narrates another story which runs as follows:-

Once a number of Rishis assembled on the bank of the Ganga and got things ready for the performance of a *Yajna*. Narada came to them and asked them which god they intended pleasing by performing the sacrifice. The Rishis were non-fussed and requested the sage, Bhrigu, to solve the problem. That sage undertook to solve the problem by examining the three chief divinities. He first went to the abode of Brahma and found him busy chanting the Vedas with one mouth, uttering the name of Narayana with another and looking at Vani with the third face. He took no notice of Bhrigu. Then the sage went to the abode of Siva. There again he found Siva fully absorbed in sporting with his consort and not taking notice of Bhrigu's arrival and presence. From here Bhrigu went to *Vaikuntha* and found Vishnu similarly engaged in amours with Lakshmi. Disgusted with this, Bhrigu kicked Vishnu on his chest. Vishnu immediately got up, massaged the Rishi's foot and enquired if it had been injured. Pleased with this kind attention paid by Vishnu, Bhrigu returned to the Rishis and advised them to dedicate the *Yajna* to Vishnu. Lakshmi was angered because Bhrigu kicked the spot which was her favourite resort on the bosom of the Lord and went away to Karavirapura or

Kolhapur to stay there, leaving Vishnu. Unable to bear the solitude, Vishnu left *Vaikuntha* and wandered about. In course of time he came to *Seshachala*, found it sufficiently interesting and settle down on the mountain in an ant-hill, on the bank of the *Svamipushkarini*.

### How temples were built of Him

The Puranas associate the names of several kings with the worship of Vishnu on Seshachala and the building of an abode for him.

### Story of Sankha

Once, in the *Krita-yuga*, there was a king named Sankha in the solar race. He desired to do some thing which would last eternally and consulted his guru, Vasistha. Vasistha advised him to go to *Venkatadri* and pray to the Lord. The king came to the hill and did penance. The Lord appeared before him in a *vimana* and asked the king to build a vimana like the one in which he came and install in it an image which would resemble him. Sankha carried out the command and built a vimana and installed in it an image of the Lord. This temple was destroyed at the end of the Kalpa and the image got buried in the ground up to the knees; an anthill surrounded it and a tamarind tree grew up offering it good shade.

### Story of the Chola King

This story is found in the *Brahmandapurana* and runs as follows:-

In the *Kali* age there was a Chola King. One day, he went out for hunt and wandered about killing many animals near the Seshachala. Halting at a place for a little rest, he found a handsome young woman plucking flowers. Struck by her beauty, he approached her and asked her for her antecedents. He was told that she was the daughter of a Naga, named Dhanamjaya, who lived in *Patala*. The

king then conveyed to her his sincere love and asked for her hand. The Naga maid asked the king to obtain her father's permission but the king did not have the patience to go through the formal process. Ultimately, they married in the Gandharva way and spent the night together happily. Next morning the Naga girl went back to her place. On hearing of her matrimony, her father was pleased. Very soon, she conceived and delivered a beautiful boy. This child grew up into a fine young man. Once the boy asked the mother to show him his father. The mother told him who his father was and showed him the way to the earth. The boy followed his mother's instructions and went to the Chola King. The king forgot his relationship with the Naga woman and was doubting the veracity of the boy's story. Then a divine voice assured the king that the boy was his own son and advised him to crown the son. Pleased with this assurance, the king built a city on the spot where he met the Naga maid and installed the boy as its king. This ruler came to be known as the Chola-chakravarti.

One day, the keepers of his cows came and told this king that every day, as they passed by an anthill, one of the pots was being broken and its milk spilt over the anthill. That night, the king had a dream. A very handsome person black in colour appeared before him and told him "Oh king, I come from Srinivasa and live with him on Seshadri. He lives on the hill with *Sri* and *Bhu*. You come and see him." The king followed him in the dream to *Seshadri* and there saw a *brilliant vimana*. Next day, a Sabara came to the king and told him a strange story thus- "Sire, I live on *Seshadri* cultivating *priyangu* roots. I offer some of them to the god and eat the rest. Once, I saw *Svetavaraha* spoiling the crop. I kept my boy to watch the field and myself went in search of honey. On returning, I found that the boy had eaten without the offering being made to god. I got angry and attempted to kill the boy but a divine voice told me that the god had partaken of the food before the boy and asked me to

fetch you to Seshadri..." The Chakravarti asked his ministers to send behind him the milk of one thousand cows and himself followed the Sabara. When they reached the top of the hill, the Sabara showed an anthill to the king and suggested that it might be dug out. The king was afraid of doing so. He caused the milk sent by his ministers to be poured on the ant-hill. The ant-hill melted and out of it emerged the glorious figure of the Lord, bearing *Samkha* and *Chakra* in the upper hands, keeping the lower right in *varada* and the lower left in *Katyavalambita*. The king praised the Lord in many ways and requested him to stay where he was and as he was. The Lord agreed and asked the king to worship him daily. During the course of the worship he was talking to the king, as if to a friend.

Once a Brahman, named Krishnasarma, came to the king accompanied by his wife and a baby, told him that he was on a pilgrimage to Banaras and requested the king to kindly grant an asylum to his wife and child till the time of his return. The King agreed. A separate house was assigned to the lady and provisions for six months given to her. She was asked not to stir out of the house. Subsequently, the king forgot about this Brahman lady and her child. In course of time Krishnasarma returned from the pilgrimage and asked for his wife and child. The king sent a servant to fetch them but the servant came back and told the king in secrecy that the rotten skeletons of the lady and her child were to be found in the house. The king was shocked at this and repented for his foolishness in not taking proper care of them. He told the Brahman, however, that the lady has been to *Seshachala* to see the Lord and that he can meet her the next day. Having thus satisfied the Brahman, he ran to the hill and sought the protection of the Lord. The god commanded his general, Vishvaksena, to fetch some water from the *Asthikuta* tank and sprinkle it over the two skeletons. When this was done, the lady and her child assumed their former shape and form and got up as if from sleep. The king restored them to Krishnasarma.

Some time later, a demon, named Simhada, settled down on the hill. He did penance and obtained a boon to the effect that no celestial, semi-celestial or human should be able to kill him. He started harassing the *Devas* thereafter. The *Devas* sought the protection of the Lord. He asked them to go to his devotee, the Chakravarti, seek his help and enter his body with their *amas* and they did so. On hearing of their request, the king came to *Seshadri* and sought the Lord's guidance. The Lord gave him his own weapons, the *Samkha* and the *Chakra* and asked him to go and fight the demon. The king and his men went to the *Papanasana-tirtha*, where the demon lived, and challenged him to battle. During the bitter fight that ensued, the king used the Lord's *chakra* which severed the head of the demon. The king came back to the Lord and offered his sincere thanks. He then returned the weapons but the Lord told the weapons- "Go and live in tirthas named after you. I want to live for sometime without you. In the *Kali* age, for some reason, a man will invest me with artificial *Samkha* and *hakra*. I will hold them just to please the world."

### Story of Rangadasa

This story is found in the *Brahmanda-purana* and runs as follows:-

Once there was a *Vaikhanasa* brahman, named Gopinatha, in the Chola country. He was a great devotee of Krishna. He requested the Lord to grant him salvation. Krishna asked him to go to *Seshadri* and worship Srinivasa there and assured him that a sudra, named Rangadasa, would meet him on the way and be of use to him. The brahman came to the foot of the hill and there met Rangadasa. The two went up the hill and dug the image of the Lord from out of the ant-hill. *They installed it in a mantapa with a thatched roof* and built a stone wall round it. Rangadasa used to fetch flowers and make garlands out of them and Gopinatha was worshipping the

Lord. One day, as Ranga- dasa was preparing the garlands, he saw a Gandharva couple sporting. Unable to control his mind he had an ejection. Repenting for this, he threw away the garlands and flowers, already prepared, had a purificatory bath, gathered fresh flowers, made new garlands and went into the shrine. Gopinatha chided him for being late but Rangadasa did not explain the reason for the delay because of shame. A divine voice told Rangadasa "Your mind is upset. You cannot do any good deed in this condition. Be born again and this time as a king. Enjoy all worldly pleasures. Then build a good abode for me. Once, some enemies will cause you trouble. I shall give you my *samkha* and *chakra* with which you will be able to overcome them."

Rangadasa died and was born as a king. He came to be called Chakravarti and the people of the Dravida country called him *Tondaman*. He lived at Narayanavanam and used to go every day to *Seshachala* and worship the Lord. In course of time he built for the god two *prakaras* with two gopuras, the *Garbhagriha*, kitchen, *Yagasala*, grannery and *Gosala*. He presented many jewels to the god and instituted many festivals. Once number of enemies invaded his territory and harassed him. The king went to the Lord and sought his help. The god lent him his own *Samkha* and *Chakra*. The king defeated and drove away the enemies and came back to the Lord. He then requested the Lord to stay as he was without the *samkha* and *chakra* and that his archa-image should be without them. The Lord agreed.

### How the Lord received a blow

This story is found in the *Bhavishyottara purana* and runs as follows:-

Once Lakshmi converted Brahma into a cow and Siva into a calf and sold them to the Chola king. The cow which used to wander

over *Seshachala*, discovered the anthill in which the Lord lay, taking rest. Thereafter she used to shed her milk on the ant-hill and did not yield a drop to the milkman of the king. The queen took the milkman to task and blamed him for stealing the cow's milk. Next day, the milkman followed the cow and saw her pour the milk over the ant-hill. Incensed at this, he took an axe and wanted to kill the cow. The Lord came out of the ant-hill and took the blow upon himself. Blood gushed out of the wound made in his head. The milkman saw this and died of shock, on the spot. The cow went down the hill, reached the King and showed intense grief. The Chola king followed the cow, came up the hill and saw the pitiable sight. The Lord cursed him to become a *pisacha* and said, "In future time an Akasaraaja will give his daughter, Padmavati, in marriage to me. He then presents me a *kirita* which I wear on Fridays. As long as I wear it, I will not feel the pain of the wound on my head and for that time you will also be normal."

### **Srinivasa's marriage**

This story is found in the *Bhavishyottara- purana* and runs as follows:-

Once Srinivasa put on a fine dress and started for hunt. He chased an elephant and wandered a long distance and ultimately entered a garden. A beautiful young maiden and her companions, who were plucking flowers, ran away on seeing the elephant and took shelter behind a tree. This maiden was the foster daughter of king Akasaraaja and was named Padmavati. This Akasaraaja and his younger brother, Tondaman, were the sons of Suvira, a king of the lunar race. Akasaraaja found Padmavati concealed in a lotus while he was getting a piece of land ploughed in order to construct a *Yagasala*. Being childless, he took this child home, named her Padmavati and brought her up. Subsequently, he had a son, named Vasudana. Srinivasa approached Padmavati and described himself

as Krishna, son of Devaki and Vasudeva, and brother of Rama and Subhadra. He asked for her hand. The attendant maidens of the princess got wild and pelted stones at the Lord. His horse was hit by them and fell down dead. Srinivasa departed from there taking a northern direction.

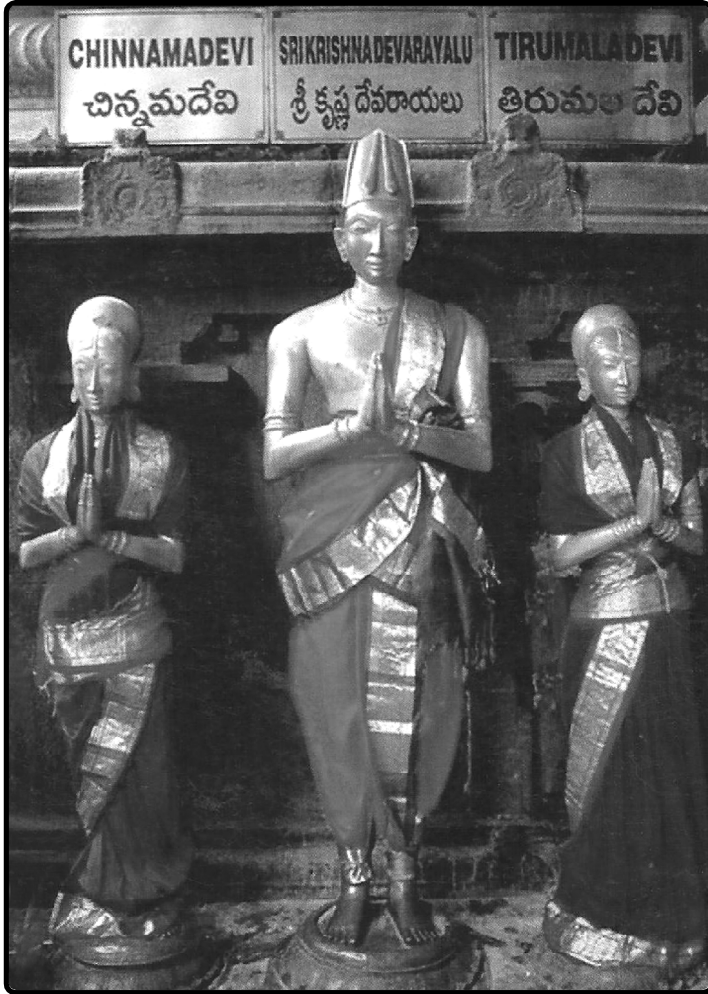
The Lord returned to his abode in the ant-hill and lay down in great grief. Vakula, who attended upon him, appeased him by many courtesies and found out that he fell in love with Padmavati. The Lord asked her to go to Akasaraaja and negotiate his marriage with Padmavati. Even before Vakula could reach the king's abode, he himself went there in the disguise of a gipsy woman and persuaded Akasaraaja's queen, Dharani, to give her daughter, Padmavati, in marriage to Srinivasa. Padmavathi was also struck by love and was pondering over the young man she had met in the flower garden. When Vakula reached the king's palace the ground was already prepared and the marriage was settled. Srinivasa set out with all the gods and goddesses as his relations and married Padmavati.

### **Tondaman builds a temple**

Very soon after the marriage Akasaraaja died and his brother, Tondaman, and son Vasudana, fought for the throne. Srinivasa interfered at the instance of Padmavati and divided the kingdom between the two disputants. Tondaman got the Tondamandalam part and Vasudana obtained the Narayanavanam part of the kingdom.

This Tondaman was Rangadasa in the previous birth. So the Lord commanded him to build a fine abode for His residence. Tondaman constructed a temple. The lord lived in it with great satisfaction. The king had many vehicles made and performed a number of *utsavas* for the Lord.





*Sri Krishna Devaraya and his two queens,  
Chinnadevi and Tirumaladevi*

## CHAPTER IV

### Discription of the temples of Tirumala

The following is a brief description of the important temples and shrines situated on the Tirumala hill.

#### **Sri Venkateswara Temple**

The celebrated temple of Sri Venkatesvara stands on a hill named *Venkatadri* which looks like a depression surrounded by high hills on all sides. The entire temple is surrounded by a *prakara* built of large blocks of stone riveted into each other. The walls are 414 feet East-West and 263 feet North-South. There is only one entrance in the east surrounded by a gopura, known as the *Padikavali gopuram*. The base of the gopuram seems to have been in existence even by the commencement of the 13th century A.D. and the superstructure is a later date (I-84).

#### **Outer Courtyard or Sampangi Pradakshinam**

Passing through the entrance of this gopura, one enters the outer courtyard of the temple. Immediately adjacent to and touching the gopura is a small mantapa with two wings, one on each side, and a path-way in the centre. Each wing has two rows of four pillars each. The pillars in the outer row are plain and contain a *Salakoshtha* at the base. The pillars in the inner row contain an animal bracket having a lion with rider on, standing with its hind legs resting on a *Makara*. In the northern wing of this mantapa resting against the *prakara* wall are three metallic statues of Krishna Raya and his two queens, Tirumaladevi and Chinnadevi. In the southern wing are to be found a metallic statue of king and two stone figures of a king and his queen. From the style of the pillars, this mantapa may be taken to have built in the later Vijayanagara times, about the early half on the sixteenth century.



Tirumalarayamandapa in Sri Venkateswara Temple.

## Ranga mantapa

In the south-east corner of the courtyard is a big mantapa, popularly known as the Ranga-mantapa. There is small portico before it. This portico contains two rows of four pillars each. The outer pillars have three pillaret projecting and the inner ones have the animal bracket. The mantapa proper contains nine pillars on each side, each pillar having a pillaret projecting into the interior. At the western end are four plain pillars. The entablature above the pillars is interrupted at intervals by a second capital. The intervening spaces contain two *pattas* with a *kapota* or cornice above. Above the *kapota* are two rows of five sculptures depicting dancers and scenes from Vaishnava mythology. Towards the southern end of the mantapa are a pavilion and a shrine. The pavilion is of black granite but is now coloured all over and used to house a vahana. The shrine is a fine structure consisting of an *Antarala* and a *Garbhagriha*. The walls on the sides are decorated with the series-*pilaster*, *kumbhapanjara*, *pilaster* and *pilaster*. The *koshtha* has a false perforated screen. The back wall of the Garbhagriha is adorned with the series pilaster, *kumbhapanjara*, pilaster, *sala-koshtha*, pilaster, *kumbhapanjara*, and pilaster. The *koshtha* has a plank decorated with lotus scroll. The front part of the shrine consists of an entrance flanked by a *sala-koshtha* on either side. A *kapota* decorated with *nasikas* surmounted by *simhalalatas* surmounts the entire front. This shrine may be ascribed to the 14th century on architectural grounds.

## Unjal mantapa

To the west of the Ranga-mantapa is another mantapa known as the *Anna-unjal-mantapa* and *Tirumalarayamantapa*. This is in two parts, the front part being at a lower level and the back part

at a higher level. The back part was built by the Vijayanagara ruler, Saluva Narasimha, in 1473 A.D. (II-50) and the front part was added by Araviti Tirumala Raya in the sixteenth century (VI-1). The front part contains two rows of four pillars each on each side. The pillars in the two outer rows are plain while those in the interior contain animal brackets. In the back part of the mantapa also there are two rows of four plain and those in the inner rows have one pillaret projecting. In the centre of the mantapa is a pavilion of black granite. There are two rows of two pillars each, both before and behind this pavilion. All these have a pillaret projecting. The pavilion has, in the corners four pillars each with three pillarets projecting. There are a few Vaishnava sculptures on the pillars and beams of this pavilion. The statues of Todar Mal, his mother and wife are now located in the front part of this mantapa in the north-western angle.

### Aina mahal

In the northern part of the courtyard is another structure known as the *Aina-mahal*. This is in two parts, an open mantapa in the front containing six rows of six pillars each and a shrine behind it, consisting of an *Antarala* and a *Garbhagriha*.

### Dhvajastambha-mantapa

There is a narrow mantapa in the western part of the courtyard touching the second or inner gopura. It has on the north and south two rows of five pillars each, those in the inner row having one pillaret projecting. In the Centre of the mantapa are the *Dhvajastambha* and *Balipitha*.

The remaining part of the outer courtyard on the south, west and north seems to have-contained originally long pillared verandahs, subsequently converted into a number of rooms.

### Inner Courtyard

The inner or second enclosure has to be reached through an only entrance, guarded by the second gopura. The base of this gopura seems to have existed by the beginning of the 13th century. This enclosure is known as the *Vimana-pradak- shinam*.

### Varadaraja shrine

Immediately to the left of the gopura entrance there is a small shrine dedicated to Varadaraja. It consists of a high *adhistanā*, an *Antarala*, a *Garbhagriha* and a *Vimana* above, belonging to the *Vesara* order. The walls of the *Garbhagriha* of this shrine are decorated with four pilasters, those of the *Antarala* with one pilaster and the back wall with four pilasters. There is a doorway in the front flanked by a pilaster on either side and surmounted by a *kapota* decorated with *nasikas* surmounted by *simhalalata*. There is another *kapota* above the walls similarly decorated. The sanctum contains a stone image of Varadaraja.

### Kalyana mantapa

In the southern part of the courtyard is the *Kalyana-mantapa*, 80 feet X 36 feet. It is reached by a short flight of steps in the east. There are two rows of nine pillars each in the north and one row of nine pillars in the south. The pillars in the outer row in the north are plain while those in the other two rows have animal brackets. Towards the western end of this mantapa there is a pavilion of black granite containing four pillars, each with three pillarets projecting. These pillars contain a few fine Vaishnava sculptures like those of Narasimha, Krishna and Venugopala. Behind this pavilion is a small shrine on a finely carved *adhistanā*. Its side walls are decorated with the series- pilaster, pilaster, *kumbhapanjara*, pilaster, *sala-koshtha*, pilaster, *kumbhapanjara* and pilaster. There is a false

screen inside the *koshtha*. The back wall of the shrine is decorated with the series-pilaster, *kumbhapanjara*, pilaster, *sala-koshtha*, pilaster, *kumbhapanjara* and pilaster. This Kalyana-mantapa was constructed by a chieftain named Avasaram Chennappa in 1586 A.D. (VI-7).

### Narasimha shrine

The shrine of Narasimha is in the north-east corner of the courtyard built in a pillared verandah touching the eastern wall of the *prakara*. There are five pillars on each side and two in the front of this shrine. The pillars on the sides are plain but those in the front have one pillaret projecting. The shrine has an *Antarala* the outer side of whose walls is decorated with the series-two pilasters, *sala-koshtha* and two pilasters. The side walls of the *Garbhagriha* beyond are decorated with the series - three pilasters, *sala-koshtha* and three pilasters. The back wall contains a *sala-koshtha* between three pilasters on either side. There is a fine icon of Yoga-Narasimha inside the sanctum, sitting with the legs crossed and bound by the *yoga-patta*, holding *samkha* and *chakra* in the two upper hands and keeping the two lower hands resting on the knees.

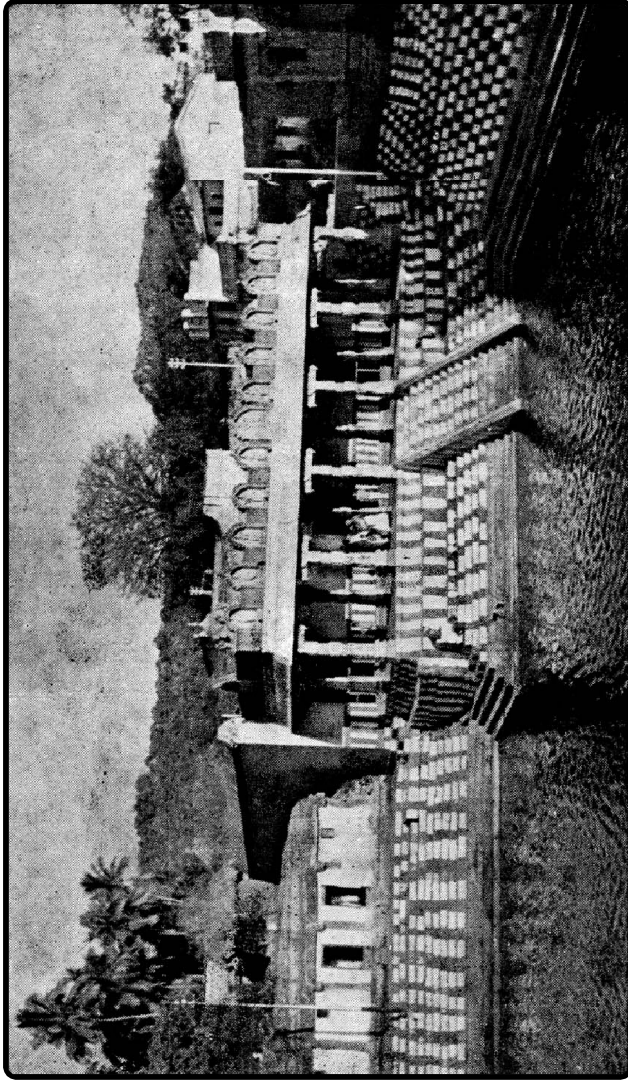
The earliest reference to this god who is popularly known as *Alagiya-singar*; is found in an inscription, dated 1469 A.D., which refers to an offering made to him (II-39). Another record mentions offerings made on the thirty days of the *Dhanurmasa-puja*, on *Vasantapanchami* and *Sri Ramanavami* days and on the 7th day of each of the *Tirukkodi-tirunal* (II-101). Another refers to offerings made on the *Vasantapanchami* day (III-II). Kandadai Ramanujayyengar provided for the *tirumanjanam* of this god and for offerings to be made to him on the *Panguni-amavasya* and *Vasantapurnima* days (T. T. 70).

### Main shrine

The main shrine which contains the image of Sri Venkateswara is a complex of structures. It starts with the *Garbhagriha* at the western end and ends with the *Tirumamani-mantapa* at the eastern end. Part of this area, ending with the northern and southern wings of the *Mukkoti-pradakshinam* inside, is enclosed by a thick stone wall which is plain and rests on a low *adhishtana* consisting of *upana*, *patta*, *patta*, *padma* and *alinga-pattika*. The northern wall of the *Mukkoti-pradakshinam* is longer and covers a longer distance. Two mantapas, the *Tirumamani-mantapam* and the *Snapanam-mantapam*, project to the east from the front wall between the two side wings of the *pradakshinam*. Thus the main shrine appears to be in three sections, if looked at from the north.

The *Vimana* which rises above the *Garbhagriha* is of the *Dvitala* type and belongs to the *Vesara* order. Each *tala* has the series-*kuta*, *panjara*, *sala*, *panjara* and *kuta*. There is a plain narrow step above the two *talas* containing lions in the cardinal directions. Above it is the *gala* or neck adorned with a *Sala-koshtha* surmounted by *simhalalata* in the centre with a *panjara* similarly surmounted on each side. Above this is the round domical *sikhara* adorned with lotus design all over and on the top is the *kalasa*. There are many Vaishnava sculptures on the *Vimana* which is encased by gilded plates.

The *Tirumamani-mantapa* is an open pillared hall. Behind this is the *Snapanam-mantapa*, whose northern and southern walls are in three sections, the central section, being wider than the other two. The front and back sections stand on an *adhishtana* which contains *upana*, a broad *patta*, a narrow *patta*, *padma*, a broad *patta*, *gala*, *Tripatta*, fluted horizontally all over, another *gala* cut into compartments by short pilasters and *kapota* decorated with



*Sri Varahaswami temple, Tirumala.*

*nasikas* surmounted by *simhalalatas*. The central section is almost similar excepting for the tripatta which is plain and an alingapattika and a row of makaras found above the kapota. The walls of the western section are decorated with the series-two pilasters and Koshtha surmounted by a simhalalata-torana. The walls of the central section are adorned with a sala-koshtha between two pilasters. The walls of the eastern section are decorated with a koshta surmounted by a simhalalata-torana and two pilasters.

The *Mukkoti-pradakshinam* encloses the *Sayanamantapa*, *Antarala* and *Garbhagriha*. The architectural features found on the outer side of the walls of these structures are different. The walls in the north and south are in four sections from west to east. The two central sections are wider. Sections 1, 2 and 4 stand on a high *adhishtana* which contains *upana*, *patta*, *Adhahpadma*, two *pattas*, *gala*, *patta*, *tripatta*, *urdhvapadma*, *patta*, *gala*, *kapota* adorned with *nasikas* surmounted by *simhalalatas* and a *patta* containing a row of *makaras*. The decoration of the walls of these three sections is also different. The walls of section 1, contain the series-*sala-koshtha*, two pilasters and *kuta-panjara*. The walls of section 2 contain the series-pilaster, *Kumbhapanjara* between two pilasters, *kutapanjara*, pilaster and *kumbhapanjara*. The walls of section 3 are adorned with a *sala-koshta* between two pilasters. The walls of section 4 are decorated with the series-*kumbhapanjara*, pilaster, *kutapanjara*, pilaster, *kumbhapanjara*, pilaster and pilaster. The back wall of the *Garbhagriha* is in three sections, the central one projecting a little to the west. The southern section contains the series-pilaster, pilaster, *kumbhapanjara*, pilaster, *kutapanjara*, pilaster and *kumbhapanjara*. The central section contains a *sala-koshtha* between two pilasters. The northern section contains the series-pilaster, *kumbhapanjara*, pilaster, *Kutapanjara*, pilaster, *kumbhapanjara*, pilaster and pilaster.

The circum ambulatory passage known as the *Mukkotipradakshinam* is a pillared verandah in three sections. The southern section has a row of six pillars, the western section has a row of four pillars and the northern section has two rows of seven pillars each. All the pillars are round and have Chola capitals with the broad face fluted and with a circle in the centre.

There is no *kapota* above the walls but a plain *patta* is to be found in its place.

The *Tirumamani-mantapa* is 43 feet x 40 feet and contains sixteen pillars and an overhanging *kapota*, projecting from the roof above. To the west of it is the front wall of the *Snapana-mantapa*. There is a finely carved doorway in its centre, known as the *Bangaru-Vakili*, flanked by a *Dvarapalaka* on either side. The jambs of the doorway are decorated with lotus petals. The lintel contains the figure of *Gajalakshmi* and the architrave above has in the centre a *sala* surmounted by *simhalalata*.

Passing through the *Bangaru-vakili* one enters the *Snapana-mantapa* which contains four central pillars. The front part of this mantapa has been converted into two rooms, one on either side.

Beyond this mantapa is a narrow compartment, about 12 feet x 10 feet with a raised pial on each side of the pathway. A number of metallic images are kept on these pials. Obviously, this was originally another mantapa, and rooms must have been built on the sides leaving a narrow path way in the centre.

Farther west is another mantapa, now known as the *Sayana-mantapa*. This must have been originally the *Antarala*.

Next is the *Garbhagriha* containing the image of Sri Venkatesvara.

## Date of the Temple

It is very difficult to determine the date of this temple. There is no direct evidence to help us in this connection and any attempt must therefore be based upon inference.

Inscriptions found in the temple only refer to its renovation and rebuilding and the addition of later structures and do not state when the original temple was built. The earliest mention of Sri Venkatesvara in the epigraphs is in connection with a proxy temple, *Tiruvilankoil*, at Tiruchanur and not in association with the temple on Tirumala or Vengadam.

A renovation made in the 13th Century was so done as to preclude a view of the original sanctum. Thick stone walls were built so as to grip the older ones. It is not therefore possible to examine the outer side of original walls of the sanctum and estimate the date.

The Vaishnava Alvars, who flourished during the later Pallava period, sang hymns in praise of many Vishnu shrines in South India. They have sung about the image located at Vengadam but do not refer to its temple. Tirumalisai-alvar has said that the god can be seen from anywhere. If this statement is taken literally, it implies that the image of *Tiruvengadamudaiyan* or Sri Venkatesvara was located in an open mantapa. Kulasekhara-alvar expressed that he wished to be the padi, pedestal, if only to enjoy seeing the coral lips of the Lord. If this statement can be relied upon it may be inferred that by the time of this Alvar, there was an enclosing structure round the image. Kulasekhara is assigned to the 8th century A.D.

The earliest inscription found at Tirumala records the birth of a Bana prince, named Vijayaditya, who flourished during the first half of the 9th century A.D. The first mention of the temple on the hill is

to be found in an inscription assignable to 970 A.D. in connection with the consecration of a silver image, named Mana- valapperumal. This inscription indicates the existence of the *Garbhagriha* and the *Antarala* at this time.

It may be concluded that a shrine with *Garbhagriha* and *Antarala* existed in the 8th Century A.D. at the latest. This may be the present sanctum and the Sayana-mantaparn. But these two have been enclosed in the 13th century by parallel walls. It is certain that the outer side of the original walls of these two structures contain architectural decorations of the later Pallava period corresponding to those found on the outer side of the walls of the Krishna temple, adjacent to the Govindarajasvami temple at Tirupati. In all probability, the image of Sri Venkatesvara stood in open mantapa for a long time before the 8th century A.D.

### Varaha shrine

The *Vamanapurana* mentions a story according to which Brahma set up an image of this god on the bank of the *Svami pushkarini*. In course of time the temple was destroyed. Subsequently, a Nishada started cultivating the *syamaka* crop in the neighbourhood. He used to give part of it to a brahmin for being cooked and offered to god. One day he gave the grains to his son, and went in search of honey. He returned after a long time. Meanwhile the boy thought of god and ate a few of the grains. The Nishada tried to hit the son for this offence but a divine voice told him that the grain was offered by the boy to god. On one occasion, the Nishada saw a big white Varaha eating up his crop. He chased it. The Varaha entered an anthill. He desired to see it again and dug out the anthill. From inside, the Lord told him "you cannot see me. My image, originally installed by Brahma, is inside this anthill. Get it out and get it properly installed." The Nishada did so.

The *Bhavishyottarapurana* mentions another story. According to it, after receiving a blow on his head, Srinivasa wandered one day in search of herbs. On the way he met a Svetavaraha and each began to wonder who the other was. Ultimately they came to an agreement. Varaha, who was already there on the west bank of the *Pushkarini*, agreed to give Srinivasa 100 *padas* of space to live on and to share with him milk, honey and *syamaka* food. He also detailed a lady named Vakula to attend upon Srinivasa. This Vakula was Yasoda in the previous life. Once Yasoda told Krishna "I did not see your marriage. I wish to see it." Krishna replied that she would see it in the Kaliyuga. Yasoda was re-born as Vakula and attended upon the Lord as she did when he was Krishna.

The Puranas state that Varaha was on *Seshachala* earlier than Sri Venkatesvara. The place is called *Varahakshetra*. Sri Venkatesvara and Brahma stipulated that this god should be seen earlier than Sri Venkatesvara.

This god Varaha is also known in inscriptions as *Gnanappiran* or giver of knowledge. This god comes to notice for the first time in a record of 1380 A.D. which refers to rice offerings made to him on the second day of each *Brahmotsavam* (1-184). It is not known in what kind of shrine this deity was found at this time. Saluva Timmaraja provided for two offerings to this god in 1481 A.D. (T. T. 196). A record of 1519 A.D. mentions that the processional image of Sri Venkatesvara used to be seated in the Varaha shrine on five days during the *Brahmotsavam* of Sri Venkatesvara and hear the *Tirumoli* of *Tirumangai Alvar* sung there (T. T. 38). A certain Venkatatturaivar arranged, in 1539 A.D., for the offering of food to *Gnanappiran*, enshrined on the west bank of the *Svami- pushkarini*, on the thirty days of the *Dhanurmasam* festival in the month of *Margali* (IV-138). Tallapakam Tirumalayyangaar, son of Annamayyangaar,

constructed the Prakara walls and pradakshinamantapam for the shrine in 1535 A.D. (IV-40, 41). Tallapakam Tiruvenkatanatha arranged, in 1546 A.D., for the supply of rose water and *chandanam* on the day of the *Sravanam* star in the month of *Chittirai*, for offerings to be made on the day of *Krittika*, for offerings to be made on the 4th solar day in the bright half of *Ani* and *Masi* months and on the day of *Visakha* star in the month of *Vaisakha* (V-71). Provision was made, in 1543 A.D., for offerings to be made to this god on the occasion of the *Sudarsana* being bathed in the *Pushkarini* on the day of *Mukkoti-dvadasi* (V-5). As late as 1684 A.D. Raja Sri Sivaraja Ramachandra arranged for the offering of one plateful of food for this deity. (VI-24).

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## CHAPTER V

### IMAGES IN THE TIRUMALA TEMPLE

#### The image of Sri Venkatesvara

The Puranas state unequivocally that the image of Sri Venkatesvara is self-manifest and not prepared by any mortal. It is said to have lain in an anthill under a tamarind tree on the bank of the *Svamipushkarini* on Tirumala. We are also told that the image is of Vishnu and that it depicts him as holding *samkha* and *chakra* in the two upper hands, keeping the lower right hand in *varada* and the lower left hand in *Katyavalambita*. It is said to be fully decorated with various ornaments and clad in fine clothes.

A group of inspired saints, popularly known as the Alvars, flourished in the Tamil country and sang the praise of Vishnu. They propagated Bhakti and Vaishnavism. These saints are assigned to the period 400-800 A.D. These Alvars visited many Vishnu temples of the time and went into trances on looking at the images of the Lord. Their inspired songs have been collected and arranged later and this collection goes under the name of the *Nalayiraprabandham*.

The Sri Venkatesvara temple on Tirumala is said to have been hymned by Poygai-alvar, Bhudattalvar, Pey-alvar, Tirumalisai-alvar, Periya-alvar, Andal, Nammalvar, Tirumangai-alvar and Kulasekhara-alvar. All these Alvars have sung the praise of this god.

Poygai-alvar refers to this god in eight verses. He says that Vengadam destroys all sins and that Vishnu stands on it wearing a *Tulasi* garland. The scholars and philosophers of the time are said to have gone to him with flowers, lights and incense, worshipped him and obtained true knowledge. This god is said to be Krishna who blew the conch and who dispelled Arjuna's ignorance; *Mohini*



for whom the asuras lost their heads; Narayana who sleeps on the milk ocean; Rama who killed Ravana and Trivikrama who measured the earth.

Bhudattalvar has seven verses in praise of Sri Venkatesvara. This god is identified with Krishna who tore the mouth of a horse. All the celestials are described as placing their crowned heads at his feet. He is Vishnu who took his abode here a long time ago. He is often dressed as Krishna. His body is smeared with sandal paste and decorated with fine ornaments and garlands.

Pey-alvar praises the god in ten verses. It is stated that the god is self-manifested, and that he is Trivikrama and Krishna. We are also informed that on his chest shines the Divine Lady seated on a lotus flower.

Tirumalisai-alvar praises the Lord in fourteen verses. He mentions the celebration of the *Onam* (Tiruvonam-Sravanam) festival on Tirumala. Brahma and Siva are said to worship this god daily. The god's feet are said to be decorated with flowers placed there by the devotees. It is also stated *that the god is visible from everywhere*.

Tiruppanalvar has two verses in praise of Sri Venkatesvara. He says that the celestials worship him daily and that the same god stands at Vengadam and sleeps at Arangam or Srirangam.

Kulasekhara-alvar also says that Brahma, Rudra and Indra worship the god. He also wished to be *the doorstep and worship the god*.

Nammalvar states that the Lord manifested himself at Vengadam and that he is the one who destroyed Vali. He is said to be having Alarmelmangai on his chest<sup>1</sup>.

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1. This information is found on pp. 1111-1157 of Sri T. K. T. Viraraghavacharya's History of Tirupati, Vol. II.

### Alarmelmangai-Nachchiyar

This is the name by which the goddess Lakshmi, carved on the right side of the chest of Sri Venkatesvara, as seated on a lotus, is known<sup>2</sup>.

Alarmelmangai enjoys all worship offered to Sri Venkatesvara along with Him. Inscriptions show that provision was also made for the offering of special worship and offerings to this goddess.

The earliest mention of this goddess is found in an inscription of 1477 A.D. which refers to a special offering named *Alarmelmangai-Nachchiyar-Sandhi* (II-69). The next record, dated 1495 A.D., refers to an offering made to *Malaikiniyaninra-perumal* while seated in the Alarmelmangai-Nachchiyar mantapam on the seventh festival days (II-134). An inscription dated in the next year mentions the practice of smearing *Pulugukappu* on the occasion of *Pulugukappu-murai* on the bodies of this goddess and of Sri Venkatesvara on alternate Fridays (II-136). Another record, dated 1506 A.D., refers to the same practice (III-4). There was the custom of making cash offerings to Malaikiniyaninra-perumal as *Alarmelmangai-Nachchiyar-sirappu* after he hears the *Onruntevu-Tiruvaymoli* on the fourth day of the *Adhyayanotsavam* (III-142). One inscription of 1530 A.D. mentions a flower garden named after this goddess (IV-3). Another record, dated in the same year, states that *Uttara* is the annual birth star of this deity (IV-6). Achyutaraya, the famous Vijayanagara emperor, instituted in 1533 A.D. a new festival named the *Lakshmiddevimahotsavam* for this goddess and Sri Venkatesvara. Provision was made for the recitation of the Srisuktam and the performance of the *Lakshmi-sahasranamarchana* on this

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2. Alarmelmangai-Nachchiyar has been identified with Padmavati-devi installed in a shrine at Tiruchanur and worshipped as the consort of Sri Venkateswara. (T. T. D. Epigraphical Report). This identification is not correct, and conflicts with the evidence of the inscriptions referred to above (cf. V-5).

occasion (IV-54). An inscription of 1536 A.D. mentions the practice of Malaikiniyaninra-perumal being seated in the Alarmelmangai-Nachchiyar mantapam on every seventh day of the *Brahmotsavam* (IV-73). Another record states that *Uttara*, the annual birth star of this goddess, occurs in the month of *Kartika* (V-2). Tallapakam Tirumalayyangaar instituted a special *tirumanjanam* to be done on Fridays for this deity in 1544 A.D. (V-57). Mention is made in a record of 1545 A.D. of a flower garden named after this goddess, situated below a tank named Alarmermangai-Nachchiyar-samudram in Pongalveli at Tirumala (V-60). A record of 1546 A.D. states that this garden was situated on the way to Tirupati and that Malaikiniyaninra-perumal was being seated in a mantapa in this garden on the seventh day of the *Brahmotsavams* (V-64). According to a record of 1545 A.D. turmeric powder was used on 66 days, 53 Fridays and 13 days of the *Mrigasirasha* star, for bathing this goddess.

### The image of Sri Rama

An inscription states that this god is seated before Sri Venkatesvara (T. T. 305) and he is still there. He has no separate shrine or *Mula-beram* or stone image. The presence of this deity in this temple may be explained in the light of a Puranic story. It is stated that Sri Venkatesvara is an incarnation of Sri Rama and that Padmavati, whom he married, was at the time of *Ramavatara*, a woman named Vedavati, who was substituted for the real Sita at the time of Ravana's abduction. After Ravana's death, and in response to her request, Rama is said to have promised to marry Vedavati when in the Kali age he would be incarnate as Sri Venkatesvara and when Vedavati would be born as Padmavati. The image of Rama is thus an indication of this Puranic legend. It is stated that on the image of Sri Venkatesvara marks are found near the arm-pits of the bow and the quiver of arrows being hung. This is corroborative of the Puranic version.

It is not known when or by whom this image of Rama was installed in the Tirumala temple. The earliest epigraphical reference to it is in a record of 1476 A.D. when a certain Narasimharaya Mudaliyar arranged for offerings to be made to this god (II-68). An inscription of 1507 A.D. mentions offering made on the day of the commencement of the *Adhyayanotsavam* on the day of Sri Ramanavami (III-I 0). Another record refers to the practice of burning a lamp before this god (III-I).

### The image of Sri Krishna

This image is also found located before Sri Venkatesvara in his sanctum. The Puranas explain the presence of Krishna here. Sri Venkatesvara is regarded as an incarnation of Krishna. This god is represented to have described himself to Padmavati, when the two met in a garden before their marriage, as the eighth issue of Devaki and Vasudeva, as the brother of Balarama and Subhadra and as a friend of the Pandavas. It is also stated that after being shot at by a hunter while resting under a tree and casting off his mortal coils, Krishna emerged in the Suryamandala in the form in which the image of Sri Venkatesvara is sculptured.

The earliest inscriptional reference to this god is found in a record of 1495 A.D. which provides for offerings to be made to him on the Sri *Jayanti* day at the time of his birth (II-132). Other records provide for offerings to be made on the fifth day of the nine *Brahmotsavams* celebrated at Tirumala (T. T. 14, 54, 58).

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## CHAPTER VI

### The Temples of Tirupati

The town of Tirupati came into existence only about the middle of the twelfth century, with the foundation of the Govindarajasvami temple. Before this time there was a small village, named Kottur, to the north-east of Kapilatirtham, situated about two miles to the north of the modern town. On the spot where the Govindarajasvami temple stands there was a small shrine dedicated to Krishna. The famous Vaishnava teacher, Ramanuja, founded the Govindaraja temple and started a small settlement round it named Ramanujapuram, confined to the four Mada streets round the temple. This small colony was expanded later on; particularly in Vijayanagara times. An Achyutarayapuram came into existence to the north-east. A Srinivasapuram came to be formed to the west. The main bazaar was formed and a fairly big township grew up. Several other shrines were also founded like the Rama or Raghunatha temple, the Periyalvar shrine, the Achyutaraya temple, the Nammalvar shrine, the Kapilesvara shrine and the Narasimha shrine. Near the foot of the hills a Lakshminarasimha temple and an Alvar shrine came to be built.

### The Govindarajasvami Temple

This Temple is the main attraction for the pilgrims at Tirupati and the biggest temple in the town.

*Foundation of the shrine*- None of the numerous inscriptions found in the temple mention the date of its construction or the name of its founder. The earliest of the records belongs to the year 1235 AD. The *Guruparampara* accounts of the Vaishnavas ascribe the foundation of the shrine to Ramanuja. This teacher lived at Srirangam, in the heart of the Chola kingdom and carried on his missionary activity. The accession of Kulottunga I (1070- 1120 A.D.) had

important consequences as far as Vaishnavism in south India was concerned. This monarch was an ardent Saiva. Vaishnava activity was in the full swing at this time under the lead of Ramanuja. The Saivas and the Vaishnavas came into conflict with each other frequently. On one occasion, it is stated, there was a heated discussion between these rival religionists. A Saiva is said to have proposed that there is nothing greater than *Siva* (also a measure) and a Vaishnava retaliated by asserting that the *Drona* (another measure) was greater than *Siva*. The king naturally took offence at this. Subsequently, he is said to have gone to the famous Nataraja temple of Chidambaram and found there a small shrine dedicated to Vishnu under the name of Govindaraja. Remembering the arrogance of the Vaishnavas, Kulottunga is said to have remarked that the proper place for Vishnu was not the earth but the sea. The Vaishnavas grew apprehensive of the safety of their god. They walled up the entrance to the sanctum, took hold of the *Utsavamurti* or processional idol and fled over night from Chidambaram. Travelling by circuitous routes they are said to have reached Kottur and hidden the idol there. Ramanuja himself could not bear the hostility of the Chela ruler and fled to the Hoyasala kingdom, which then flourished in the modern Mysore State. He lived there for some years and returned to Srirangam only after the death of Kulottunga in 1120 A.D. Subsequently, he visited Tirumala and came to know that the idol of Govindaraja of Chidambaram lay hidden below the hill. He raised a small shrine adjacent to the shrine of Krishna, already existing, and installed a temporary *mula-beram* of Govindaraja in it along with the metallic image brought from Chidambaram. This event is ascribed to about 1130 A.D.

### History of the temple

A large number of inscriptions found in this temple and in the Sri Venkatesvara temple at Tirumala help us to trace the history of

this temple. The earliest record, dated in the 19th year of the reign of the Chola king, Rajaraja III, corresponding to 1235 AD., is incised on the outer side of the front wall of the *Mukhamantapa*. It indicates that by this time the *Garbhagriha*, *Antarala*, the pillared verandah on their three sides and the *Mukhamantapa* existed (1-40). The next record (1-61), dated in 1264 A.D., refers to the provision made for offerings to the deity during the *Vaikhasi* festival. An inscription dated in 1239 A.D., corresponding to the 30th year of the reign of the Yadavaraya chief, Viranarasinga, states that his queen made a gift for the celebration of the *Ani* festival, for the decoration of the car presented by her to Govindaraja and for effecting repairs to the temple. (1-86) Another inscription of 1308 A.D., makes provision for conducting *Tirumanjanam* on the *Kaisika-dvadasi*, *Margali-dvadasi*, *Makara-samkramanam* and *Citra-visu* days (1-98).

The Govindaraja temple received wider attention with the advent of Vijayanagara rule over Tondamandalam.

A record of 1445 A.D., refers to special offerings made to the god on the day of the star *Uttara* (1-212). The two *Tirukkoditirunals* celebrated in the temple are referred to in a record of the same year (1-213). An epigraph of the next year mentions the *Dhvajarohana* during the *Vaikasi* and *Ani* festivals (1-215). The Kaiyar-chakram day is referred to in, another record of the same year (1-222).

Interesting information about this temple is also available from the inscriptions of the Saluva dynasty. An inscription of 1456 AD., states that the *Padiya-vettai* or Hunting festival was celebrated on the second day of the month of *Thai* (II-3). Another record of 1467 A.D., states that Govindaraja, Sridevi and Bhudevi were given a holy bath with water obtained from a tank as arranged by Ramanuja (II-29). We learn from an epigraph of 1475 A.D. that oil and betel

leaves offered to Sri Venkatesvara were being brought down Tirumala to be offered to Govindaraja at the time of his *Tirumanjanam* on the day of the *Krittika* star in the month of *Kartika* (1-62). A certain teacher, named Van-Sathakopa- Jiyar, constructed the verandah of the *Vasantamantapam* at the entrance of the Govindaraja shrine, but the roof was left unfinished. A certain Nallar-Angan dai finished the roofing during the twelve days of the *Vaikhasi* festival (II-83). A festival named the *Kodai-tirunal* was being celebrated in the temple for twenty days during the Summer festival (II-83). We learn from an inscription of 1490 A.D., that Govindaraja was taken in procession through the streets on the day of *Samkramanam* and during the *Kanuppadi* festival (II-91). One record of the succeeding year refers to the practice of decorating the deity on the *Yugadi* and *Deepavali* days with two garlands resembling the Sun and the Moon (II-94). Another, dated two years later, refers to the Car festival during the *Vaikhasi* and *Ani* festivals and the *Citra-vishu* celebrations held in the *Chitrakuta-mantapam* (II-105). Other inscriptions of this time mention the practice of the god being taken to the temple of Rama and given *Tirumanjanam* there during the *Vaikhasi* festival and of his riding the *Seshavahanam* during the *Ani* festival (II-111). One record of 1492 A.D., mentions the *Tiruppallieluchchi* or *Dhanurmasam* festival (II-100). Mention is made in a record of the next year of the practice of Govindaraja hearing the accounts on a day in the *Adi-ayanam* of opening new accounts and of the *Uri-adi* and the *Uri-katti* festivals (II-115). Another record refers to the practice of the god riding the horse vehicle on the *Tai-amavasya* day (II-118). The custom of Sri Vaishnavas reciting the *Tiruvaymoli* on the occasion of Govindaraja's going to the shrine of Tirumangai-alvar on the seventh festive days seems to have come into vogue in 1494 A.D., (II-122). One more record of this time mentions that as offerings made to Sri Venkatesvara

are brought down Tirumala to Tirupati, Govindaraja and Sudikudutanachchiyar go out to welcome them (II-140).

The Govindaraja temple came in for greater patronage during the rule of the Saluva dynasty of Vijayanagara. A certain Appa-pillai built a mantapa in front of the kitchen in 1506 A.D., (III-9). The practice of making offerings to *Tiruvali Alvar* or Sudarasana in the big gopuram of the temple was in vogue in 1507 A.D., (III-10). The *Anna-unjal-tirunal* or Swing festival was instituted in this temple in 1508 A.D., for the merit of Narasimha Maharaya (III-B). An inscription of 1513 A.D., refers to the practice of Govindaraja going out to the tank at Tiruchanur on the day of the Masi-makham festival (III-31). Mention is made in a record of the same year of the Tirukkoneri or Govindapuskarani (IV-12). From 1533 A.D., there came into vogue the custom of Govindaraja witnessing the *Malaippu* dance in the north-east corner of the North Mada street on the twenty eight days of the *Vaikhasi* and *Ani Brahmotsavams* and of the celebration of the *Margali-nirattotsava* for Sudikudutanachchiyar (IV-27). An inscription of the same year mentions the practice of Govindaraja going to the *Alvar-tirtham* and mixing tirtham in it on the ninth festival days of the *Vaikhasi* and *Ani Brahmotsavams* (IV-49). In the same year, a certain Ramabhattacharyan constructed a mantapam at the entrance to the Govindaraja temple (IV-76). According to another record the *Rathasaptami* festival was being conducted while the god was seated in the Chitrakutamantapam (IV-118). A Saluva Govindayya instituted the floating festival for the god in 1539 A.D., (IV-133). A record of the same year mentions the *Gajendramoksam* festival and the recitation of the *Gajendramoksam slokas* on the occasion (IV-135). In 1544 A.D., during the rule of Aliya Ramaraya, the *Tiruvengkata mahatmyam* was read in the Lakshmidēvi mantapam (V-92). One record of this time refers to the reading of the

*Kaisikapuranam* in the temple (V-40). Another inscription of 1545 A.D., supplies the interesting information that 365 pairs of *Yajnopavitams* were given to the temple to be used at the rate of one on each day (V-47). Tallapakam China Tirumalayyāgar instituted in 1547 A.D., a *Kalyanotsavam* for Govindaraja to be celebrated for five days in the month of *Chittirai* (V-153). Two years later, a Nandyala Narappayya installed two dvarapalakas on either side of the entrance to the *Mukhamantapam* of the temple (V-122). An inscription of 1554 A.D. mentions the practice of having the *Kaiyarchakram* slokas recited in the temple composed by Tippur Pillai ayyangar.

Some more festivals were instituted in the temple during the days of the rule of the Aravidu dynasty. A record of 1584 A.D., mentions the *Avilali* garden festival (VI-6). Another record of 1592 A.D., refers to the *Tiruppuvula* festival and the *Tulasimahatmyam* festival celebrated on the *Mukkoti-dvadasi* day (VI-9). Matla Ananta, a powerful feudatory of this period, gifted a *Gajavahana* and a *Turagavahana*. He also built the biggest and outermost gopura of the temple (VI-25, 26).

### Peculiar features of the temple

There are two shrines and not one, as usual, in the centre of the innermost enclosure. These two shrines are enclosed by an outer wall. The shrine to the south is that of Krishna, popularly known as Parthasarathi, while the shrine to the north is that of Govindaraja. The Krishna shrine is closed for worship on the ground that some mishap overtook the idol inside. There are references to this in inscriptions of the sixteenth century and its closure must have been a subsequent happening. The position of the gopuras is peculiar. They face the shrine of Krishna and not the shrine of Govindaraja. The innermost gopura was built in the thirteenth century, the central one

in the fifteenth century and the outermost in the seventeenth century. The Govindaraja shrine is said to have been built by Ramanuja in 1130 A.D., i.e., a century before the innermost gopura was built. Still, the gopura was built so as to face the Krishna shrine and not the Govindaraja shrine. Why was it so built? It cannot be said that there was not enough space, because the Mada streets on the three sides of the temple were laid only after the Govindaraja shrine was built and not before. This peculiar feature can be explained on the basis that the Krishna shrine was earlier than the Govindaraja shrine. Another peculiar feature to be seen in this temple is the mixture of architectural styles. Inside the Govindaraja shrine the pillars of the open verandah on the three sides of the *Garbhagriha* and *Antarala* and of the *Mukhamantapa* are of the Chola style while the structures are of a later period. In the open mantapa before the *Mukhamantapa* the pillars of the two back rows are of the Chola style while those of the front row and of the other mantapa before it are all in the Vijayanagara style. The *Vahanamantapa* and the Salai-Nachchiyar shrine also contain pillars of different styles. Another peculiar feature is that though, the Krishna shrine is earlier the *dhvajastambha* and *balipitha* are not before it but face the later shrine of Govindaraja. Obviously, they were moved here from their original place when the Krishna shrine was closed for worship.

### Date of the temple

What is the date of the present shrine of Govindaraja? Mention has already been made that the Vaishnava traditions ascribe its building to the great teacher, Ramanuja, about 1130 A.D. This date falls within the period of Chola rule. The Chola capitals on the pillars of the verandah round the main shrine and its *mukhamantapa* indicate this date: These pillars are similar to those of the Parasaresvara temple at Jogi-Mallavaram, which belongs to the middle of the tenth century and which is a pucca Chola temple. The

decorations on the outer side of the walls of the *Garbhagriha* and *Antarala* of the Govindaraja shrine indicate a definitely later date. The pilasters and the *Salakostha* on the walls are of the Pandya style and border upon the early Vijayanagara style. It is certain, therefore, that the present shrine of Govindaraja is not the one built by Ramanuja. The temporary structure raised by Ramanuja must have been of the Chola style and must have been subsequently replaced by the present structure. The earliest record found on the innermost gopura belongs to the fifteenth year of the Yadavaraya chief, Viranarasingadeva, corresponding to 1224 A.D. A record of the same reign refers to gifts made, among other purposes, for repairs of the temple. A record at Tirumala, dated 1245 A.D., states that the main shrine of the temple of Sri Venkatesvara was renovated in the reign of Narasingadeva. It will be reasonable to presume that the temple of Govindaraja was also rebuilt at this time. Only the *Garbhagriha* and the *Antarala* were rebuilt and the *Mukhamantapa* and the pillared verandah of the three-sides were left as they were.

### Description of the shrine

The main entrance to the shrine, which faces the east, is surmounted by a big gopura built by Matla Anantaraja in 1624 A.D. The walls of this gopura are decorated with the series-pilaster, *Kuta*, *pilaster*, *Kumbhapanjara*, *pilaster*, *Salakoshtha*, *pilaster*, *Kumbhapanjara*, *pilaster*, *Salakoshtha*, *pilaster*, *kumbhapanjara*, *pilaster*, *Kuta* and *pilaster*. There are numerous Vaishnava sculptures all over the walls and the figures of the donor and his wife and parents.

To the west of the gopura entrance is the first or outermost courtyard. In this are to be found the Vedanta Desika shrine and the *Lakshmiddevimantapam* in the southern part and the shrines of Manavala-mahamuni and four Alvars in the northern part.

The Vedanta Desika shrine consists of a front verandah, a hall, the *Garbhagriha* and the *Antarala*. The verandah contains two

rows of four pillars each, all in the Vijayanagara style. The hall beyond contains eight rows of seven pillars each, all in the Chola style. The walls of the *Garbhagriha* are decorated with six pilasters, each with a Chola capital with the bracket highly decorated. The walls of the *Antarala* are plain. There is a narrow compartment before the *Antarala*. Inside the *Garbhagriha* is the stone image of Vedanta Desika.

Very near this shrine is a narrow high mantapa on four tall columns known as the *Kumbaharati* mantapa. Beyond this mantapa is another similar mantapa known as the unjal-mantapa or *Buggamantapa* near a small pond formed by a bugga or water spring.

A big mantapa known as the Lakshmidivimantapam is situated adjacent to the second Gopura. It contains two mantapas, one at a lower level and the other at a higher level. The front part contains four rows of five pillars each. All these are fluted pillars of the Vijayanagara style. The elevated part contains five rows of four pillars each, each pillar consisting of three rectangular blocks with two octagonal shafts between them in Vijayanagara *capital*.

There is a shrine of three alvars parallel to the Lakshmidivimantapam in the northern part of the courtyard. It consists of a hall with two rows of six Vijayanagara pillars each having at the base the varaha and an inverted sword before it. The *Garbhagriha*, situated at the western end of the hall, contains the stone images of Poigai-alvar, Pudattalvar and Periyalvar. Next to this shrine is an empty mantapa with tall pillars.

The *Manavalamahamuni shrine* is parallel to the shrine of Vedanta Desika.

## Second or central gopura

This gopura and the entrance below it, situated at the western end of the first courtyard, lead us into the second courtyard. This gopura was built in the 15th century. Its walls are decorated with the series-pilaster, pilaster, *Kumbha-panjara*, pilaster, *Kumbhapanjara* and pilaster. The *Kapota* above contains gables with human heads. The walls of the entrance contain sculptures of scenes from the Ramayana and Bhagavata and of dancers. The northern wall of the western side of the gopura contains the figures of Narasimha tearing open the stomach of Hiranyakasipu, Narasimha seated holding two samkhas and two chakras, Narasimha and Hiranyakasipu fighting and Narasimha seated on Sesha with *Sri* and *Bhu* on his sides. The southern wall of the same side of the gopura contains the figures of Putana suckling Krishna, Lakshminarasimha and Narasimha riding a lion.

The following shrines are to be found in the second courtyard:

## Chakrattalvar shrine

There is a two storeyed mantapa adjoining the northern wall of the gopura. The ground floor contains two rows of five short pillars each, in the Chola style. The upper floor, reached by a stair case, contains three rows of three pillars each, in the Vijayanagara style. To the south is a small shrine built against part of the Gopura wall so as to enshrine the figure of *Chakrattalvar* or Sudarsana, sculptured on the gopura wall.

*Salainachchiyar shrine*: This shrine is in the southern part of the courtyard very near the gopura. It consists of an outer verandah, a hall, an *Antarala* and a *Garbhagriha*. There are three types of Vijayanagara pillars on the front edge of the verandah (a) pillar with two pillarets projecting (b) pillar with one pillaret projecting and (c)

pillar with a bracket containing lion on *makara*. The pillar with animal bracket to the left of the entrance has a figure of Varaha dancing with Prithvi seated on his left thigh. The Hall has eight rows of six pillars each which are of three types (a) plain cubical pillars (b) pillars with rectangular base and octagonal shaft above and (c) pillars with three rectangular blocks and two octagonal shafts between them. All these pillars have Chola capitals. The eastern and western walls of the *Antarala* have four pilasters each and the front wall has two pilasters, on either side of the entrance. The walls of the *Garbhagriha* have five pilasters each resembling those on the innermost gopura indicating a 13th century date. The *Garbhagriha* contains the image of Lakshmi or Salainachchiyar or Pundarikavalli. The devi is seated on a lotus holding a lotus in each of her two upper hands and keeping the two lower hands in poses of *abhaya* and *varada*.

### Vahanamantapa

To the west of the Salainachchiyar shrine is a big mantapa in which the vahanas of Govindarajasvami are kept. It has nine rows of four pillars each with one row built into the walls in the east and west. There is an injudicious mixture of Chola and Vijayanagara pillars in this hall.

### Shrine of three Alvars

This shrine is adjacent to the Vahana- mantapa. It consists of a verandah, a hall and a *Garbhagriha*. The verandah has two fine pillars each face of which is decorated with five rows of the series-*Kuta*, *Sala* and *Kuta*, all over and crowned by a Vijayanagara capital. The Hall has two rows of four pillars each. These pillars have three rectangular blocks with an octagonal shaft in between and Chola capitals above. The *Garbhagriha* contains the stone images of Tirumalisai alvar, Nammalvar and Kurattalvar.

### Ramanuja shrine

This shrine is adjacent to the shrine of the three Alvars. It consists of a gopura entrance, a Hall, *Antarala* and *Garbhagriha*. The pilasters found on the gopura are similar to those found on the innermost gopura. The bases of its pillars have the Varaha and the inverted sword which are distinct Vijayanagara emblems. The Hall contains two rows of three pillars each with corresponding pilasters in the eastern and western walls corresponding to the first row. The front wall of the *Antarala* is decorated with two pilasters on either side of the entrance. The *Garbhagriha* contains the image of Ramanuja. Originally, the *Garbhagriha* and the *Antarala* seem to have stood by themselves in the hall. Subsequently, two short walls seem to have been built connecting the front wall of the *Antarala* with the walls on the east and west.

### Thirumalainambi shrine

This shrine is situated between the shrine of Ramanuja and the innermost gopura. It consists of a pillared verandah, a Hall and *Garbhagriha*. Of the six pillars in the front verandah, those at the extremities are fluted columns with Vijayanagara capitals. Those in between them are Vijayanagara pillars with brackets containing two rows of lions standing above makaras. The hall beyond is at a higher level and reached by a short flight of steps. It has two rows of six pillars each most of which have animal brackets. There are four pillars with one pillaret projecting. The *Garbhagriha* contains a stone image of Tirumalainambi.

### The innermost gopura

This gopura is in the western wall of the second courtyard and leads into the third or innermost courtyard. Its walls on either side of the entrance are decorated with four pilasters. These pilasters contain, above the octagonal shaft *kalasa*, *tadi*, *padma*, an open lotus and



*phalaka*. The capital above has a bend on either side resembling the trunk of an elephant ending in a low lotus bud or *potika*. The cornice above is adorned with gables containing a circle inside.

### The innermost courtyard

This contains, in its southern part, a small open mantapa, the temple kitchen, a mantapa converted into rooms, the *Kalyanamantapa* and the *yagasala*. There is a narrow open pillared mantapa on the west. There is a long pillared mantapa in the north, now walled and converted into rooms, and a small open mantapa. In the centre of this courtyard is the double shrine of Krishna or Parthasarathi and Govindarajasvami.

### The Kalyanamantapa

This is a rectangular structure facing the east and consisting of a pillared hall, a pavilion of black granite stone and a shrine. It has a low *Adhishtana* consisting of *upana*, *kampa*, *kampa*, *adhahpadma*, *kantha*, *tripatta*, *kampa*, *gala*, *kapota*, *alingapattika* and *antarita*. The *mantapa* above contains three kinds of pillars- (a) pillar with the base and the main part above curved like an arch and three pillarets projecting from it (b) pillar with one pillaret projecting and (c) pillar covered by *Salas* and *Kutas* all over. All the pillars are in the Vijayanagara style. In the interior of the hall there is a wide *prastara* or entablature above the capitals of these pillars. It is decorated, from bottom to top, with two *kampas*, a *Kumuda* moulding, a *patta*, and two *kumuda -pattas*. Then there are a *gala*, *patta* and *gala*, both the *galas* containing representations of women exhibiting the *Kolata* dance. Above are two more *pattas*. A second capital situated above these *pattas* supports the roof or *achchadana*.

The pavilion of black granite stone is at the western end of the mantapa. It has an *adhishtana* finely carved having the *upana*,

*kampa* with lotus stalk carving, another *kampa*, *adhahpadma*, *kampa*, *gala*, *urdhvapadma*, *padmapatta*, *kampa*, *gala*, *kapota* and *antarita*. Above the *adhishtana* in the four cardinal directions are finely carved pillars each with three pillarets projecting out of the main block. The base of each pillar contains a *nasika* or gable surmounted by *simhalalata*. Above this base are sculptures of deities and human beings in fine poses. Each pillaret and the main part of the pillar are surmounted by bracket capitals containing many fine sculptures and ornamental work. The *Prastara* or entablature above is covered on the exterior by a finely moulded *Kapota* or cornice. The lower side of this *Kapota* is in stages and divided all over into small square compartments by horizontal and vertical rafters. The inner side of the *Prastara* is decorated with fine *Kolata* dance poses. Above the *Kapota* and on the edges of the *achchadana* or roof there is a band containing a row of *makaras* on all the four sides. On the lower side of the four beams above the pillars are circles containing the *avatars* and other sculptures of Vishnu.

The following important sculptures are found on the pillars of this pavilion:- Bhuvараha dancing, Sudarsana, Vishnu dancing on a prostrate human body, Srinivasa with a chauri bearer, Rama, Lakshmana and Hanuman, Lakshmi standing with lotus in each hand, Venugopala, Vishnu seated, Venugopala with eight hands, Lakshminarasimha seated, Krishna with four hands as Kaliyamardana, Vishnu as Anantasayi, Yoganarasimha, Sthauna-Narasimha, Gajendramoksha, Vishnu riding on Garuda, Lakshminarayana, Trivikrama and Rama with a bow and arrow.

There is a small shrine to the west of this pavilion. It contains the *Antarala* and the *Garbhagriha*. The *Antarala* stands on a well executed *adhishtana* containing from bottom to top *upana*, *kampa*, *adhahpadma*, *kampa*, *gala*, *tripatta*, *urdhvapadma*,

*patta*, *gala* and *kapota* decorated with *nasikas* surmounted by *simhalalatas*, *patta*, *gala*, *vajana* and *antarita*. The walls above the *adhishtana* are decorated with the series-two *pilasters*, *kumbhapanjara*, *koshtha*, *kumbhapanjara*, and two *pilasters* on each side. The sanctum behind stands on an *adhishtana* consisting of *upana*, *padma*, *kampa*, *gala*, *tripatta*, *kampa*, *patta*, *gala* and *kapota* decorated with *nasikas* surmounted by *simhalalatas*. The wall above contains, on each side, a *salakoshta* with two *pilasters*.

### The main shrine

As stated before, the two shrines of Krishna or Parthasarathi and Govindaraja are enclosed by four walls and appear like a single shrine. This enclosure contains, in the case of each shrine, a pillared verandah running on the south, west and north and a *Mukhamantapa* in the east. Within this verandah are the *Garbhagriha* and the *Antarala*. Outside this enclosure there is an open pillared mantapa. Before this and at a lower level is another open pillared mantapa. Before this second mantapa there is another square mantapa with a small shrine of Garuda in its centre.

The two shrines stand on an *adhishtana* which consists of *udpana*, *patta*, a *moulding*, *gala* cut into compartments by short *pilasters*, *patta*, another *patta*, and *alingapattika*.

The walls above are plain and built of large blocks of stone rivetted into each other. The *Prastara* at the top is plain and so is the *kapota* above it. The *Achchadana* or roof is also plain. The edges of the open pillared mantapas in the front have *chunchu* on the edges.

The *Vimana* which rises above the *Garbhagriha* of the Govindaraja shrine is a *dvitala-vimana* of the *Vesara* order. The first *tala* or storey contains a *hara* or row of *Kuta*, *Panjara*, *Sala*,

*panjara*, and *kuta*. The second *tala* contains in the corners a *nasika* or gable surmounted by *simhalalata* with a seated Vishnu image below. The *Sikhara* is oblong or *Ayatasra* because of the *Sayana-murti* inside the *Garbhagriha*. It has five gilded *kalasas* at the top. The entire *Vimana* seems to have been renovated recently.

The foremost open pillared mantapa of the shrine is described as the *Chitrakutamantapa* in inscriptions of the fifteenth century. It has three rows of eleven pillars which are of three types (a) simple pillars with Vijayanagara capitals (b) pillars with one pillaret projecting and (c) curved pillars with one pillaret projecting. A small shrine housing Garuda is located in this mantapa between the second and third pillars of the first row in the front. The second mantapa which is slightly elevated contains three rows of nine pillars each. The pillars in the front row are in the Vijayanagara style while those in the two back rows are Chola pillars.

There is an entrance in the back wall of the mantapa guarded by two *dvarapalas* which leads into the enclosure beyond and to the *Mukhamantapa* direct. There are two fluted Chola pillars before this entrance. The front wall of the *mukhamantapa* is plain and built of large blocks of stone rivetted into each other. There are two rows of five pillars each in the centre of the *Mukhamantapa* on either side of the entrance of the *Antarala*. There are corresponding *pilasters* in the walls in the north and south. All these are Chola pillars.

The pillared verandah runs to the south, west and north. There are five pillars in the northern and southern sections and six in the western section. All these are Chola pillars. The roof of the verandah joins that of the *Garbhagriha* while there is a narrow space between it and the roof of the *Antarala*.

The *Garbhagriha* and the *Antarala* are similar in design. The *Antarala* is narrower and forms an angle at the place where it joins

the *Garbhagriha*. Both the structures stand on an *adhishtana* which contains *uapana*, three *pattas*, *kumuda*, another *patta*, *gala*, another *patta*, *tripatta*, *gala* and *alingapatta*. There are circular projections on the *uapana*. The walls are decorated with a *sala-koshta* in the centre with three pilasters on either side. All these stand on a *patta* about a foot above the *adhishtana*. These pilasters have a rectangular base whose corners are rounded into shape with rows of pearl hangings, a *kumuda* a *kalasa*, a *dvipatta*, another *patta*, two half lotuses and the phalaka or abacus. Above is the capital whose brackets are broken into angles and whose top projects to the sides in the shape of an elephant's trunk and ends in a low *potika*. The central *salakoshtha* is made of two pilasters supporting a *kapota* or cornice decorated with two *nasikas* or gables surmounted by *simhalalatas*, one above each of the two *pilasters* below. There is a circular projection inside each of the *nasikas*. The space between the *nasikas* contains a smaller *nasika*. Above the *kapota* is the *sala* or waggon-top shaped roof which has in the centre a big *nasika* with a miniature *nasika* inside it. The space on either side of the big *nasika* is cut into vertical and curved ribbons. The roof of the *salakoshta* has a row of *kalasas*. The *koshtha* is empty. Below the phalaka at the top of each of the two pilasters below are projecting brackets containing the figure of a *Yali* with a lion's face and with its trunk hanging between its raised knees. Above the *Salakoshta* the wall is plain. The roof is adorned with six *nasikas* on each edge. The front wall of the *Antarala* has two pilasters on either side of its entrance.

The following sculptures are to be found on the outside of the walls of the *Garbhagriha* and *Antarala*.

1. On the *sala* above the *koshtha* in the west wall of the *Garbha-griha*-Two figures standing in the *katihasta* pose supporting the *sala* on their shoulders.

2. On the base of the pilasters of the north wall of the *Garbha-griha*-A dancing deity inside a *sala*; Rama shooting an arrow; deity with an axe and shield; Vishnu seated in the *pralambapada* pose holding *samkha* and *chakra* in the upper hands and keeping the lower hands in *abhaya* and *varada*; Krishna as *Kaliyamardana*; Vamana and Varaha with Bhu seated on his left thigh.

3. At the base of the pilasters of the *koshtha* in the west wall of the *Garbhagriha*-A man holding an axe and with his right foot raised and dancing; two-handed Narasimha fighting Hiranya- kasipu and Rama shooting an arrow.

4. On the north wall of the *Antarala*- Yoganarasimha ; Narasimha killing Hiranyakasipu; Vishnu seated cross-legged with the lower right hand in *abhaya* and the lower left resting on the left knee; Trivikrama with the left leg uplifted and two standing deities.

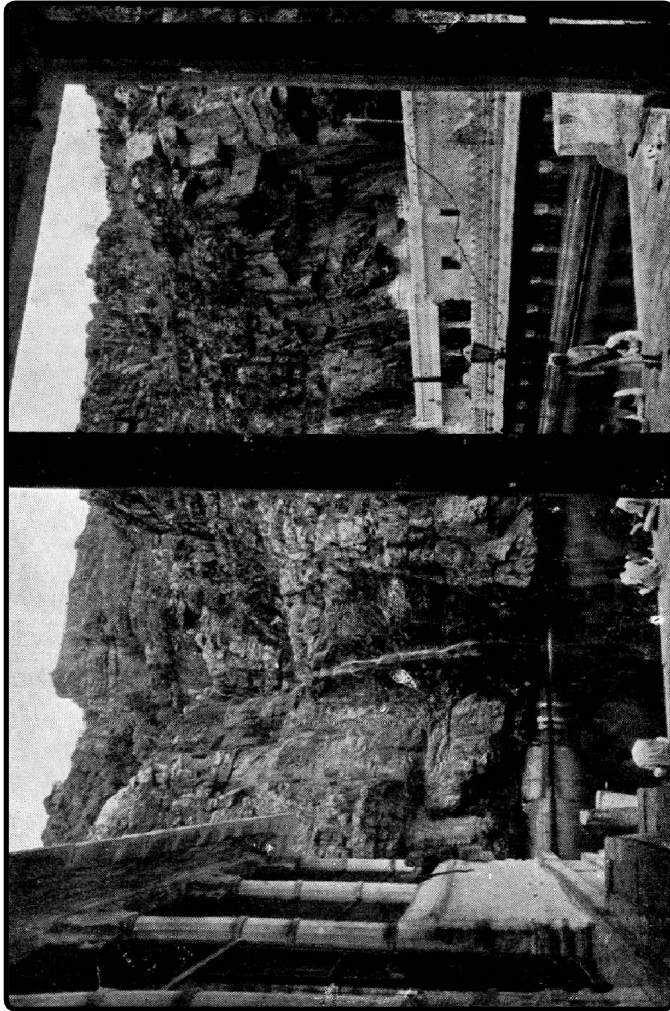
5. North side of the front wall of the *Antarala*-Man standing with hands in *anjali* and Venugopala with a gopi on either side.

### The Andal shrine

This small shrine is located between the second and third pillars of the first two rows of the mantapa behind the Chitrakutamantapa in the south-east corner. It is not possible to say when this shrine was built. There is one inscription on the inner side of the north wall of this shrine dated in 1308 A.D. and it may be inferred from this that the shrine might have been built during the reign of one of the later members of the Yadavaraya family.

### The Krishna Temple

This is the earliest of the temples now found at Tirupati. The Govindaraja shrine was built adjacent to this shrine with a wall inside separating them. The innermost gopura was built in the 13th century before this shrine and two more gopuras were added in line with this in subsequent times.



*Kapilathirtham, Tirupati.*

The earliest reference to this shrine is in an inscription of 1445 A.D. which makes provision for an offering to be made to the god on the *Rohini-nakshtram* day (1-212). Another record, dated 1494 A.D., refers to offerings made on the *Uri-adi* day (11-116). A third inscription refers to the practice of Krishna distributing oil on several festive occasions of Govindaraja (11-127). One record refers to offerings made to Krishna on the Sri *Jayanti* day and to his being seated on a pial during the *Vaikhasi* and *Ani* festivals (11-32). One record of 1512 A.D. refers to a *Sandhi* offering made to this god (11-20). Other inscriptions, dated in 1541 and 1542 A.D. also refer to this god (11-166 and 169).

This shrine is to the west of the two sections of the Chitrakutamantapa which is common to both this shrine and that of Govindaraja. The enclosed part of the shrine consists of the *Mukhamantapa* Which contains four rows of four pillars each, and a pillared *pradakshina* on the south, west and north. The northern and southern sections contain three pillars each and the western section contains four pillars, all of the early Chola type. Inside the *pradakshina* are the *Garbhagriha* and *Antarala*. Both these structures stand on an *adhishtana* which consists of *upana*, *Kumuda*, *patta*, *patta*, *gala* and *tripatta*. The walls of the *Garbhagriha* are decorated with the series-three pilasters, *koshta* surmounted by *torana* with *simhalatata* above and three pilasters. The walls of the *Antarala* are decorated with the series-pilasters, *koshta* surmounted by *torana* with *simhalatata* above and pilaster.

The sanctum contains three images. In the centre is the image of Vishnu, seated with the left leg folded and resting on the seat and the right hanging, holding *chakra* in the upper right hand and *sankha* in the upper left hand and keeping the lower right hand in *abhaya* and the lower left in *Sukatunda*. On either side is the image of a devi seated like Vishnu holding a lotus in one hand and keeping the other hanging,

The central image is mutilated and therefore declared unfit for worship. This shrine has been closed for a long time.

The decorations on the walls of the *Garbhagriha* and *Antarala* indicate a 8th or 9th century date for this shrine.

## The Kapilesvara Temple

This is a small temple situated about two miles to the north of Tirupati town on the eastern bank of the *Kapila-tirtham* tank which is also known as *Alvar-tirtham*. There is a pillared verandah on the eastern, southern and western banks of the tank. The Kapilesvara temple is situated above the eastern verandah, in the north-eastern corner. It is built into a concave bend in the rugged natural rock behind.

Five inscriptions, one found in the Kapilesvara temple, and four found round the tank below, help us to trace the history of this temple. The earliest of these records is incised on the door jamb of the *Mukhamantapa* of the temple and states that the structure was erected by a certain Rayan-Rajendrasolan *alias* Brahmarayan - Munaiyadarayan the head of the village of Kottur (1-20). The next record, dated 1531 A.D., mentions that the Vijayanagara emperor, Achyutaraya, set up steps of black granite stone on the sides of the sacred *Chakratirtham* of Tiruvengadamudaiyan or Sri Venkatesvara and constructed the *Sandhyavandanamantapam* on the three sides of the tank (IV-8). The third inscription, dated 1544 A.D., states that during the reign of Sadasivaraya a certain Tallapakam Periya-Tirumalaiyyangar made a gift for conducting *Sattumurai* for Nammalvar enshrined at *Alvar-tirtham* during the Adhyayanotsavam, (V-34). The fourth record, dated 1563 A.D., in the reign of Sadasivaraya, states that as the Prakara, walls and kitchen of Kapilesvarasvami temple were damaged by thunder, a certain Rachavittu-nayakar reconstructed them and that a dancing girl,

named Sevvusani, installed Ganapati in the nrittamantapa of the temple (V-172). The last inscription, dated in 1865 A.D., mentions that Mahant Dharma Das renovated the steps and mantapas of the Kapila-tirtham tank.

The village of Kottur mentioned above seems to have been in existence for a long time before Tirupati came into existence and flourished at least up to the time of Achyutaraya. It then included the Kapilesvara temple within its boundaries. The earliest of the records mentioned above does not mention the name of the god, Kapilesvara, and his temple. as such, comes to be mentioned for the first time in 1563 A.D. We do not know by which name the temple and its god were known previously. Similarly, the tank, now known as Kapila-tirtham, existed before 1531 A.D. but we do not know under which name it was known previously. Achyutaraya gave it the name *Chakratirtha* and ascribed its ownership to Sri Venkatesvara. Vishnu's *Chakra* or *Sudarsana* is otherwise known as *Chakrattalvar*, as an *Ayudhapurusha*. The word *Alvar* included in this name might have given the alternative name of Alvar-tirtham to the tank. Munaiyadarayan, the founder of the temple, must have been a subordinate of the Chola king, Rajendra Chola, who flourished between 1012 and 1044 A.D. The architectural style of the *Garbhagriha* and *Antarala* of the temple indicate clearly that they were built in the Chola times and bear close resemblance to the architectural features of the Parasaresvara temple of JogiMallavaram which has to be assigned to about the middle of the tenth century A.D.

The temple consists of an open pillared verandah in the front, a *Mukhamantapa* beyond it, and a semicircular *pradakshina* beyond, enclosing the *Garbhagriha* and the *Antarala*. To the south there is a small shrine with a *Garbhagriha* and *Antarala* belonging to Kamakshi, the consort of Kapilesvara. To the further south there is a square hall wherein the *pradakshina* ends.

The four pillars of the verandah in the front are of the early Vijayanagara type. There is an entrance in the back wall guarded by two *dvarapalakas* standing in *dvibhangi* holding *damaru* in the upper right hand, *trisula* in the upper left hand, resting the lower right hand on *gada* and keeping the lower left hand in *katyavalambita*. Built into the back wall is a small shrine in the southern half of the verandah containing a fine icon of Kumarasvami. Before this shrine is the figure of a yogi and adjacent to it is a fine image of Ganapati, possibly removed from the *nrityamandapa* in which it was originally installed by a temple damsel.

The *Mukhamantapa* is a rectangular structure and contains three rows of three pillars each with corresponding pilasters in the walls in the north and south. These pillars are of the Vijayanagara style. There is a small Nandi facing the *Antarala*.

The *Antarala* is narrower than the *Garbhagriha*. Both stand on an *adhishtana* which is low and consists of *upana*, *gala*, *patta*, *gala*, *tripatta*, and *alingapattika*. The walls above are about six feet high. The walls of the *Garbhagriha* have, on each side, four pilasters of the Chola style. The *kapota* or cornice above is decorated with vertical ribbon cuttings and with *nasikas* above the pilasters below. On the edge of the roof is another *patta* with similar ribbon cuttings. The *Vimana* on the roof is incomplete and merges into the rock above. Its first *tala* contains a row of *Kuta*, *panjara*, *sala*, *panjara* and *kuta*. The walls of the *Antarala* have only two pilasters, one at each end. Its front wall has one pilaster on either side of the entrance. The architrave above it contains a row of vertical ribbon cuttings. To the right of the entrance on a pial is a small image of Ganapati and to the left, on another pial, is a figure of Kumarasvami. The *Garbhagriha* contains in its centre the linga of Kapilesvara on a vedi.

The Kamakshi shrine, to the south of Kapilesvara's *Garbhagriha*, consists of a narrow *Antarala* and a *garbhagriha*.

There is an arc like *pradakshina* round the Kapilesvara and Kamakshi shrines. There is a small image of *devi* opposite the water outlet of the Kapilesvara shrine in the northern part of this passage.

There is a big hall to the south of the two shrines mentioned above. It contains four big pillars in the centre, all in the Vijayanagara style. There is an image of *Dakshinamurti* set up against the northern wall, and the icons of *Alinganachandrasekharamurti* and *Surya* set up against the east wall. Next to them is the gate-way leading to the *pradakshina*. A long compartment has been formed at the western part of the hall wherein the *utsavamurtis* are kept.

The following icons found in this temple are of interest:-

### Kumarasvami

This image is set up in a small shrine in the back wall of the verandah before the shrine. Seated on a peacock with his left leg folded and resting on the back of the bird and the right leg hanging on its side, this deity has three faces in the front and three at the back. He has twelve hands and holds *vajra*, *khadga*, *bana* and two other objects in the upper right hands and *trisula*, *dhanus* and three other objects in the upper left hands. The lower right hand is in *abhaya* and the lower left is in *varada*. He is adorned with *chakrakundalas*, three *graiveyakas*, and one *hara*. He wears an *ardhoruka*. The peacock carries a snake in its beak. At right angles to this image is the figure of Devasena on one side and of Valli on the other. Both the deities hold a lotus in one hand and keep the other hanging.

### Ganapati

This icon is set up before the shrine of Kumara mentioned above. This deity is seated with his left leg folded and touching the

fringe of the belly and the right bent at the knee and raised up. He holds *ankusa* in the upper right hand, *pasa* in the upper left, *danta* in the lower right and *modaka* in the lower left hand.

## Devi

This small image is located opposite the water sprout in the north wall of the Kapilesvara shrine. The *devi* holds a lotus in her right hand and keeps the left on the left thigh.

## Kumara

This image is on the pial to the left of the entrance of the *Antarala* of Kapilesvara. Standing in *sambhdanga* with the peacock behind him, this deity has four hands. He holds *trisula* in the upper right hand and *vajra* in the upper left. The lower right hand is in *abhaya* and the lower left in *katihasta*. He wears *graiveyakas*, a girdle, *chakrakundalas* and *purnoruka*.

## Dakshinamurti

This image is set up against the north wall of the hall adjacent to the Kapilesvara shrine. Seated with the right leg bent at the knee and resting on the back of *apasmarapurusha* lying below, with his legs apart and face turned up and the right leg bent at right angles at the knee and the left ankle resting on the right thigh, this god has four hands. He holds a naga in the upper right hand, and *trisula* in the upper left. The lower right hand is in *chinmudra* and the lower left in *varada* with a book in the palm. *Jatas* emanate from the head to the sides and the front part is adorned with the sun to the right, Ganga in the centre and the crescent moon to the left. He has a *makarakundala* on the right ear and *chakrakundala* on the left ear. He is also adorned with three *graiveyakas*, one *hara*, *Yajnopavita*, *udarabandha*, *keyuras*, anklets and *manjiras*. There is a bearded sag on either side sitting cross-legged.

## Alinganachandrasedekharamurti

This image is set up against the east wall of the hall. Siva is seated on a *bhadrasana* with his left leg folded and the right hanging and resting on the head of Nandi below. He holds *ankusa* in the upper right hand and *mriga* in the upper left. His lower right hand is in *abhaya* and the lower left passes round the back of *devi* seated on his left thigh. He wears a *kiritmakuta*, *makarakundalas*, three *graiveyakas*, one *hara*, a girdle of pearl hangings and a *Purnoruka*. The *devi* holds a lotus in the right hand and keeps the left hanging.

## Surya

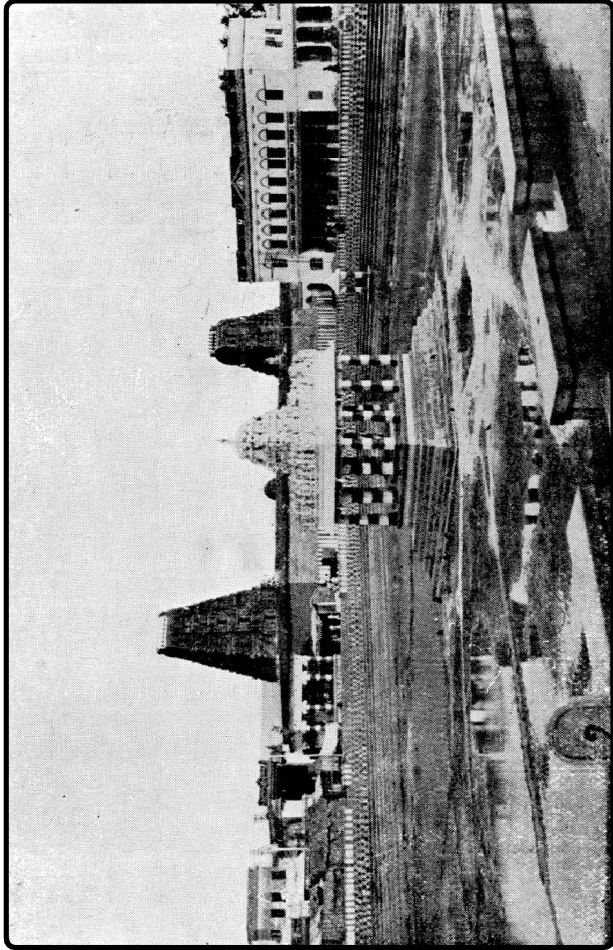
This fine image is also set against the east wall of the hall. This god stands in *samabhanga* holding a lotus in each hand. He is adorned with *kiritamakuta*, *chakrakundalas*, three *graiveyakas*, *Yajnopavita*, *udarabandha*, a triple girdle of pearls, *manjiras*, anklets and an *ardhoruka*.

## Kamakshi

This goddess stands in *samabhanga* holding *ankusa* in the upper right hand and *pasa* in the upper left. Her lower hands are in *abhaya* and *varada*.

The *Garbhagriha* and *Antarala* are of the Chola times as indicated by their architectural features. The other parts of the shrine might have collapsed on account of a thunder-fall as mentioned in the inscriptions. The *Mukhamantapa*, the front verandah and the hall to the south were added during Vijayanagara times. The icons, however, seem to be of the Chola period.

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*Sri Padmasarovar Tank and Temple at Tiruchanur.*

## CHAPTER VII The Temples of Tiruchanur

Tiruchanur, popularly known as Chirtanur, is a village situated three miles to the south of Tirupati. This village was known as *Tiruchchoginur* and *Tiruchchukanur* in earlier times and one late inscription calls it *Srisukagrama*. Tiruchchoginur is now represented by the small hamlet of JogiMallavaram, situated about a furlong to the west of Tiruchanur. Tiruchanur was also known as Vadirajapuram in the sixteenth century. In Pallava times the village was situated in the Kudavurnadu in the Tiruvengadakkottam while in the Chola times this area came to be assigned to the *Rajendracholamandalam* or *Jayamgondachola- mandalam*,

### Importance

Tiruchanur is of great importance in the history of the Tirupati region, particularly for the evolution of religious activity therein. This region came under the influence of Vaishnavism as early as the eighth century. There was an important Vaishnava settlement at Tiruchanur by the beginning of the ninth century. Though Tirumala and Sri Venkatesvara were known by this time, the hill continued to be inaccessible and could not attract many pilgrims. The Vaishnavas at Tiruchanur established a *Tirumantrasalai* and carried on proselytising activity. They also constructed a *Tiruvilankoil* and set up in it an image of Sri Venkateswara as a representative of the original god of the Vengadam hill. Tiruchanur being situated in plain country, this proxy temple of Sri Venkatesvara attracted large numbers of pilgrims who came here and paid their homage to the Lord. The Cholas conquered Tondamandalam in which the Tirupati-Tiruchanur area was situated by the end of the ninth century. They were patrons of Saivism and Saiva influence reached this erstwhile Vaishnava stronghold of Tiruchanur. A Siva temple, named after



Parasaresvara, was constructed in the western part of the village (in the present hamlet of JogiMallavaram) and it soon grew popular. The decline of Chola power about the middle of the thirteenth century lead to the rise of many local chieftains to independence. The Yadava rayas were the most powerful of these chieftains and zealous patrons of Vaishnavism. About the time of their rise to independence, a temple dedicated to *Alagiaperumal* or Krishna appeared in Tiruchanur. Vaishnavism obtained unprecedented patronage during the days of Vijayanagara rule and a Varadaraja temple came to be built at Tiruchanur in the sixteenth century. This Vaishnava enthusiasm culminated at a still later date in the construction of the Sri Padmavati temple in this village.

Tiruchanur is important for five temples, four of which exist even to this day. These are the Tiruvilankoil, the Krishna temple, the Parasaresvara temple, the Varadaraja temple and the temple of Padmavati.

### The Tiruvilankoil

This is the earliest of the five temples of Tiruchanur. The earliest inscription relating to this temple is dated in the 51 st year of the reign of the Pallava king, Dantivarman, corresponding to 826 A.D. It may be inferred from this that the temple existed from the beginning of the ninth century at the latest. There are no records relating to this temple after the reign of the Chola king, Rajaraja III. This indicates that, in all probability, this temple declined in its importance from about the beginning of the thirteenth century.

There are thrity two inscriptions which relate to this temple. Of these, only ten mention it by name while the others seem to belong to this temple. Fourteen of these are undated fragments. Two of the records belong to the time of the Pallava king, Dantivarman (1-1 and 2). One mentions a Ganga chief (1-5). Another mentions a

Gunvadaparajitan (I-6) who must have been a Pallava chief. Five inscriptions belong to the Chola period (1-12, 13, 15, 17). Of these, one is dated in the 29th year of Parantaka I (907-950). Another is dated in the next year. One belongs to the reign of Rajaraja I and another to the 5th year of Rajaraja III.

This Tiruvilankoil contained an image which was installed as a representative of *Tiruvenkatattuperumanadigal* or Sri Venkatesvara of Tirumala. The earliest inscription records the gift of 30 *kalanju* of gold for setting up a perpetual lamp by Ulagapperumanar, an inhabitant of Solanur in *Solanadu* (I-I). The next record (1-2) mentions the gift of fine red gold by a certain Siyakan for burning a light in the temple. The well known Bana chief, Vijayaditya, gifted land, taxes and gold for lamps and food offerings to *Tiruvilankoil-perumanadigal*, *Tirumantrasalai-perumanadigal* and *Tiruvenkattu-perumanadigal* (1-4). A later Pallava chief, Gunavanaparajitan, arranged for the feeding of two brahmans in the temple (1-6). A record of 898 A.D. (1-7) states that the officials of the village diverted the income that they derived from the village on account of its administration for the maintainence of the temple. Obviously, there was a fall in the revenues of the temple and they were not enough for its maintainence. This crisis in the history of the temple may be explained in a way. The last Pallava king, Aparajita, had a disturbed reign and many of his relations took possession of parts of the kingdom. The Chola king, Aditya, invaded Tondamandalam about this time, defeated the Pallava ruler and annexed it to the Chola kingdom. The pilgrims that usually visited the Tiruvilankoil must have given up coming here on account of the disturbances mentioned above and the income of the temple must have gone down considerably as a consequence.

Peace and order were restored during the first quarter of the ninth century and the temple became popular once again. For the

first time after the crisis of 898 A.D. a lamp was gifted to this temple in 927 A.D. in the reign of Parantaka I. A certain Kudongoluran of *Malanadu* gifted 40 *kalanju* of gold for setting up a lamp in this temple in 936 A.D. (I-12). A Chola subordinate, named Arulakki *alias* Rajarajamuvandavelan, made a gift during the reign of Rajaraja I (1-17).

Chola power in Tondamandalam declined by about the middle of the thirteenth century. Jatavarman Sundara Pandya I invaded this region and subjugated most of the Chola subordinates here. Afterwards these subordinates became independent taking advantage of the Muslim invasions which shook the contemporary Hindu kingdoms of the Deccan and south India to their foundations. These chieftains continued to enjoy their power till about the middle of the fourteenth century when they were all subjugated by the Sangama rulers of the Vijayanagara empire. There are many inscriptions which belong to this period. Most of them are undated and do not mention any ruler. One record refers to a god being taken out in procession (1-96). Another refers to the gift of taxes received in gold coin and to the Panguni festival conducted in the Tiruvilankoil (1-97). A third inscription refers to the conduct of a festival previously instituted by three individuals (I-108). A fourth record refers to people who managed the affairs of the temple (1-118). Another mentions the sanctum of the temple (1-119). A gift for the feeding of brahmans is recorded in another fragment (1-120). Reference is made to the temple treasury, the townsmen and the servants of the temple in another fragmentary record (1-121). One fragment mentions a gift of 40 *Kalanju* of gold (1-129) and one more mentions Govindaperumal or Govindaraja of Tirupati, Narayana and Tiruvilankoil (I-144). Another refers to oil to be smeared over the body of a god, obviously the Tiruvilankoil-perumal.

It is not possible to locate or identify this Tiruvilankoil in Tiruchanur. As most of the inscriptions referred to above are to be

found either in the Vahanamantapa or on slabs found in the Padikavali gopura of the Padmavati temple, it may be surmised that the Tiruvilankoil existed on the site of the three shrines now found inside the compound of the Padmavati temple. It must have been neglected and fallen into ruins. A medley of pillars and stones of various styles and times found in the three temples inside this compound leads us to believe that the material of this ruined temple was fully used in the construction of the three temples now seen in this compound.

### The Alagiaperumal Shrine

This is the earliest of the three shrines found inside the compound at Tiruchanur. The entrance of the compound, surmounted by a big gopura, faces this shrine and not the other two as is the case with the Parthasarathi shrine and the Govindaraja shrine situated in the same compound at Tirupati.

Alagiaperumal or Krishna, installed in this shrine, is referred to in ten inscriptions found at Tirupati and Tiruchanur. The earliest of them is dated in the 5th year of Rajaraja III, corresponding to 1221 A.D. The latest is dated in 1552 A.D. There are two later fragments but they are undated.

This deity and his temple seem to have been in existence by 1221 A. D. as stated above. The origin of the shrine may be ascribed to about the middle of the twelfth century. A certain Pokkiran spent his own money and levelled a piece of land and made it cultivable. He gave it to the shrine and its servants agreed to conduct the *Panguni* festival for the deity, obviously, in the name of the donor (I-34). The Vijayanagara king, Saluva Narasimha, made a stipulation in 1467 A. D. regarding the distribution of prasadam to the *Sthanattar* of Tirupati. Part of this stipulation provided for the offering of two platefuls of butter to Alagiya- perumal, supplied from the stores of the Sri Venkatesvara temple (II-30). Another record contains an independent gift made by the same king (II-33). Kandadai

Ramanujayyengar, the manager of the gold treasury of Sri Venkatesvara and of all the Ramanujakutams at Tirumala and Tirupati, deposited 8,770 *narpanam* in the treasury of the Tirumalai temple and arranged for a number of offerings to be made to various deities. Provision was made, in this connection, for the offering of *dosai-padi* to this god while he was seated in a mantapa on the *Vidaiyyarri* festival (IV-3). A certain Sattalur Srinivasayyan paid 2,770 *narpanam* in 1541 A. D. during the reign of Achyutaraya and provided, among other services, for the offering of one *dosai-padi* to Alagiaperumal on the day of the *Tirthavari* festival during the *Adi-Brahmotsavam*, (IV-I 57). Ramaraja Kondaraja made an arrangement in 1552 A.D. according to which one *Kanukku-padi* was to be offered to this god on the day of the *Padiya-vettai* festival celebrated for him (V-133).

This shrine consists of a *Garbhagriha*, *Antarala Mukhamantapa*, the rear part of which has been converted into a compartment before the *Antarala*, and *Mahamantapa*. It faces the east.

The *Adhishtana* or base of the shrine is low and simple containing five plain and undecorated members. The walls of the *Garbhagriha* above it are decorated with four plain pilasters on each side. The *Prastara* or entablature above the pilasters contains the *Bhutamala* or a row of dwarfs in various poses. The *Kapota* or cornice above it is adorned with four *Nasikas* or gables on each side with a human head inside each. There is a low parapet on the roof adorned with *makaras*. The walls of the *Antarala* contain one pilaster each. The *Vimana* above the roof is of the *Dvitala* type. It has two square steps, one over the other and the corners of the higher step are adorned with lions.

The *Sikhara* above is round and of the *Vesara* order. It is adorned with *nasikas* surmounted by *simhalalatas* in the four

directions. On its top is a double lotus with a gilded Kalasa in its centre. This *Vimana* was renovated in recent times.

The foremost part of the shrine contains an open mantapa of three rows of four pillars each. Of these, two pillars in the extremities of the front row are of the Chola style while the others are of the early Vijayanagara style. The floor between the four central pillars is slightly raised in the shape of a square. There are two more rows of four pillars each behind this mantapa but walls have been put up connecting them on the sides and in the front so as to form a narrow compartment. This compartment is now being used as the *Snapanamantapa*. Beyond this is a narrow *Antarala*. The *Garbhagriha* contains four icons. The principal image is that of Alagiaperumal or Krishna seated in the centre. He sits in *Padmasana* with both his hands in the *Varada* pose and resting on the knees. At right angles to him is another deity stated to be Balarama, sitting with his left knee bent and unpraised and the right leg hanging below. He places his left hand on his left knee and rests the right hand on the ground. The other two images are those of Krishna as Kaliyamardana and of Lakshminarasimha.

### The Varadaraja Shrine

This shrine is to the south of the shrine of Alagiaperumal and is now known as Sundararajaswami shrine. Three inscriptions refer to the deity of this shrine. The earliest of them (IV- 157), dated 1541 A.D., mentions the car festival of Varadarajaperumal. The second, dated 1547 A.D. (V-99), mentions the *Brahmotsavam* of this god and the *Vidaiyyarri* festival celebrated at the end of it. It also refers to the *Yugadi*, *Dipavali* and floating festivals as well as the *Adhyayanotsavam*. It is evident from these two records that this shrine came into existence some time in the sixteenth century.

This shrine consists of the *Garbhagriha*, *Antarala*, *Mukhamantapa* and the *Mahamantapa*. The *Adhishtana* is high and

ornate. It contains the *Upana*, three *pattikas* above it, *padma*, *pattika*, *tripatta*, *gala* cut into compartments, *kapota* adorned with *nasikas* and *alingapattika*. The outer side of its walls is decorated with the series-two pilasters, *kumbhapanjara*, two pilasters, *kumbhapanjara*, one pilaster, *Sala-koshtha*, one pilaster, *Kumbha-panjara*, two pilasters, *kumbhapanjara* and two pilasters. The walls of the *Antarala* are adorned with two pilasters, *kumbhapanjara*, one pilaster, *Sala-koshtha*, one pilaster, *kumbhapanjara* and two pilasters. The walls of the *Mukhamantapa* contain 6 pilasters. The *Kapota* or cornice above has a row of *nasikas* with human heads or lotuses inside them. The roof has a low parapet decorated with *makaras*. The *vimana* is of the *Ayatasra* type and of the *Vesara* order. It is of two storeys, each containing a *hara* or row of *kuta*, *panjara*, *kuta*, *panjara*, *sala*, *panjara*, *kuta*, *panjara* and *kuta*. The *griva* above is low. The *Sikhara* is oblong and the gables at the end contain a *kuta* inside. The face of the *sikhara* is decorated with gables. There are many Vishnu images all over, moulded out of plaster.

The *Mahamantapa* in front of the shrine contains three rows of four pillars each and one row of two pillars at the back. All these pillars are of the Vijayanagara style. The *Mukhamantapa* beyond is plain. There is a *dvarapalaka* on either side of the entrance of the *Antarala* beyond. The walls on either side of the entrance are decorated with four pilasters. The front wall of the *Garbhagriha* contains a *kumbhapanjara* between two pilasters. Inside the sanctum in the centre is the image of Varadaraja standing in *samabhanga* holding *Samkha* and *Chakra* in the two upper hands, keeping the lower right in *Varada* and the left hanging by the side. *Sridevi* and *Bhudevi* stand on his sides.

### The Padmavati Shrine

This shrine, situated to the north of the Alagiyaperumal shrine, is the object of main attraction for the pilgrims at Tiruchanur. Sri

Padmavatidevi, housed in it, is described as the consort of Sri Venkatesvara. This goddess is wrongly identified with Alarmelmanganachchiyar. Numerous inscriptions from the Tirumala temple state that Alarmelmanganachchiyar adorns the right side of the bosom of Sri Venkatesvara. Out of over a thousand inscriptions found in the temples of Tirumala, Tirupati, Tiruchanur and Jogi-mallavaram, not one mentions a goddess named Sri Padmavati. A late and undated record mentions the *Padmatirtha*, of *Srisukagrama* or Tiruchanur and not Padmavatidevi. The architecture of the shrine indicates a very late date. The inscriptions of this region stop practically with the end of the first quarter of the 17th century. This shrine may therefore be taken to have come into existence some time towards the end of the century;

This shrine resembles the shrine of Govindaraja at Tirupati in many respects. It consists of a *Garbhagriha* and an *Antarala* with a pillared verandah on three sides and the *Mukhamantapa* on the fourth. Before these is a pillared mantapa with another oblong open pillared mantapa at a lower level before it. To the farther east is the *Kalyanamantapa*, with a small shrine in its centre. The walls of the shrine end with the back mantapa and are built of large blocks of stone rivetted into each other. There is a low sunk cornice above, devoid of any decoration. The roof is plain. The *Vimana*, which rises above the *garbhagriha* is one storeyed and contains *kuta*, *sala* and *kuta*. Above is the *griva* with lions at the four corners. The *Sikhara* is round and decorated with four gables surmounted by *simhalalatas*. There is a double lotus above it containing in its centre a gilded *Kalasa*.

The open mantapa in the front has six rows of six pillars each, all of the Vijayanagara style. There are a gilded *Dhvajastambha*, and a *Balipitha* between the central pillars of the two back rows. Beyond this and at a higher level is another mantapa

whose sides are closed with walls and whose front is fitted with wooden frames having iron bars. There are two rows of four pillars each in this hall, all of the Chola style. There is a raised square between the four central pillars. Beyond this is the *Mukhamantapa* with a shrine projecting on each side. The northern shrine houses an image of Ramanuja and the southern shrine contains the icons of *Garuda* and *Vishvakṣena*. Beyond the *Mukhamantapa* are the *Garbhagriha* and *Antarala* with a pillared verandah on the south, west and north as in the Govindaraja temple at Tirupati. A low parapet wall connects these pillars. Most of these pillars have worn out Chola capitals while a few are Vijayanagara pillars. There is a narrow space of about three feet between the verandah and the *Garbhagriha* and *Antarala* which seems to have been originally open but subsequently closed with slabs of stone reaching up to the roof of the two structures in the centre on all sides.

The outer side of the *Garbhagriha* is decorated with the series -three pilasters, *Sala-koshtha*, and three pilasters. The walls of the *Antarala* contain the series-two pilasters, *sala-koshtha* and two pilasters. The *kapota* above is adorned with a row of *nasikas* surmounted by *simhalalatas*. The space between the front wall and the verandah on either side is closed by a low wall and against these are located the images of two *Dvarapalikas*. The *Garbhagriha* contains the image of Sri Padmavatidevi, seated in *padmasana* and holding a lotus in each of the two upper hands. Her lower hands are in *Abhaya* and *Varada*.

### The Parasaresvara Temple

This temple is situated in Jogi-Mallavaram, a hamlet to the south of Tiruchanur. It is inhabited by the weaver community which plies a busy trade. There are eleven inscriptions incised on the walls of this temple. The earliest of them is dated in the 23rd year of the

reign of the Chola king, Rajaraja I, corresponding to 1008 A.D. and the latest belongs to the 14th year of the reign of Rajaraja III i.e., 1230 A.D. The foundation of this temple may, therefore, be ascribed to about the middle of the 10th century, to a date very near the Chola conquest of Tondamandalam. The architectural features of the temple also justify this date. This temple seems to have lost its importance about the middle of the thirteenth century partly because the Alagiya perumal shrine of Tiruchanur became more popular and partly because the Yadavaraya rulers of this region were more interested in the temples of Govindaraja in Tirupati and Sri Venkateswara at Tirumala.

The earliest inscription in this temple states that a certain Kodinambiyangadi of *Solamandalam* gifted 26 *kalanju* of gold for an offering to be made on the *Uttarayana-Samkranti* day (I-18). A certain Naranadeva gifted the taxes due from a village for the burning of a lamp during the 3rd year of Rajendra Chola (I-21). Four servants of the temple received 128 cows from Tiruchchirrambalanambi, another temple servant, and undertook to burn four lamps in the temple in the 24th year of Kulottunga I (I-23). A record dated in the 41st year of the same reign states that the *Mahesvaras* of *Tirukkalatti-udaiyar* (Kalahastisvara) excavated a tank for god *Parasaresvara* (I-25). One record of the 16th year of Vikrama Chola refers to the Vaikhasi festival (I-33). The Yadavaraya chief, Viranarasingadeva, gifted in the 7th year of Rajaraja III, six putti of land and some taxes to this temple for instituting an offering named *Tiruvardhayamam-padi* and *Tiruveluchhippadi* to the god for the spiritual benefit of Narayanapillai, the son of the temple treasurer, Pandiyadarayyar, and one who was killed in the battle of Urattur fought by the Yadavaraya with the Kadavarayar (I-35). Rajaraja settled, in the 9th year of his reign, a dispute regarding a gift previously made by Kodinambiyangadi (I-36). A record dated in the 14th year of the same reign registers a gift made by Vira Narasingadeva for

the celebration of the Masifestival (I-38). One undated fragment refers to the figure of Vighnesvara incised on a wall of the temple by an accountant of the temple (I-39).

This temple consists of a mantapa cum shrine of Vijayanagara times, a *Nandi-mantapa* behind it and the main shrine behind, which faces the east. The main shrine is in a rectangular enclosure with an only entrance in the south. It is surrounded by a *prakara* built of large blocks of stone. There is a narrow extension to the north enclosing a small shrine of Devi.

There is a narrow verandah running on the south, west and north of the main shrine with the *prakara* wall at the back and a row of pillars in the front. There are six pillars in the northern and southern verandahs, of which the last four have three rectangular blocks each below the capital while all the others are cubical. The capitals above all these pillars are alike. They consist of a rectangular block with an angle of 45° on the sides and a small rectangular block projecting to the sides at the bottom. These are typical Chola capitals the like of which can also be found in the earlier parts of the *Govindarajasvami* temple at Tirupati. There is a narrow open space between this verandah and the main shrine.

The *Mukhamantapa* is to the east of the main shrine. It contains two rows of four pillars each with corresponding pilasters in the eastern *prakara* wall. There is a low platform in the northern part of this mantapa on which the *Navagrahas* have been installed recently.

The main shrine consists of two parts, the *Garbhagriha* and the *Antarala*. The latter is slightly narrower and projects from the former. Both face the east. Both are located over an *Adhishtana* or base, which has the *Upana*, *griva*, *tripatta* another *griva* and *alingapattika*. Above this are the walls of the *Garbhagriha* and *Antarala*. The walls of the *Garbhagriha* on the north, west and south contain two pilasters at either end with a *koshtha* between

two pilasters each, in the centre. This *koshtha* is surmounted by a plain domical *torana* which is typical of the Chola style. The walls of the *Antarala* contain three pilasters each. Each pilaster consists of a plain body with a *kalasa*, a cushion capital and a square *phalaka* above. The *prastara* above them is decorated with a Bhutamala or row of dwarfs in various comic poses. The *Kapota* or Cornice above it is ornamented with Nasikas at intervals. The central *Koshtha* in the southern wall of the *Garbhagriha* contains a fine image of *Dakshinamurthi*, that in the western wall has the figure of *Vishnu* and the *Koshtha* in the northern wall contains a figure of *Brahma*. The roof or *Achchadana* above the *Garbhagriha* contains on the edges a low parapet adorned with *makaras*. The portion above the *koshtha* in the wall below, contains the seated figure of Siva moulded in plaster. There are *Nandis* at the four corners. There is no parapet on the roof above the *Antarala*.

There is a low *Vimana* above the sanctum. Its *Griva* contains, in the four cardinal directions, a big *Nasika* or gable surmounted by Simhalalata. In between these *Nasikas* are shorter *Nasikas* resting on two pillars each. The bigger *Nasikas* contain inside them a *kuta* or a member with a domical crown. The space between the bigger and smaller gables is filled with rows of rafter ends. Above this *Griva* or neck is a large round *Sikhara* surmounted by a lotus and a *Kalasa* in the centre. The body of the temple is of stone while the *Vimana* above is of brick and plastered all over.

This temple contains the following fine icons in the Chola style:-

### Ganapati

This image is to the right of the entrance of the *Antarala*. Seated with his left leg folded and resting against the rear part of the protruding belly, and the right leg bent at the knee and upraised and touching

the side of the belly, this deity holds *ankusa* in the upper right hand, *pasa* in the upper left, *danta* in the lower right and *modaka* in the lower left on which the tip of the trunk rests. The head is just like that of an elephant without any modifications and two tusks portrude from the mouth. This god wears a *karandamakuta*, *Yajnopavita*, *Udarabandha* and *Channavira*.

### Dakshinamurthi

The image of this deity is found in the central *Koshtha* in the south wall of the *Garbhagriha*. Seated with the right leg slightly bent and resting on the shoulders of the *Apas- marapurusha*, lying prostrate below, and the left leg bent at the knee at right angles and resting on the right thigh, this deity has four hands. There is an *akshamala* in the upper right hand and *Kamandalu* in the upper left; the lower right is in *Chinmudra* and there is a book in the palm of the lower left hand. Jatas issuing from out of the head form a *Prabhamandala* round it. The god is adorned with *Chakrakundalas*, three *Graiveyakas*, *Yajnopavita* and *Udarabandha*. At the bottom is a sage with a beard sitting cross-legged with the right hand help up in *Vismaya* and the left resting on the left thigh. To bottom right is another sage seated in *Padmasana*.

### Saptamatrika slab

This slab is found placed against the west wall of the *Prakara*. It contains a row of the *Saptamatrikas* only.

### Vishnu

This image is found in the central *koshta* in the western wall of the *Garbhagriha*. Standing in *samabhanga*, this deity holds *samkha* and *chakra* in the two upper hands, keeps the lower right in *abhaya* and hangs the lower left hand and touches the left thigh the tips of the fingers.

### Kumara

This image, along with the two attendant images, is located in the north-western angle of the *prakara* wall. Seated on the peacock with the right leg bent and hanging on the side of the bird and the left leg bent at the knee and kept diagonally with its foot resting on the back of the bird, this deity has six faces, three in the front and three at the back. He has twelve hands. The upper right hands hold *Vajra*, *Bana*, *Khadga*, *Chakra* and another object; the upper left hands hold *Trisula*, *Dhanus*, *Sakti Kukkuta* on a pillar and *pasa*. The lower right hand is in *abhaya* and the lower left in *varada*. This god is adorned with *chakrakundalas*, three *graiveyakas*, *channavira*, *udarabandha* and a girdle of pearl hangings and wears an *ardhoruka*.

A *Devi* stands to his right with her right hand hanging and the left holding *nilotpala*. Another *Devi* stands to the left with her left hand hanging and the right holding a *nilotpala*.

### Brahma

This image is to be found in the central *Koshta* in the north wall of the *Garbhagriha*. Standing in *samabhanga*, this deity has three heads and four hands. He holds an *akshamala* in the upper right hand and a *kamandalu* in the upper left. The lower right hand is in *abhaya* and the lower left in *Katihasta*. He is adorned with *Jatamakuta*, *makarakundalas*, three *gariveyakas*, *Yajnopavita* and a girdle with a *kirtimukha* buckle.

### Chandi

The image of this deity is on the edge of the veran- dah and facing the image of *Brahma*. Seated with the left leg folded and resting on the seat and the right hanging, this deity holds a lotus bud in the left hand and rests the right hand on the right thigh.

## Kumara

This image is similar to the one described above. Kumara here is alone and not accompanied by either of the *devis*. The peacock ridden by him carries a snake in its beak. This image is found to the right of the entrance of the *Kamakshi* shrine.

## Balasubrahmanya

This image is located to the left of the entrance of the above shrine. Standing in *samabhanga*, this deity keeps the right hand in *abhaya* and the left in *Katihasta*. He is adorned with *Yajnopavita*, *Udarbandha*, *Graiveyakas*, a girdle with a *kirtimukha* buckle and a garland reaching above the knees.

## Kamakshi

This *Devi* is the consort of *Parasaresvara* and is installed in a small shrine which forms an extension of the north *prakara* wall. She stands in *samabhanga* and holds *ankusa* in the upper right hand and *pasa* in the upper left. The lower hands are in *abhaya* and *varada*.

## Suka

This image is placed to the left of the entrance of the *Antarala* and is a representation of the famous sage, Suka. He has a beard and keeps the right hand with *akshamala* on the right side of his chest and the left hand hanging. His hair is in *jatas*. It is appropriate that an image of Suka should be found in this temple for, the village itself was known after him as Tiruchchukanur or Sukagrama. Parasara, another sage after whom the main deity is named, was the grandfather of Suka. Further, the village is also known as Tiruchchogunur which seems to be the equivalent of Jogunur, jogi being retained in the modern name of Jogi-Mallavaram. Suka was a great Yogi.

## Navagrahas

These are located, as already stated, on a low platform in the northern part of the Mukhamantapa. They are said to have been installed very recently.

## Nandimantapa

This small mantapa is immediately beyond the eastern wall of the prakara. It consists of an *Adhishtana* with four pillars on it supporting the roof. These pillars bear typical Chola capitals as do the pillars in the temple. It is of the same age as the temple.

## Mantapa before the temple

This mantapa is situated to the east of the Nandimantapa. It contains four pillars in the front, four at the back and four in the centre. Its *adhishtana* has a row of *makaras* at the top. These pillars are in the early Vijayanagara style. There is a square in *shatkona* on the under side of the ceiling above the four central pillars. There is a lotus inside the square. There are a few sculptures on the backwall of the mantapa. Of them the following are of interest:-

### 1. Parvatiparinaya

Accompanied by two women with their hands in *anjali* standing behind her, Parvati holds an object in her left hand and with her right hand catches the out-stretched right hand of Siva. Siva, standing in *samabhanga* and holding *ankusa* in the upper right hand and *mriga* in the upper left, catches the hand of Parvati with his lower right hand, keeping the lower left hand on the head of Brahma, seated below in *Padmasana*. To the extreme left is Vishnu standing with his two lower hands stretched forward.

### 2. Ganapati

Standing with his trunk turned to the right, this god is accompanied by two women, one beating the drum and the other beating the cymbals.



### 3. Somaskanda

There is a seated Ganapati in the extreme right. Next to him is Siva, seated with the left leg folded and resting on the seat and the right hanging. He holds *parasu* in the upper right hand and *mriga* in the upper left. The lower right is in *abhaya* and the lower left in *Varada*. Next to him is Kumara as a child. To the further right is Parvati, seated with the right leg folded at the knee and resting on the seat and the left hanging. Her right elbow rests on the right knee and holds a lotus. The left hand rests on the seat.

### 4. Kankalamurti

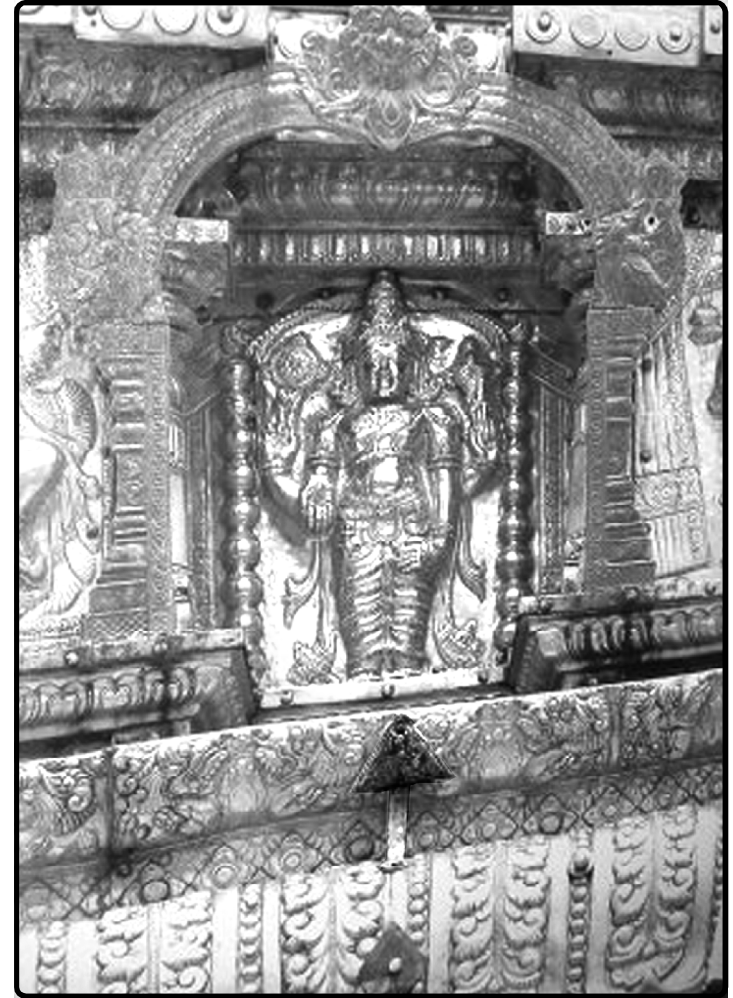
Standing with the right leg slightly bent, this deity has four hands. The upper right hand feeds a dog standing at the right bottom and the upper left holds the *Kankaladanda* on the shoulder. The two lower hands hold objects. A naga emerges to the right from his body and another rises above the *Kankaladanda*. There is a woman holding a basket on her head at the left bottom. Jatas flow to the sides of the head of the deity which is adorned with a *makuta*. The god is decorated with *makarakundala*, on the right ear and *chakrakundala* on the left ear, three necklaces, and *Yajnopavita*.

### 5. Nritta Ganapati

The sculpture of this form of Ganapati is found on the outer side of the south half of the front wall of the mantapa.

This small and unpretentious temple is of great importance for the history of Tiruchanur. It is a fine example of early Chola architecture and is of great help in tracing the history and architectural styles of the temples and Tirupati.

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*Vimana Venkateswaraswamy.*



*Govindarajaswamy Temple.*