



LADDIGAM
(A LATER CHOLA TEMPLE)

B. VENKATARAMAN

LADDIGAM

(A Later Chola Temple)

This book deals, briefly, with an important phase, covering a span of 50 years i.e., from A.D. 1070 to A.D. 1120, in the evolution of South Indian Art and Architecture. From the point of time when the Cholas took over from the Pallavas in the middle of the ninth century A.D. to the point when they cleared the stage in the late thirteenth century, South Indian style of Art and Architecture, which becomes co-terminus with Chola style, evolves into gigantic proportions and infinite variety. If the Early Chola period gave this style a name and a direction, the Middle Chola period gave it its dimension, stature and pattern. Thus the Later Cholas inherited a superb infra-structure to play with, to innovate, to diversify, and to build upon. It is with this efflorescence of Southern Art in its most dynamic phase that this book attempts to deal, depicting the evolution with brief surveys of important temples attributable to the period of Kulottunga I and illustrating the subtler points with special reference to the temple of Nilakanthesvarar at Laddigam, which is dealt with in detail.

To Cora

With affectionate
 regards

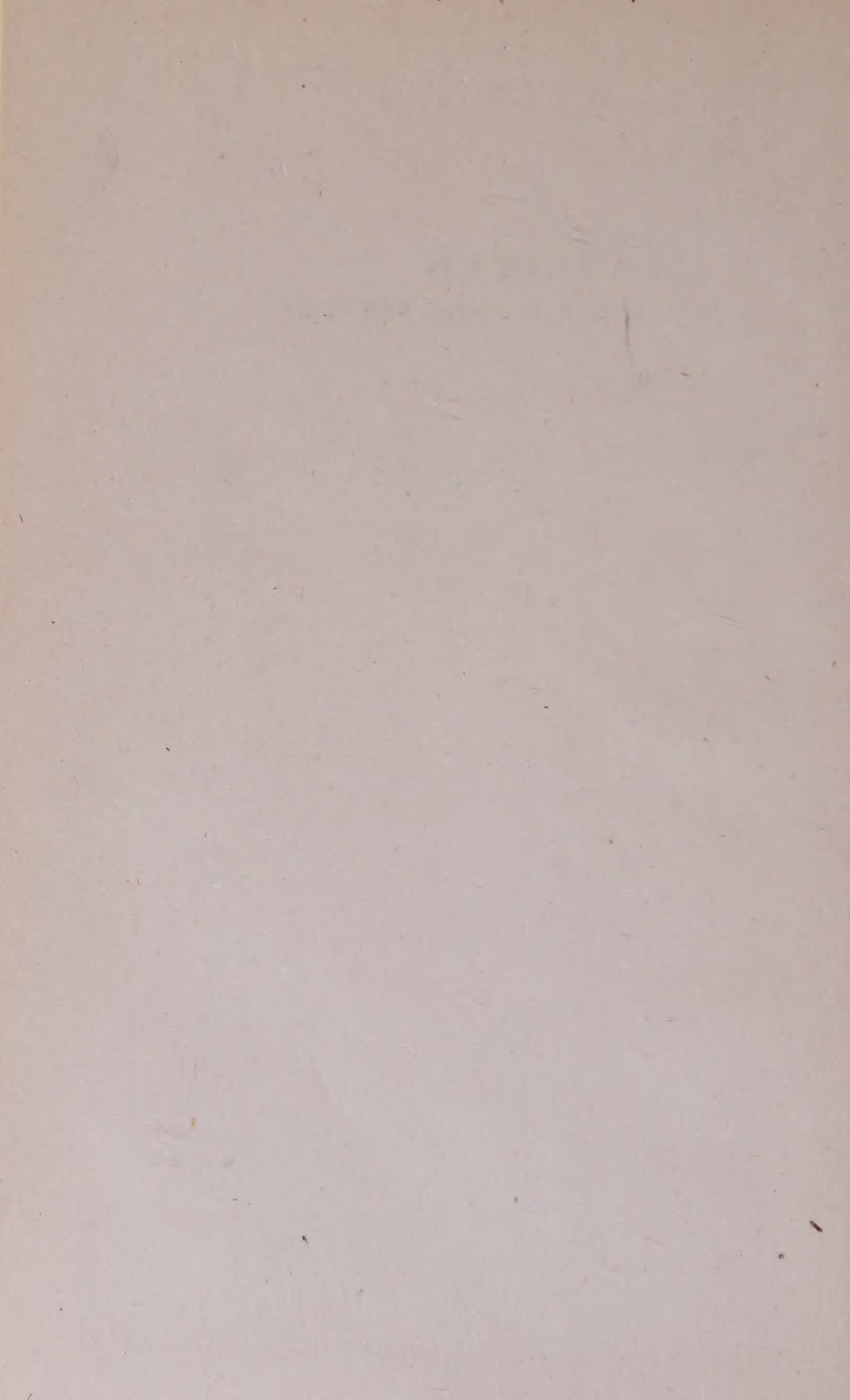
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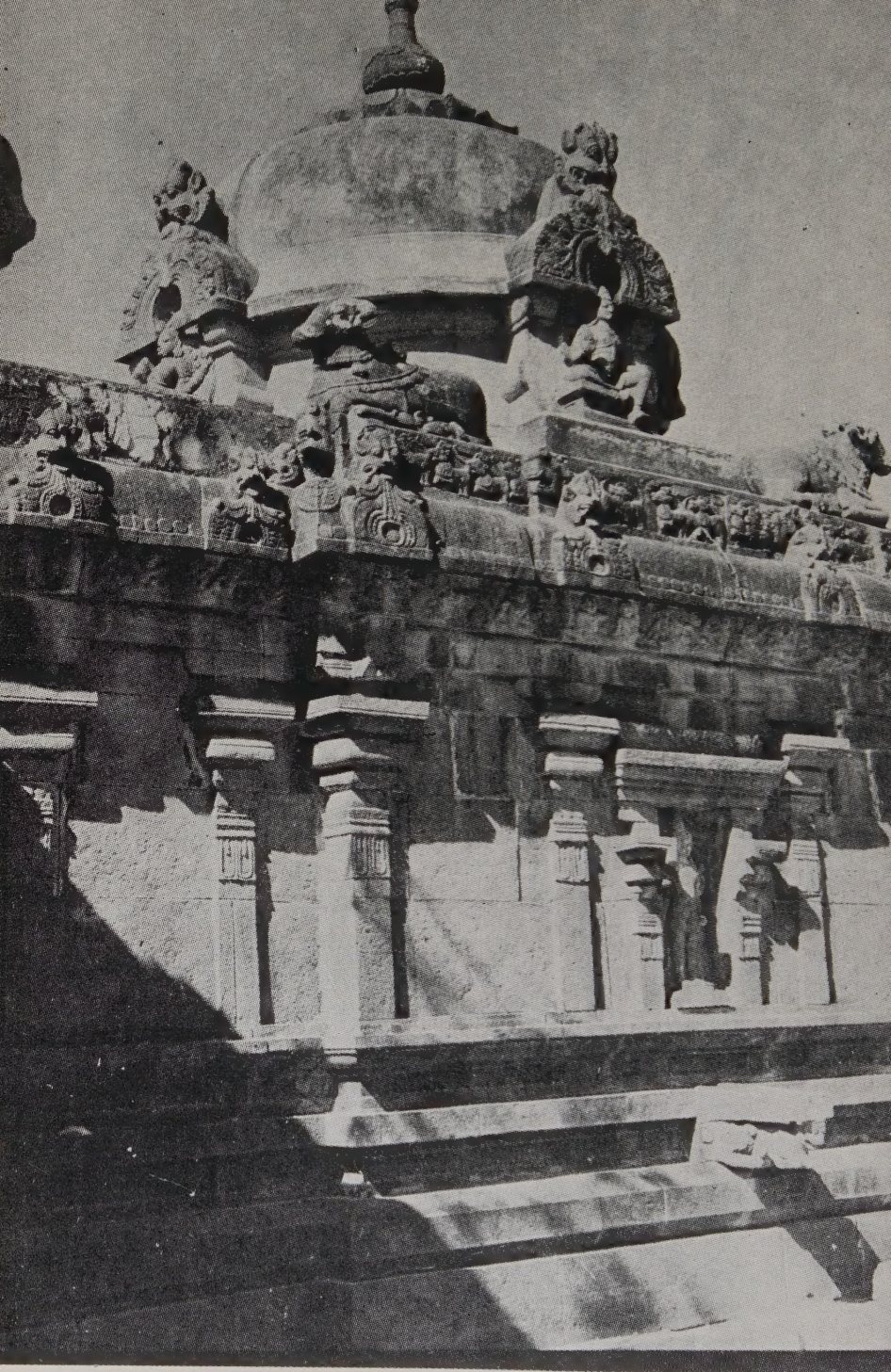
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New Delhi

LADDIGAM

(A LATER CHOLA TEMPLE)





Sri vimana (north side)
LADDIGAM, Nilakanthesvarar temple

LADDIGAM

(A LATER CHOLA TEMPLE)

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Orient Longman

SOUTHERN ART SERIES 1 : LADDIGAM

(Under the Auspices of the Mudgala Trust)

The Southern Art Series deals with monuments of special significance in the evolution of Southern art, architecture and sculpture, to which till now little attention has been paid or at best a casual reference made in the limited literature on the subject.

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TO

MY FATHER

S. R. Balasubrahmanyam

a Pioneer in the field of

Chola Art and Architecture

FOREWORD

I am glad that Mr. B. Venkataraman has written this delightful little book on a facet of Chola history and architecture. It is no wonder that a deep interest in Chola history and archaeology has been imbibed by Mr. Venkataraman from his father. It would only have been a wonder if a son of Mr. S.R. Balasubrahmanyam who has made Chola studies a devotional purpose in life had not been attracted towards so fascinating a subject with an atmosphere created at home for fostering thought on this. There has also been a tradition of Indian administrators for over a century to write authoritative books on Indian History and Culture like Smith, Sewell, Fleet, Whitehead, French, Archer and Randhawa among the latest. It is only natural that Mr. Venkataraman should have chosen a subject of supreme importance for an understanding of South Indian culture at its zenith.

Kulottunga I combined two large empires, that of his paternal ancestors with the one of his maternal forbears, with vast resources; and with a great awareness of the magnificence of Rajaraja, Rajendra and others, who had made the name of the Cholas ring all over not only in India but the whole of South-East Asia, maintained the Chola banner very high. The historical introduction giving a peep into the why and wherefore of this Chola splendour and a rapid survey of important temples of a period of over fifty years is ably covered by the author who deserves the thanks of scholars for a valuable chapter of Chola cultural activity that he has discussed so pleasantly with the utmost clarity.

I would exhort Mr. Venkataraman who has made a very successful beginning in this book, to continue these cultural studies which would be a credit not only to his penmanship but also a key to a better understanding of little known phases of the history and culture of one of the greatest imperial dynasties of India.

National Museum
New Delhi
May 23, 1971

C. SIVARAMAMURTI

Introduction

THIS BOOK deals with a Later Chola temple. Chola and Pandyan temples have not yet been fully surveyed. Most of even those surveyed still remain unpublished. The existing standard works on Indian Art and Architecture give only a meagre and inadequate account of our rich heritage. Even the Chola historian, Professor K.A. Nilakanta Sastri has added in his second edition of 'The Colas' only a brief survey of the vast and fascinating subject. He admits the inadequacy of our efforts. He says : "In fact, Chola architecture and sculpture remained neglected fields and comprehensive monographs on the best extant temples are an urgent desideratum" (p. 736). What is needed is not only a detailed monograph on important temples, but also a thorough and comprehensive survey of Chola Art and Architecture: an outline of this subject however has been published by Mr. S.R. Balasubrahmanyam in his Four Chola Temples (Bhulabhai Memorial Institute, Bombay). In that book, an important temple, viz. that of Melakkadambur relating to the period of Kulottunga I and unique from the point of view of architectural style, has been dealt with.

This monograph describes the origin and development of the temple of Nilakanthesvaram at Laddigam, another Later Chola temple, far away from the heartland of the Chola-desa, presented in a historical perspective in the context of its natural evolution during the reign of Kulottunga I (A.D. 1070-1120), one of the greatest of Chola emperors who ushered in a new formative period in the field of Dravidian Art and Culture.

When time permits and facilities are available, I hope to take up the fascinating work of bringing out a comprehensive study of Chola Art and Architecture spread over a period of more than four centuries.

I offer my grateful thanks to Mr. C. Sivaramamurti, Director of the National Museum for the generous terms in which he has introduced me to the reader.

I am indebted to Mr. P.H. Patwardhan for undertaking to bring out this book as an Orient Longman publication. Equally indebted am I to Shri R. S. Rawal of Thomson Press (India) Limited for bringing out this book in a very short time. I thank Mr. Chhabra for making the blocks for the illustrations.

Dr. Filliozat and Mr. P.Z. Pattabiramin of the French Institute of Indology, Pondicherry, have been very generous with their photographs which have added to the value of the book. They have my thanks in a very liberal measure. My thanks are also due to Messrs. N.A. Ramachandran, K.K. Malhotra, S.L. Sharma and R.S. Verma for their help in various ways.

I thank my wife Leela, and my daughter Nandini for doing the unenviable job of preparing the Index.

New Delhi
11th August, 1971

B. VENKATARAMAN

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in griva-koshta)

I The Cholas [Good general historical sketch]

THE CHOLAS of the Vijayalaya House were the most glorious of the dynasties of South India. They enjoyed a continuous rule of more than four hundred years (A.D. 850-1279). Their conquests extended far and wide.

Vijayalaya (A. D. 850-871), the founder of the House was a peerless warrior who is said to have had on his body 96 scars of wounds received on the battlefield. Aditya I (A. D. 871-907), his son and successor, conquered and annexed Tondaimandalam, the land of the Pallavas in the north. His son Parantaka I (A. D. 907-955) gloried in the title of 'Madurai konda Parakesari' after his conquest of Madurai. Rajaraja I (A.D. 985-1014) organised a strong and efficient standing army and carried on extensive foreign conquests extending from Ilangai (Ceylon) in the south to the basin of the Tungabhadra and the Mahendra Hill (in the present day Ganjam district of Orissa) in the north. He also organised a powerful navy, defeated the Chera fleet at Kandalur-Salai near modern Tiruvanantapuram, on the south west extremity of the peninsula, and the neighbouring islands now called the Laccadives group of islands. The Cholas enjoyed the 'command of the sea' which enabled them to exercise effective control over the island of Ceylon. Rajaraja I's achievement both on land and on the sea were surpassed by his son Rajendra I (A.D. 1014-1044). After conquering the north-eastern coastal region of the mainland as far as the mouth of the Ganga, he, with the help of a powerful navy, led a naval expedition across the rolling mid-ocean ("alai-kadal-naduvul pala-kalam-selutti"—Rajendra I's inscription) and subjugated the kingdom of the powerful Sailendras of Kadaram (Kedah in Malay peninsula) and Sri Vijaya (Palembang in Sumatra) and their dependencies extending over the Malay peninsula and Indonesia. After these brilliant victories, he assumed the title of the Conqueror of Purvadesam, Gangai and Kadaram (A.D. 1014-1044). Rajadhiraja I and his two brothers who ruled the Chola empire in succession carried on the great military

Cholas in
South
Asian
(Indian navy
of --)

tradition of their forefathers in their wars with the Western Chalukyas.

In the later Chola period (A.D. 1070-1279), Kulottunga I (A.D. 1070-1120) and Kulottunga III (1178-1216) were great warriors and generals who kept the Chola flag flying high; and even the last important Chola ruler Rajendra III carried on a brave struggle for the preservation of the Chola empire. It was a desperate struggle, the last bright flicker of the Chola lamp about to extinguish (See genealogical charts at pp. 15 and 16).

Every human institution has an end and so had the Chola empire; but they had carved during their hey-day a grand and mighty empire, vast and even trans-oceanic that lasted much longer than any other known dynasty not only of South India but even perhaps of the entire Indian peninsula; above all, they have left behind a memory of great deeds done in the real spirit of men of heroic mould.

The Cholas were great administrators too. By organising a well-skilled and highly efficient bureaucracy, they established a strong and stable government. Their system of decentralised democratic local administration with deep roots in the soil added greatly to the social stability in the land even when the Central authority was weak. They promoted agriculture by constructing dams across the Kaveri and other rivers and by constructing large lakes in rain-fed areas. They fostered commerce both inland and overland and encouraged the *Nagarams*, Corporate Merchant-guilds, to carry on trade in lands beyond the seas; The merchant-guilds of the Tamil-land were a great institution who enjoyed wide privileges including the right of self-defence and other extra-territorial privileges in foreign settlements, to protect their lives and commercial interests.

The contributions of the Cholas to Art and Culture are incomparable in quantity and unsurpassed in quality. They were the greatest temple-builders of our country. Architecture, sculpture and painting reached their apogee during this period. Music, dancing and allied arts received great encouragement. Whatever other achievements of theirs are remembered or not, their contribution to Art and Culture will endure.

Form the point of view of artistic style, the Chola age can be said to cover the period from A.D. 850-1279. This again can be conveniently divided into three sub-periods. The Early Period may be said to have lasted from the reign of the founder Vijayalaya up to the accession of Rajaraja I (A.D. 850-985); the Middle Period from the accession of Rajaraja I up to that of Kulottunga I (A.D. 985-1070), and the Later Period from the accession of Kulottunga I to the end of the rule of Rajendra Chola III whose exit marked also the end of Chola rule in South India (A.D. 1070-1279).

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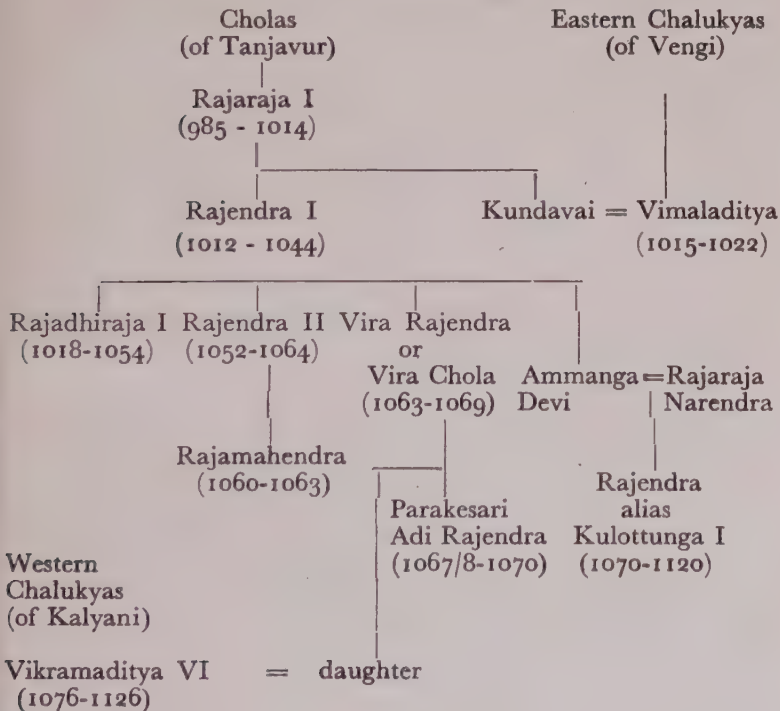
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Our concern in this book, as mentioned in the Introduction, is with the first ruler of the later period, viz. Kulottunga I.

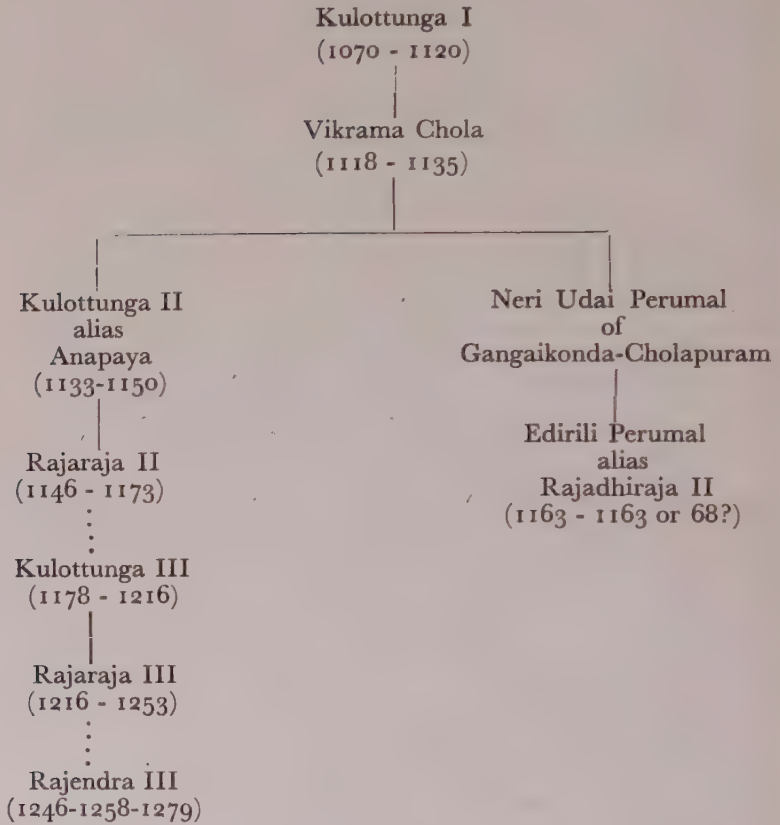
For a clear understanding of the inter-dynastic marriages and feuds and for a proper appreciation of the evolution of art in each stage of Chola history, the following genealogical tables of the middle and later Cholas will be of great assistance.

Genealogy of the Middle Cholas



Genealogy of the Later Cholas

(AD 1070 - 1279)



Note:

(1) The Chola country was conquered by the Pandya ruler, Jatavarman Sundara Pandya I, in A.D. 1258.

(2) The overlapping of regnal years of the Chola rulers as given in the genealogical table above is due to the reigning monarchs appointing the sons or successors as Crown Prince even during their life-time giving them the privilege of counting their regnal years from the date of such anointment.

2 The Last Phase of Chola Art and Architecture

THE LAST phase of Chola Art and Architecture begins with the accession of Kulottunga I (A.D. 1070-1120). His father was the Eastern Chalukyan king Rajaraja Narendra who in turn was the son of Vimaladitya and Kundavai the daughter of the Chola Emperor Rajaraja I and the sister of Rajendra I. Kulottunga I's mother was Ammangadevi, the daughter of Rajendra I. Biding his time for his accession to the throne of Vengi, Rajendra *alias* Kulottunga spent his time in making conquests in the region of the modern Bastar district of Madhya Pradesh. On account of this, he claims to be the conqueror of *Purvadesam*. In A.D. 1070, there was a political revolution in the Chola country resulting in the death of the then ruling Chola monarch Adhirajendra, the great-grand-son of Rajaraja I. This gave prince Rajendra (II) the occasion to step into the breach and make himself the ruler of both the kingdoms of Vengi and Chola desa, and thus he united the lunar and the solar dynasties. The Kalingattuparani, a contemporary poem on the conquest of Kalinga, describes Kulottunga I thus : "The noble son of the noble daughter of the *devi* of Gangai konda Sola" and "Kulottaman *alias* Abhayan who was born to rule under one umbrella, the two kingdoms of the royal Houses (of the Lunar and Solar dynasties) which extended up to the limits of the sea and the sky".

Note -
general historical
emphases

umbrella as
symbol of
sovereignty

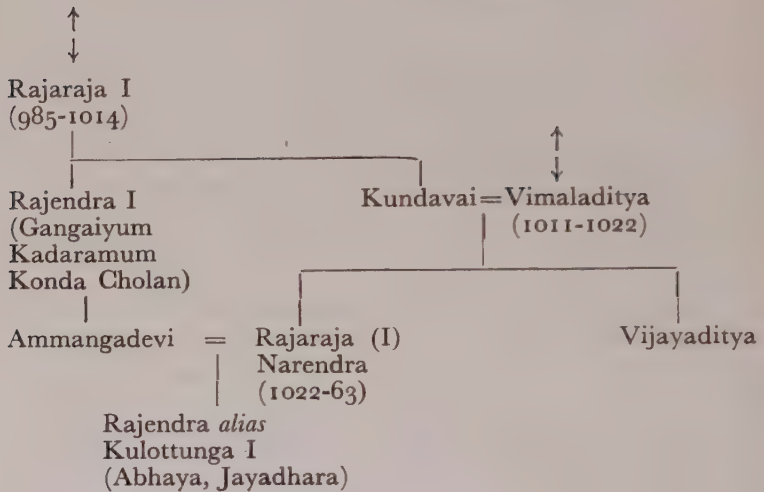
The dynastic connections between Vengi and Chola rulers are shown in the genealogical table given on the next page.

Kulottunga I inherited a big empire. In the north, there was in Kalyani a powerful rival, the Western Chalukya ruler Vikramaditya VI (A.D. 1076-1126). He had an eye on Vengi whose rulers were the descendants of their original kinsmen of the Chalukya House of Badami. He had married the sister of Adhirajendra and on the latter's death and the consequent political disorder, rushed to the Chola country; but had soon to return to his kingdom as he himself had to face troubles at home.

struggle for
succession -
see also
South Indian Hist

THE CHOLAS
(Solar Race)

THE EASTERN
CHALUKYAS
OF VENGI
(Lunar Race)



During the early years of Kulottunga I's reign, his son Vikrama Chola, then Viceroy of Vengi, conquered *Southern Kalinga*, the land between the Godavari and the Mahendra hill (A.D. 1096). Later (about A.D. 1112), a regular expedition against the northern or the Seven Kalingas was conducted by the Chola general Karunakara Tondaiman whose exploits are graphically described by the court-poet Jayangondar in his *Kalingattupparani*. It may be added that Kalinga was then ruled by Anantavarman Chodaganga, the grand son of Kulottunga I himself whose daughter Rajasundari had married the Eastern Ganga ruler, Rajaraja of Kalinga. It was then that the Eastern Gangas shifted their capital to Cuttack. Kulottunga I's inscriptions are found at Draksharama, Simhachalam, and Pithapuram. But later in his reign, the supremacy over the Vengi region passed on to the feudatory chiefs of Vikramaditya VI.

A new royal dynasty rose to power in the region of the modern Mysore State. The Hoysala general overthrew the Chola chief at Talakkad (A.D. 1116) and *Gangapadi* which had been under Chola rule since the days of Rajaraja was lost to the Cholas.

Ceylon (Ilangai or Ilam), at least the northern part of the island, remained in possession of the Cholas from the days of Rajaraja I down to the reign of Adhirajendra and the latest Chola inscription is dated A.D. 1070 and is found at Polonnaruva, the ancient Chola capital in Ceylon. About this time, there was in Ceylon a powerful movement of liberation from Chola yoke. Kitti—afterwards Vijayabahu I—was the Ceylonese national leader. In A.D. 1075, he was crowned the ruler of the whole of Ceylon. The Cholas were driven out of the land of Lanka; the Chola stronghold of Polonnaruva fell into the hands of the Ceylonese and the city was renamed Vijayarajapura. As a master of practical wisdom, Kulottunga I became reconciled to this loss. Further, he effected a matrimonial alliance by giving his daughter Suttamali in marriage to Vira Perumal, a Ceylonese prince of the Pandyan party in Ceylon.

Ceylon -
Cholan -
985(?) - to
1010(?)

Ever since the conquest of the Pandya country by Rajaraja I and Rajendra I, there was effective Chola control over the Pandya country. This success was due to the wise administrative measures taken by Rajendra I by stationing a standing army at military stations like Kottaru and by appointing Chola-Pandya viceroys in charge of the conquered land. The system seems to have broken down about this time (accession of Kulottunga I) in the face of a struggle for national independence in the Pandya country. There is evidence of two wars having been fought in the reign of Kulottunga I. The first was directed against the five Pandyas, followed by the overthrow of the Cheras with their bow emblem, the capture of Vilijnam, the destruction of their fleet at Kandalur-Salai and the occupation of the land of the Podiyil mountains and of the pearl fisheries. At Kottaru, 10 miles north of Kanyakumari, a military station was established. There is a Grantha inscription engraved on the outside of the east wall of the innermost *prakara* of the great temple at Chidambaram in the South Arcot district referring to these conquests. It consists of two verses in the *sragdhara* metre, each of which eulogises the victories of Kulottunga-Chola over

the five Pandyas. The first verse further states that the king burnt the fort of Korgara (Korgara-durga) and defeated the Keralas. Korgara is probably a sanskritised form of Korkai in the Tinnevely district, the ancient capital of the Pandyas. The second verse records that Kulottunga-Chola placed a pillar of victory on the Sahyadri mountain, i.e. the Western Ghats. This he must have done after his conquest of the Keralas which is mentioned in the first verse.

Here are the verses:

स्वस्ति श्री पाण्डयान्दण्डेन जित्वा प्रचुरशरमुचा पंच पंचाननश्रीः
दग्ध्वा कोर्गरं दुर्गन्तृणमिव स यथा

खाण्डवम् पाण्डुसूनः । पिष्ट्वा तत् केरलानां बलमति बहलम श्री
कुलोत्तुंगचोलश्रके शक्र प्रतापस्त्रिभुवन विजयस्तम्बमम्भोधिते ॥

पुण्ये संह्याद्रिशृंगे त्रिभुवविजस्तम्भम्भोधिपारे स्वच्छन्दम्
पारसीनान्तरूणयुवतिभिर्गीयते यस्य कीर्तिः ।

स श्रीमानस्तशत्रुः प्रबलबलभरैः पंच पाण्डयान्विजित्य क्षुभ्यत्
क्षमापालचक्रम् सविधिकमकरोच्छीकुलोत्तुंगचोलः ॥

The following is a translation of these two verses:

Hail ! Prosperity ! (Verse 1.) Having defeated the five Pandyas by an army, which discharged numerous arrows, having burnt, like straw, the fort of Korgara, just as (Arjuna) the son of Pandu burnt the Khandava (forest), and having crushed the extremely dense army of the Keralas,—the illustrious Kulottunga-Chola, who resembled Siva in splendour and Indra in might, placed a pillar (commemorative of his) conquest of the three worlds on the shore of the ocean.

(Verse 2.) (Having placed) a pillar (commemorative of his) conquest of the three worlds on the sacred peak of the Sahyadri (mountain), and having defeated the five Pandyas by masses of powerful armies,—the illustrious Kulottunga-Chola, whose fame is voluntarily sung by the tender women of the Parasis, and who has driven away his armies, made the trembling crowd of kings subject to his orders (See SII, Vol. I).

But in spite of these measures, political unrest was not altogether eliminated; there was a second Pandya war about

the 28th regnal year of Kulottunga I (A.D. 1098). The conduct of this second Pandyan war was in the hands of Naralokiviran who claims in his inscriptions to have conquered the *Tennavar* (The Pandyas) the *Malaimannar* (The Cheras) and other northern kings (*enai vada-mannar*).

The Chola control over the Pandya country during the period was not so effective as in the days of Rajaraja I and his son Rajendra I. Kulottunga I was wise and prudent enough to recognize the semi-independent status of the Pandyan rulers. Inscriptions of the contemporary Pandyan ruler Maravarman Parakrama Pandya are issued in the regnal year of the Pandyan ruler and not of the Chola overlord. Even the gifts of the victorious Chola general Naralokaviran are issued in the regnal years of the Pandyan ruler. Two of his gifts at Tirppattur in the Ramnad district are issued in the 3rd and 12th regnal years of Parakrama Pandya (AR 98 of 1908 and 131 of 1908).

The Sailendra kings of the Malay peninsula and Indonesia were then on friendly terms with Kulottunga I. In his 20th regnal year (A.D. 1090) two envoys (*dutas*) of the king of Kadaram Raja Vidyadhara Sri Samanta and Abinavottunga Samanta came to the Chola court and petitioned to the king for the issue of a grant to assign the income of Anaimangalam and a few neighbouring villages round about for the benefit of the two Buddhist Viharas of Rajarajap-perumpalli and Rajendra-Chola-perumpalli raised by the ancestors of the then Sailendra king built at Nagapattinam (rechristened Solakula-vallipattinam) for the benefit of Buddhist pilgrims. The request was granted. This is recorded in what is called the Smaller Leyden Grant.

From the Chinese annals we learn that Kulottunga I sent (about A.D. 1077) a diplomatic mission to the court of China. It should have enhanced his prestige and improved commercial intercourse between China and the Chola kingdom.

At the Lobeo Toeuva in the island of Sumatra, there is a fragmentary Tamil inscription dated in Saka 1010 (=A.D. 1088), recording the existence of a very celebrated merchant-guild called Nanadesi Tisaiyirattu Ainnurruvar. This will prove the prevalence of extensive overseas trade between the Sri Vijaya kingdom and that of the Cholas.

There is another very interesting inscription recorded on the northern outer wall enclosing the first *prakara* of the Nataraja

Sumatra
Chola
contacts

Sumatra

temple at Chidambaram. This inscription mentions all the three names of this king—Kulottunga, Jayadhara and Abhaya. It is dated in the 44th regnal year of Jayadhara.

It mentions the works of temple-building and the gifts of the king's younger sister, Rajarajan Kundavai Alvar to the temple of Tillai-Nayakar i.e. Nataraja. It concludes by recording that the *Kamboja-Rajan* gave king Rajendra a gift (Katchi) of a precious stone which at the behest of the Chola king, was installed in the front layer of the lintel of the gateway of Tiru-edirambalam (i.e. the Tiru-Mulasthan shrine opposite the Nataraja shrine). We are not in a position to know the nature of the political relationship between the Chola and the Kamboja kingdoms nor the nature and value of the precious gift which merited such special mention.

Kulottunga I had many titles and surnames :—

Rajendra, Rajiga, Virudarajabhayankarar (after his victory over the Western Chalukya king, Vikramaditya VI), Akalankan, Abhayan, Jayadharan, Tiruniruchcholan (Trisulam inscription) and *Sungam-tavirtha-solan*. A telling expression in an inscription states: He ruled the world (well) by abolishing tolls and thereby dispelling the darkness (the evils) of the world (*Sungam-tavirndu-irul-nikki-ulaganda*).

A land survey in his 16th regnal year is mentioned. His *Prasastis* have many historical introductions, the chief of them being : Tirumannivalara or vilanga, Pumel-arivaiyum, Pumiya-tiruvum, Pumaruviya-tirumadandaiyum, Pugal-madu-vilanga and Pugal-Sulndapunari.

Gangapuri (Gangai-konda Solapuram) was his capital. Kanchi and Palayarai served as his secondary capitals. There is a reference to a Chola capital and a Chola palace at Perumparrappuliyur (Chidambaram) also.

Kulottunga I dominated the South Indian scene for an eventful half a century—from A.D. 1070 to 1120. His rule was one of the longest among the Cholas.

3 The Development of Art and Architecture During the Period of Kulottunga I and Vikrama Chola

In this chapter, we deal, by way of a rapid survey, with a few of the temples attributable to this period of great temple-building activities, with the object of illustrating the geographical extent of the monuments (limited of course by the availability of definite materials that help us date the temples with some degree of certainty), and describing the broad characteristics of temple architecture of this period; and then in the following chapter, we deal in detail with the main theme of this book, viz., the Nilakanthesvarar temple at Laddigam.

The reigns of Kulottunga I and of his son and successor Vikrama Chola, covering the period from A.D. 1070 to 1135, mark a turning point in the evolution of Chola style of Art and Architecture. To cite only a few of its salient features, we may mention the general enlargement of the temple area (by nearly six times its original campus as in the case of the temple of Nataraja at Chidambaram), the consequent development of temple-cities or temple complexes, the erection of large-sized independent shrines for the goddess (or the consort of the Lord), such shrines going under the name of Tirukamakkottam, the building of more and more perimeter walls of enclosure, with the gateways through them at the cardinal points being crowned with *gopurams* growing taller with time, with as many as seven storeys (*elu-nilai-gopuram*, elu=seven, nilai=storey), dwarfing by comparison the tower over the sanctum sanctorum, the Sri vimana and finally the erection of expansive hundred and thousand pillared halls in the temple campus.

1. Chidambaram, Nataraja temple

The Lord of the temple of Chidambaram, Nataraja, had long been the patron deity of the Cholas, and after the dramatic

recovery, at the instance of Rajaraja I (A.D. 985-1014), of the *Devaram* hymns of the Nayanmars in *this* temple, Chidambaram became *the* temple, the Koyil of the Saivaites. Its proximity to the new Capital of the Cholas, Gangai-konda-Cholapuram, which Rajendra I established, enhanced royal patronage towards this temple, accompanied by consequent frequent royal visits and benefactions to the Lord. With the increasing attention, there would appear to have come into existence, a Chola palace for the stay of the royal guests and pilgrims. Temple-building activities became vast and a new expression came into vogue to describe such pious activities, viz *pon-vey-dal* (gilding), and in general to temple building. The chief benefactors were the king himself, his younger sister Rajarajan Kundavai Alvar, and the Chola General Naralokaviran. There is a Tamil inscription in two verses inscribed on the eastern gopuram of the Nataraja temple here in the *Saka* year 18 (i.e. 1018 Saka, which equals A.D. 1096); corresponding to the 26th regnal year of Kulottunga I, which claims that the foundation stone for the renovation and expansion of the Chidambaram temple was laid by Mahadevi Sola Kulavalli, the queen of Kulottunga I. The script of the inscription seems to belong to a later period; perhaps it is an old inscription on a loose stone re-engraved after the construction of the eastern *gopuram* in the days of Kulottunga II.

The original Linga shrine of Tillai known as the Mulasthanam, worshipped by Patanjali and Vyagrapada, the originators of the Nataraja cult sank into a secondary place; during the days of Kulottunga I, this temple, which was then known as *Edirambalam* (i.e. the shrine-opposite) was undergoing extensive renovation. Inscriptions of the 46th and the 47th regnal years of Kulottunga I, which had perhaps been engraved on the walls of the original Mulasthanam shrine were re-engraved on the outer surface of the northern wall of enclosure encompassing the *prakara* of the Nataraja and Govindaraja shrines. The present structure and architectural features of the Nataraja temple take their shape in this period of phenomenal expansion of the temple campus. This massive high wall of enclosure, the first and the innermost one is called in inscriptions of this period by the names of *Kulottunga Solan tiru-maligai* (no. 267 of 1913 on the east wall, no. 279 of 1913 on the south wall) and also *Vikrama Solan tiru-maligai* (no. 276 of 1913 on the south wall and nos.

282, 287, 289 and 293 of 1913 on the north wall). The immediately next outer wall of enclosure is known by the name of *Vikrama Solan tiru-maligai*; the work was perhaps started by Kulottunga I and his minister and general Naralokaviran, and continued by Vikrama Chola.

Naralokaviran was a native of Arumbakkam and the chieftain of Manavil south of the Palar river in the modern North Arcot district of Tamil Nadu. He had various surnames, Sabhanartakan, Kalinga-ryan, Kaliyar-kon, Manavataran, Porkoyil-Tondaiman, Ponnambalakkuttan, Arulakaran and Madurantakan. He figures in a large number of inscriptions found in the Chola and Pandya country, including Tondaimandalam, from the 28th regnal year of Kulottunga I to the 6th regnal year of Vikrama Chola (i.e. from A.D. 1098 to 1126). Naralokaviran *Sandhi* and Naralokaviran *mandapa* are mentioned in two inscriptions at Tirupattur in Ramnad district, Tamil Nadu (nos. 98 and 131 of 1908). Naralokaviran must have been a great general of his days, as he claims victories over the Pandyas (*Tennavar-Southerners*), the kings of Malai-nadu, the region of the Western Ghats (*Malai-mannar*) and the rulers of the north (*Vada-mannar*). More than all these victories, he is remembered by the innumerable and extensive religious benefactions. An inscription in verse form at Tiruvadigai in South Arcot district mentions his exploits (A.R. no. 36 of 1921). He was the builder of the hundred pillared hall at that place. We have another inscription of his on the western wall of enclosure of the Nataraja temple at Chidambaram, 31 verses of are which in Sanskrit and 36 *venbas* in Tamil, which list out a huge array of his charities (A.R. no. 120 of 1888 and SII. IV, pp. 33-34).

It is an impressive list indeed: His chief benefactions include the gilding of the Ponnambalam and Perambalam, the provision of street lights, the watering of the main streets on festival days, the raising and tending of flower gardens and areca palm groves, the construction of a road from Chidambaram to the sea coast (a distance of about 8 miles) for taking the processional deity of Nataraja to the bathing-ghat at Killai-on-the-sea, of a mandapa to house the deity built at Killai and of a fresh-water tank near it, the construction of a wall of enclosure named after him, the *Naralokaviran tiru-maligai* (same as the first

inner wall of enclosure) with two tall towers over the entrances, the hundred pillared hall for Pasupati and his consort, and the shrine of the Goddess with a *gopuram* and *madil* (wall of enclosure), the building of a flight of stone steps for the sacred tank of the temple called Siva-ganga, the installation of an image of the saint Sambandar in a shrine of his own, the construction of a hall for the recitation of the Devaram hymns, the engraving on copper plates of the Devaram hymns of the three Tamil saints and the construction of a shrine and a large irrigation tank in the neighbourhood of Chidambaram (could it be the Viranam or Viranarayana tank (?) which in those days was considered the western boundary of the *Taniyur* of Perumbarrappuliyur, as Chidambaram was then called?). These charities and developmental schemes many of which survive even to this day are graphically described in the Sanskrit portion of the inscription, while the Tamil section, the *venbas*, confirm and amplify them.

This account of Naralokaviran's benefactions has to be supplemented by the *prasasti* of Vikrama Chola, which mentions his building works at the Nataraja temple out of the tributes paid by his feudatories in his *tenth* regnal year. The chief of them are the wall of enclosure of the Ponnambalam where resided his family deity (*Kula nayakam*), the gateway of the *gopuram* (*gopura-vasal*), *kutas*, *salas*, *bali-pithams* and the *ratha-vimana* or shrine (*tirut-ter-koyil*). Perhaps the last might refer to the *Nritta-Sabha* fashioned in the shape of a car on wheels and drawn by horses; this is similar to the *ratha-vimana* of Karakkoyil built by Kulottunga I at Melakkadambur. The Subrahmanya shrine at Chidambaram known as the *Pandya-nayakam* in the third prakara of the Nataraja temple has also to be assigned to this period. The specific mention of the *gopura-vasal* seems to refer to the gateway of the western gopuram which has the unique feature of the sculptures in its first tier bearing labels of the names of the respective figures installed in the niches.

The western gateway leading from the second *prakara* to the third was called the *Akalanjan Tiruvasal*. The hundred pillared hall contains a few pillars with an inscription "*it-tiru-mandapam-akalanjan*". *Akalanjan* was a surname of both Kulottunga I and Vikrama Chola and so the gateway and this hall should

be attributed to this period. The view has been held that these extensive 100- and 1000-pillared *mandapas* were the works of Vijayanagar rulers, especially Krishnadevaraya. This is not tenable in view of the indisputable evidence of inscriptions that the hundred pillared hall was built in the days of Kulottunga I and Vikrama Chola. Again Fergusson held that the *Nritta Sabha* was the oldest part of the Nataraja temple and that it should be ascribed to the 17th Century A.D. The *Nritta Sabha* housing the image of *Urdhva Tandava* is not the oldest structure of the Nataraja temple. It is the *Mulasthanam* (or *Tirumulanathar*) temple that is the oldest part of the temple though later renovated; and the *Nritta Sabha* must have been built in the days of Kulottunga I. This shrine—*terk-koyil*—in the shape of a *ratha* is similar to the *ratha-vimana* of Melakkadambur built sometime before the 41st regnal year of Kulottunga I (A.D. 1111 i.e., early 12th century).

External evidence of his building activities at Chidambaram during this period is available from an inscription from Nidur (Tanjavur district), which states that in the 46th year of Kulottunga I, one Kandan Madavan, Lord of Karikai-Kulathur and the nephew of the local chief who patronised Amrita Sagarar, the author of *Yapperungalak-karigai*, a work on Tamil prosody, built of stone, in the north eastern portion of the *prakara* of Tillai-ambalam (Chidambaram), a shrine for *Sonnarivar*, the Tamil saint *Seraman Perumal Nayanar*, and a covered *mandapa* for conducting Puranic discourses (*Peruntogai*, no. 118). This Nidur inscription was also caused to be engraved at Chidambaram, but neither this inscription nor the monument built can be traced now at Chidambaram.

2. Tiruvadigai (Virattanesvarar temple)

Tiruvadigai is in South Arcot district and was formerly known as *Tiru-vadi*. In the *Virattanesvarar* temple, there is an inscription of *Naralokaviran*, the general and minister of Kulottunga I and Vikrama Chola consisting of 25 verses in Tamil (A.R. 369 of 1921). They describe the exploits and benefactions of this chief amongst whose noteworthy contributions is the building of the hundred-pillared hall in this temple, similar

to that at Chidambaram, also built by this chief Naralokaviran.

3. Nidur (Somanathesvarar temple)

Nidur is a suburb of Mayuram, a railway station on the main line from Madras to Tiruchy. The Somanathesvarar temple at Nidur is sung by the Tamil Saint Sundarar (9th century A.D.). This ancient temple was rebuilt of stone (in the 38th regnal year of Kulottunga I) by Kandan Madavan the *vel* (chief) of *Milalai nadu* and the nephew of the chief who was the patron of Amrita Sagarar who wrote a book on Tamil prosody called *Yapperungalak-karigai*. The temple is said to have resembled Kailasa (E.I. XVII., Nidur inscription; M. Raghava Ayyangar's *Peruntogai*, no. 1219).

4. Melakkadambur (Amritaghatesvarar temple)

Melakkadambur is a small village about twenty miles from Chidambaram and six miles from the Chola capital of Gangai-konda-Cholapuram. Saint Sambandar (7th century A.D.) has a hymn on the Lord of Kadambur. Saint Appar in his hymn calls the deity in this temple the Lord of Karakkoyil at Kadambur. The temple is now called that of Amrita-ghatesvarar at Melakkadambur.

There is a local tradition that some *vimanas* were brought from Heaven by the *Devas* like Vishnu and Indra and installed for worship on earth. Such a *vimana* is called *vin-ili-vimana*, a *vimana* descended from Heaven. In his *Tirut-tandaham* on *Tiru-vili-milalai*, Appar calls the Lord of the place *Vinnili-tan-vili-milalaiyan*; it implies that the Lord here was brought by Vishnu from Heaven and installed here for worship. So the *vimana* of this temple is called *Vin-ili-vimanam*. The Lord of Alavoy (Madurai), Soma-sundarar, is said to have been brought in a *vimana* by Indra from Heaven and worshipped by him; hence do we have here the tradition of a 'heavenly' *vimana* brought from heaven. We do not know if *Karakkoyil* is the same as *vin-ili-vimanam*; but the *vimana* at Melakkadambur is in the shape of a *ratha*, which has wheels and horses answering to the picture of a celestial car.

The temple seems to have been in existence in the early Chola period. There is a fragmentary inscription found on a slab imbedded in the pavement of the *prakara* of the temple (A.R. no. 112 of 1946-47); in this inscription, the village of Kadambur gets an alternate name Uttama-chola chaturvedimangalam. Thus it is clear from this name that the temple was in existence even in the days of Uttama Chola. Further there is a stray stone statue of Ganapati of the *valam-puri* variety earlier in age than the *deva-koshta* image of this deity on the *Sri vimana*. Perhaps the *valam-puri* Ganapati was a deity of the *ashta-parivara-alayam*, now no longer in existence.

On the walls of this temple there are two inscriptions of the 41st and 43rd regnal years of Kulottunga I (i.e. A.D. 1111 and 1113), and the *vimana* is in the shape of a chariot. It has wheels and caparisoned horses. It satisfies the description of a *ratha-vimana* or *terk-koyil*, as described in an inscription of Vikrama Chola at Chidambaram. So this temple should have been rebuilt in the days of Kulottunga I some time before A.D. 1100. The latter inscription records an endowment of six *kasus* for a perpetual lamp to be burnt in the temple.

The renovated temple of Kulottunga I's age consists of the *garbhagriha* and the *ardhamandapa*. The *mukha-mandapa* is an addition of a later age.

On the outer walls of the *garbhagriha* there are three *devakoshtas*, which house Dakshinamurti in the south, Vishnu in the west and Brahma in the north. These have projecting porches supported by lion-pillars in front. On each of the three sides of the *vimana* (over the cornice) of this porch (adorned with *kudus*) is another *devakoshta* with an inset of a sculpture placed in a huge kudu. This is in line with the main wall and the cornice over the *garbhagriha*. The huge ornamental *kudu*, is crowned with a *simha-mukha*. This projects into the second *tala*. Below the cornice of the *mula-tala* (main *tala*), there are bracket figures of exquisite workmanship. The outer walls of the *ardhamandapa* are studded with sculptures of deities and *rishis* (with engraved descriptive labels) who are said to have worshipped the Lord of this temple in different *Yugas*. These sculptures include those of Ganapati, Agastya (of the Treta yuga), Dakshinamurti, *rishis* (in the Treta yuga), Chandra, Vishnu, Surya (Treta yuga), Brahma, Patanjali (Kali yuga), Gangadharar, Devendra, Mahishasura-mardini,

Bhikshatanar, Vinadharar, Uma-sahitar and Vrishabhantikar.

The second *tala* of the temple is also very interesting. Instead of *salas* and *karnakutas*, there are single-storyed *panjaras* at the four corners with a *devakoshta* in the centre flanked by *sardulas*. The cornice of the second *tala* is crowned by the *griva* and the *sikhara*. In the *griva*, there are four *devakoshtas* with attendant deities, eight in all (*dik-palas?*), and with bas-relief ornamentation in the intervals. Over the *griva* we have now a newly built semi-circular *sikhara* with four *kudus* facing the four cardinal points. It is now crowned by a modern copper finial (*stupi*). As the cornice of the second *tala* is octagonal, it is probable that the original *sikhara* was also octagonal. The arrangement of the second *tala* is unlike the features of any other monument of an earlier age. In many respects, this temple built in the days of Kulottunga I is unique, without any precedent. This starts a new style of architecture in the later Chola age, but it had a far reaching influence on the future architectural style till the Vijayanagar period (16th century).

In the plinth there are bas-relief sculptures depicting Puranic stories; some of them are episodes in the life of Chandesvara, Kannappar, Kungiliyak-Kalayanayanar, based on the account in the Periyapuram of Sekkilar etc. (see Four chola Temples, pp. 47—53 and Pls. 35—54).

5. Suryanar-koyil (Kulottunga-Sola-martanda-alayam)

Suryanarkoyil is near Kumbakonam in the Tanjavur district. There is a temple here dedicated solely to the worship of the Sun and the Planets. In other places, we have a shrine for the Sun as a *parivaradevata*, or some times there are sculptures of Surya and Chandra installed in the covered verandahs round the *prakara* of the temple. This is the only Sun temple of the *Svayampradhanya* type in South India.

The temple faces the west. The central shrine is dedicated to Surya and near it there are images of Visvesvara and Visalakshi, deities associated with Varanasi. Brihaspati is installed in a shrine opposite to the main shrine; all around are the other planets as *Parivaradevatas*, viz., Rahu, Sukra, Ketu, Chandra, Angaraka, Budha and Sani. The *garbhagriha* and the *mukha-*

mandapa of the temple are built of stone and the shrines of the navagrahas are of brick.

There are two inscriptions of Kulottunga I on the base of the *mukhamandapa*. According to one of the inscriptions, this temple is called the Kulottunga-sola-martanda-alayam, the temple of the Sun God being named after Kulottunga I. The inscription of his 44th regnal year begins with the historical introduction of '*Pugal Sulnda pumari*'. It records a royal order granting the accountantship of the village of Dammadana-vinoda-chaturvedimangalam and of the *devadana* villages of Surya deva to the highest bidder. The other is of his 48th year and 245th day, which begins with the historical introduction '*Pugal madu vilanga*'. This also records a royal order granting the accountantship of all the *devadana* lands of Surya deva to two private individuals. There is a third inscription of the Vijayanagar ruler, Krishnadeva Raya (16th century) which records a gift of land made tax-free by a vassal of the Emperor on behalf of and for the merit of Krishnadeva Raya (A.R. no. 229, 231 and 230 of 1927; ARE 1908, para 60, p. 78).

Kulottunga I was on friendly terms with the rulers of Kanauj who were fervent devotees of Surya deva. In the Chola capital of Gangai-konda-cholapuram there is an incomplete inscription of the Gahadwal dynasty of Kanauj; it may be one of Madanapal or his son Govinda Chandra and it is coupled with the 41st regnal year of Kulottunga I; though there is no clear indication of the nature of the grant, the association of the Gahadwal rulers of Kanauj with Kulottunga I is well-established. And it is legitimate to infer that the Gahadwals might have been responsible for the impetus and fervour given to Sun worship in South India during the reign of Kulottunga I. The temple of the Sun God at Suryanarkoyil is a tangible expression of their influence in South India.

6. Kallaperumbur (Kailasanatha temple)

Kallaperumbur lies on the main road from Tanjavur to Budalur in the district of Tanjavur. In this place there is a temple dedicated to Kailasanathar. There are five inscriptions on the walls of this temple and the sixth at the entrance to the *gopuram*.

According to these inscriptions, this place was called Rajasundari-Chaturvedimangalam, evidently after the name of one of the queens of Kulottunga I. The present temple of Kailasanathar was called in an inscription of the 49th year of Kulottunga I (SII, XVII, 627 and 628; A.R. nos. 581 and 582 of 1904) as that of Srikailasam *alias* Kulottunga-sola-isvaram Udaiya Mahadevar. So this temple should have been built some time before the 49th regnal year of Kulottunga I (A.D. 1118-9). There are two inscriptions recorded in the 23rd and the 25th regnal years of Kulottunga III, relating to certain gifts (A.R. nos. 585 and 584 of 1904). An inscription of the 12th regnal year of Rajaraja III mentions the dismissal of the accountant of the temple for misappropriation of temple funds. The latest Chola inscription is one of the 12th regnal year of Rajendra III (A.D. 1257-8).

The Kailasanathar temple at Kallaperumbur is a temple built in the days of Kulottunga I.

7. Tiruvanjiyam (Vanji-lingesvarar temple)

Tiruvanjiyam lies about 11 miles nrth west of Tiruvalur on the main road to Kumbakonam. The Lord of this temple Vanji-lingesvarar was worshipped by all the three Tamil saints Appar, Sambandar and Sundarar. Manikkavasakar glorifies this place and mentions the miracle of the Naga-kannikai who worshipped this Lord and became one with him as Ammai-appan. Vishnu is said to have adored the Lord and gained re-union with Lakshmi after a temporary separation.

In the 39th year of Rajakesarivarman Tribhuvana Chakravartin Kulottunga I, a gift of land is made to the Goddess *Tirupalliyarai-nam-pirattiar* in the temple of Tiruvanjiyam Udaiya Mahadevar (A.R. no. 72 of 1911).

The worship and the installation of the deity of the Goddess and the building of a shrine for the Goddess were new features occuring in the later Chola period.

8. Ambar Makalam (Makalanathar temple)

Close to the railway station of Peralam and also that of

Peruntottam on the Southern Railway in the Tanjavur district, there are two celebrated Siva temples of Ambar and Ambar Tirumakalam.

The Brahmapuravar temple at Ambar is a *madakkoyil* (for a description of Madakkoyil, see Early Chola Art Part I, p. 22). Appar calls it *Perunkoyil*, one built on an artificial mound inaccessible to an elephant like the temple at Sirkali, the birth place of Sambandar. This temple is said to have been built by Kochchenganan, a Chola king of the late Sangam age.

About a mile west of this temple is the temple of Ambar-tirumakalam. This is mentioned in inscriptions of Rajaraja I as one of those which supplied temple servants and *devar-adiyars* (*tali-pendir*) to the temple of Rajarajesvaram at the Chola capital.

The main deity of this temple is called Makalesvarar or Makalanathar. This temple is at least as old as the days of Sambandar (A.D. 7th century). Kali is said to have done penance here to absolve her of the sin of having killed the Rakshasas, Amban and Ambasuran.

The shrine of the Goddess is said to have been built in the 15th regnal year of Rajendradeva *alias* Kulottunga I. A gift of land is said to have been made for the conduct of the temple services to this deity by the members of Madurantakachaturvedimangalam (A.R. 100 of 1910).

The Amman shrine of this temple was built during the days of Kulottunga I.

9. Tirupalaiturai (Palaivananathar temple)

Tirupalaiturai is in the Papanasam taluk of the Tanjavur district, one mile north east of Papanasam town. There is a temple here named that of Kshiravanesvarar or Palaivananathar.

There are ten inscriptions on the walls of this temple. The earliest of them is one of the 43rd regnal year of Rajakesarivarman *alias* Tribhuvana-chakravartin Kulottunga deva I (=A.D. 1113; A.R. no. 434 of 1912). This record registers that, at the request of Madurantakap-paravainattu-muvenda-velan, the king granted the remission of *Antaraya-pattam* and other taxes in respect of the *devadana* village of Tiru-chirrambala-nallur belonging to the temple of Mahadevar of Tirupalaiturai in Nallur nadu,

a sub-division of Nitta-Vinoda-vala-nadu. An inscription of the 10th year of Vikrama Chola (A.D. 1128) mentions a gift of jewels to the temple of Mahadevar at Tirup-palaitturai. There is an inscription of the 12th year and 264th day of Parakesarivarman alias Tribhuvana-Chakravartin Rajaraja II (about A.D. 1159) (A.R. no. 440 of 1912). It records a gift of land (*kaval-kadu*) in the grove called Kunjiran *alias* Bhuvanmulududaiyal under the new name of Raja-gambhira-nallur (after a surname of Rajaraja II) for worship in the temple and for maintaining a flower garden. Reference is also made in this inscription to the revenue survey (*nila-alavu*) of the 16th year of Sungam-Tavirtta-devar (Kulottunga I).

There are three inscriptions of Kulottunga III (acc. A.D. 1178). One of his 4th regnal year (A.R. no. 439 of 1912) mentions that a person called Periya-devan Nambi of Pennagadam who had proprietary rights in the *devadana* village of Tiruchchirrambala-nallur and Rajaraja-Gambhira-nallur, consecrated the shrines of *Periya devar* and *Nachchiyar* in this temple, evidently named after the donor and made a gift of gold for jewels. Another of his 12th year 93rd day (A.R. no. 441 of 1912) registers the distribution and assignment of lands in the village of Kuladipa-nayaka-puram with the corporate consent of the *Saliya* (weaver) merchants and this was engraved on the walls of the temple. The third inscription, which is of the 15th regnal year is very much damaged. The last Chola inscription of the 28th regnal year of Rajaraja III (=A.D. 1244) mentions that the shrine of *Tiru-gnana-Sambanda-Isvaram Udaiyar* was consecrated in the eastern verandah of the temple of Tirup-palaitturai Udaiyar by one Neela-gangaraiyan and it adds that a gift of land by purchase was made in the villages of Tiruch-chirrambala-nallur and Raja-gambhira-nallur to this newly built shrine.

The temple of Tirup-palaitturai belongs to the age of Kulottunga I.

10. Nagerkoyil (Solisvaram; Rajendra Solisvaram)

After the conquest of the Pandya and the Kerala kingdoms, Kulottunga I established a military station at Kottaru about 10 miles north of Kanyakumari in order to protect his extended

southern frontier. After the Chola conquest, Kottaru was renamed Mummudi-sola-nallur,⁶ situated in Nanjil nadu, a sub-division of Uttama-chola-valanadu, a part of Rajaraja Pandi-nadu. Near the post-office of Nagerkoyil there is a temple called Cholisvaram.

One of the local officers of Kulottunga I, Mullaiyur Udaiyan Araiyan Madurantakan *alias* Kulottunga-sola-kerala-rajan of Manninadu in Sola-mandalam built here a temple called Rajendra-solisvaram, perhaps named after this Chola king, known as Rajendra in his earlier years. To this temple, Kulottunga I granted in his 30th regnal year and 180th day from his palace at Kanchipuram, the village of Andayakudi renamed Rajendra-sola-nallur as a *devadana irayili*. The following are the relevant lines from this foundation inscription: 'Solamandalattu manni nattu mullaiyur udaiyan araiyan madurantakan ana kulottunga chola kerala rajan eduppitta Rajendra sola isvaramudaiya mahadevar' (i.e. the Rajendrasolisvaram was a Chola temple built in the Pandya country by a Chola Viceroy from the Chola desa). Perhaps he was in charge of the military station at Kottaru. This bespeaks the kindly interest of the Chola ruler in the spiritual welfare of the people of the conquered land and his encouragement to art.

II. Siddhalingamadam (Vyaghrapadesvarar temple)

Siddhalingamadam is in the Tirukkoyilur taluk of South Arcot district. It lies about five miles to the south east of Tirukkoyilur. The Vyaghrapadesvarar temple in this village seems to have been in existence at least from the days of Parantaka I. There are on the walls of this temple three Chola inscriptions (of Parantaka I) and three Rashtrakuta inscriptions (of Krishna III). These inscriptions seem to be copies of earlier endowments made prior to the reconstruction of this temple in the days of Kulottunga I.

There are two inscriptions in Sanskrit verse (A.R. no. 367 and 369 of 1909) which mention the temple-building activities of a chieftain of Manavil. He is called variously Sabhanartakan, Kalinga-ryan and Manavataran. This chief is to be identified with Naralokaviran who was the minister and general of

Kulottunga I and Vikrama Chola. He distinguished himself in the Chola wars with the Pandyas during the period of Kulottunga I. His endowments and temple building works were extensive. They are referred to in inscriptions from the 28th year of Kulottunga I to the 6th year of Vikrama Chola. They are found in the Pandya, Chola and the Tondaimandalam regions.

The local inscriptions credit him with having built for Siva a stone temple consisting of a *vimana*, a *prakara* with *madil* and a *mandapa* at the *agraharam* called Siddhalinga, worshipped by the sage Vyaghrapada. This temple of an earlier age (at least of the days of Parantaka I) was re-built of stone by Naralokaviran in the days of Kulottunga I.

12. Trisulam (Dharmapurisvarar or Tiruch-churam Udaiya Nayanar temple)

Trisulam is a small village situated about two miles from the railway station of Pallavaram near the city of Madras. The temple faces the east. The original temple consisted of the *garbhagriha* and the *ardhamandapa*. It is apsidal both in the *garbhagriha* portion and in its superstructure. The Amman shrine and the *madil* are later additions.

There is an inscription on the lintel of the entrance to the temple. It reads 'Tiruch-churam Udaiyar', which seems to be the old name of the deity of this temple. Except an inscription of the 38th regnal year of Maravarman Kulasekhara Pandya of the 13th century, all the other thirteen inscriptions belong to the Later Chola period. They range from the time of Kulottunga I to that of Rajaraja III. The earliest is one of the 36th year and 107th day of Kulottunga I (SII VII, no. 538; A.R. no. 312 of 1901). It concerns a *tiru-mukham* (a royal order) of *Sungam tavirtta-Kulottunga sola deva*. The temple is called that of Udaiyar Tiruch-churam Udaiya Nayanar situated in Pallapuram *alias* Vanavan Mahadevi chaturvedi-mangalam in Churattur-nadu a subdivision of Puliyur-kottam *alias* Kulottunga-sola-valanadu a part of Jayankonda-chola-mandalam. It was alleged by the priest and the temple servants that the worship in the temple had come to a stand-still and that there was need for the celebration of the temple festival. At the request of Vanarajan, the king

made a gift, as *devadana*, of 41 *veli* of land in the village of Munnalur which was renamed Tiru-neerru-chola-nallur, after one of the surnames of Kulottunga I. Another of his 38th regnal year (A.R. no. 317 of 1901) makes provision for two twilight lamps, while a third inscription whose regnal year is lost mentions a gift of land by the local *Mahasabha* for the midnight service of the Lord (ardhayamam).

There are four inscriptions of Vikrama Chola in this temple. In the inscription of his 9th regnal year, the *Urom* of Manarpakkam made a gift of land (972 *kuli* in extent) called *Tiruch-chura-vilaham* for food offerings (A.R. no. 314 of 1911). One of his 14th regnal year mentions a gift of land for food offerings to *Palliyarainampirattiyar*, the deity of the bedroom of the Lord. In the 37th regnal year of Tribhuvana Vira deva (Kulottunga III, A.D. 1215), the *Vanigar nagarattar* of Poondamalli *alias* Uyyakkondasolapuram made a gift of various temple utensils to Tiruchchuram Udaiya Nayanar; all other inscriptions relate to gifts for lamps.

The following chart brings out the features of the *devakoshta* figures and those of the respective torana figures of this temple:

<i>Devakoshta figures</i>	<i>Description of features</i>	<i>Torana figures</i>
Ganesa	with <i>chhatra</i> and <i>chamara</i>	Vali-Sugriva fight
Dakshinamurti	seated figure with right leg on Apasmara; sages on either side; <i>akshamala</i> and fire are held in two hands; front right hand in <i>abhaya</i> pose and front left hand resting on the thigh.	Somaskanda
Lingodbhavar	with Vishnu in boar-form with <i>sankha</i> and <i>chakra</i> at the bottom; with Brahma as a flying swan at the top; with a <i>ketaka</i> flower.	Rishabhantika with Uma
Brahma	a standing figure with three heads and four arms, <i>akshamala</i> and <i>kundika</i> held in two arms	Ardhanarisvarar

Durga

a standing four-armed figure on a pedestal, with *sankha* and *Krishna chakra* with flames.

The *kirtimukha* of the *sikhara* has an inset figure of Subrahmanya and the other niche figures of the *griva* are : Vinadhara Dakshinamurti in the south, Yoga Narasimha in the west and a seated Brahma in the north. Brahma has lotuses in the two upper hands and the other two hands are in the *abhaya* and the *varada* pose. There are some interesting panels of sculptures above the *kodungai* and in line with the *vyala-vari* at the corners : they are, on the right a cow pouring milk over a Linga (Gokarnesvarar), Brahma worshipping a Linga, Kannappa pulling out his eye; and on the left, an elephant worshipping a Linga, Vali worshipping a Linga and a monkey riding a crocodile.

This temple, built in the northern part of his (Chola) empire, in the region known as Tondaimandalam also belongs to the days of Kulottunga I and its interesting aspect is its apsidal structure, a regional characteristic of Tondaimandalam.

13. Kolar (Kolaramma [Pidari] temple)

The Kolaramma temple in Kolar in the present day Mysore state seems to have been an old venerated temple of Pidari; it had received many royal endowments during the periods of Rajaraja I and Rajendra I. It seems to have been built of stone about A.D. 1033 in the days of Rajendra I.

During the early part of Kulottunga I's reign, there seems to have been mismanagement of the endowed gifts and in the 2nd regnal year of Rajendra Chola *alias* Kulottunga I, one Virasikhamani Muvenda-velan inspected the temple and appointed a committee to look into the affairs of the temple and to suggest allocation of the income to the various deities in the different shrines of this temple. The deities mentioned are Virabhadra, Brahmi, Isvari, Vaishnavi, Indrani, Ganapati, Chamundesvari of the mulasthan, Kshetrapala, Mahasastha, Surya deva, Yogesvara and Yogini. The former income in cash of 577 *madai* and 3 *mahani* (equal to about 1034 *kasus*) was converted into one of kind (2834 *kalams* and odd of paddy). This was

distributed among the various deities for worship. We learn that provision was made for intoxicating drinks for Yogesvara and Yogini for their worship.

The original Kolaramma temple seems to have been a Saptamatrika temple with later additions of Mahasastha, Kshetrapala and the deities of the Yogini cult.

14. Nandalur (Soumyanathasvamin temple)

Nandalur is in the Cuddapah district of Andhra Pradesh. It was the home of a line of local chiefs known as the Pottapi-Cholas. Ancient Pottapi has been identified as Potapi near Tongoator in the Pullampet taluq of the Cuddapah district. Later Chola inscriptions mention that it was included in Merpakkai-nadu, part of Adhirajendra-mandalam. Pakkainadu embraced the region of modern Cuddapah (Madanapalli) and Vellore districts.

In Chola records, Nandalur was known as Kulottunga-sola-chaturvedimangalam, the *agara-brahmadeya* of Nirandanur in Merpakkai-nadu in Adhirajendra-mandalam. Later, Nandalur was called Nelandaluru *alias* Nirantarapura in an inscription of the 17th century (A.R. no. 589 of 1907, Saka 1541=A.D. 1619)

It seems that the region round about Nandalur was conquered and added to the Chola empire in the days of Rajendra I and Rajadhiraja I. The earliest of the Chola inscriptions on the walls of the Soumyanatha temple—inscribed on the second, third and fourth tiers of the south base of the mandapa in front of the central shrine—is one in Grantha and Tamil belonging to the 8th regnal year of Vira-Rajakesarivarman *alias* Chakravartin Sri Kulottunga-sola deva. The present temple of Soumyanathasvamin is called in the inscription that of Sri-Kulottunga-sola-vinnagara-alvar in Kulottunga-sola-chaturvedimangalam, the *agara-brahmadeya* of Nirandanur in Merpakkai-nadu, a subdivision of Adhirajendramandalam. It adds that one Madurantaka-Pottapi-Chola Siddharasa got the boundaries of the temple engraved on stone; and there is another inscription on the eastern inner *gopuram* of the 27th regnal year of Kulottunga I. In this inscription also, the village is called Nirandalur *alias* Sri-

Kulottunga-chaturvedimangalam. Thus it is clear that the temple with the inner eastern *gopuram* was a foundation of the age of Kulottunga I.

There are two inscriptions of Vikrama Chola which record gifts for the success of the king's arms. Perhaps this indicates the trouble from the Western Chalukyas in which the local Chola feudatories should have played a prominent part (A.R. nos. 583 and 579 of 1907). There are four inscriptions of Kulottunga III of which one of the 26th year (A.R. no. 576 of 1907) refers to the order of exemption from certain taxes in respect of three villages including the village of Nirandanur alias Kulottunga-chaturvedi-mangalam by Nallan Siddharajan, son of Madurantaka-Pottapich-chola *alias* Irama Siddharasan. The next, which is of his 31st year (A.R. 581 of 1907) provides for a gift of land for two lamps to the deity of this temple called Sökkapperumal (equivalent to Soumyanatha-svamin) of the temple of Kulottunga-sola-vinnagara-emperuman. Another inscription of the same year makes a gift of a lamp by Madurantaka-Pottapi-chola Tiruk-kalatti-deva for the merit of his father. There is another inscription of the 33rd year of Kulottunga III (A.R. no. 576 of 1907). An inscription of an unspecified Rajadhiraja (A.R. no. 571 of 1907) which is incomplete records a gift of land; perhaps this has to be assigned to Rajadhiraja II. The latest of the Chola inscriptions is one of the 23rd regnal year of an unspecified Rajarajadeva (A.R. no. 596 of 1907) recording a gift by a native of Malai-nadu. This seems assignable to Rajaraja III (A.D. 1216—accession).

The temple of Kulottunga-sola-Vinnagara-emperuman or Sökkaperuman at Nandalur was a temple built in the days of Kulottunga I, perhaps by the local Pottapich-chola feudatories of the Cholas.

15. Chelluru (A Vishnu temple)

During the reign of Kulottunga I, his son Vira Choda deva *alias* Vishnuvardhana IX (acc. to the throne in Saka 1001 = A.D. 1079) acted as the Viceroy of Vengi and in his 21st regnal year i.e. (1079 + 21 = A.D. 1100) he made a grant of a village probably named Kolaru (line indistinct) to a Vishnu

temple at the agrahara of Chelluru (Kolaru was possibly connected with the Kolar or Kolleru lake in the Gudivada taluq in Guddavatti Vishaya, now in the Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh). This temple was founded by the king's Senapati, Medamarya *alias* Gunaratnabhashana, son of Potana of the Mudgala gotra, who had also constructed a pond at the same village and founded two *sattras* (feeding houses) at Draksharama and Pittapuri (modern Pithapuram) (vide SII, I, No. 39-Vira Chola grant). Thus we have evidence of yet another temple built in the Vengi province of the Chola empire during Kulottunga I's time.

In this Chapter, we have briefly surveyed, based on epigraphical and undisputed evidence, a set of fifteen temples attributable to the period of Kulottunga I. It is seen that his temples covered a wide geographical range encompassing Kottaru (near the southern tip of the peninsula) on the one side, and Chelluru in the Godavari district on the other—separated by a distance of over 800 miles.

After this rapid but brief survey of the definitely identifiable temples of Kulottunga I's time, we shall take up in the next chapter a typical foundation of this period, attempting a full description of its features and deriving conclusions on the basis of certain common characteristics regarding the style of Chola architecture of this period.

4 Laddigam Temple

THE KONGU COUNTRY

Ancient Kongu nadu comprised a portion of the present day Salem district and the whole of the Coimbatore district of Tamil Nadu. There were two distinct divisions of Kongu nadu, the northern and the southern. Northern Kongu was probably the region north and east of the Kaveri river while the southern Kongu comprised the whole of the Coimbatore district. Kongu is called Sola-Kerala-mandalam in an inscription of Kulottunga III at Karur. In the past, the Cheras seem to have lived south of the Kongu country and they seem to have conquered southern Kongu.

North of the Kongu country and around it there were the petty kingdoms of the Banas, the Gangas, the Nolambas and the Vaidumbas. The Kongu country was conquered by the Chola kings Aditya I and Parantaka I. The final Chola conquest of the Kongu country, however, took place in the days of Rajaraja I and his son Rajendra I. Then this region became a subdivision of Jayankonda-sola-mandalam, later re-named Rattapadi-konda-sola-mandalam after Rajadhiraja I and Rajendra II.

Namakkal in the northern Kongu country has a cave temple of Vishnu; there are sculptures of Ranganatha, Narasimha and Adivaraha in the rock-cut cells of this cave-temple. In this cave there is an archaic Pallava-grantha inscription which may be assigned to the 8th century A.D. and from this we learn that the name of this cave was *Atiyendra-vishnu-griham* i.e., the Vishnu cave temple excavated by, or in the name of, Atiya, Adiyam or Adiyaman. A Chera king is said to have conquered the Adiyamans and taken their capital Tagadur, which is modern Dharmapuri (A.R.E. 1906 paras. 36 to 38, pp. 76 to 79).

THE BANA COUNTRY

The region formerly known as the Punganur Zamindari

in which Laddigam was situated was ruled by the Banas in the 8th and the 9th centuries A.D. Their country was known as *Perumbanappadi*. Eight of their inscriptions in the Kannada language are found at Punganur, Madanapalli (Cuddapah district) and Bangapadi (Mysore region). The Bana king Mahavali Banarasa is said to have ruled over Vadugavali 12000 and Manne 200 and his territory is said to have extended from Punganur in the west to Kalahasti in the east. There is reference to the battle of Soremati where the Bana opposed the Nolamba Rachmalla and Mayindadi on behalf of Perumanadi (Western Ganga?) (A.R. 543 of 1906), in a slab-inscription close to the Punganur-Chadum road. The same battle of Soremati is mentioned in a Telugu hero-stone inscription of the Vaidumba king, Kanda-trinetra-Vaidumba-Maharaja at Pedda-tippa-samundram. It states that one Prabhu-chalavundu of the Vaidumba chief distinguished himself in this battle between his Lord and the Nolambi and fell. This is to be assigned to the latter half of the 9th century A.D.*

Mahendradhiraja Nolamba claims to have destroyed the Banas (A.R.E. 1900-01, para 11). The Chola king Parantaka I is said to have destroyed two Bana kings and bestowed the Bana kingdom on the Ganga king Prithivipathi II (about A.D. 912). Perhaps the distant descendents of the Gangas ruled over the Kongu region on the eve of the accession of Kulottunga I. The earliest dated inscription on the walls of the Nilakanthesvarar temple at Laddigam is one of the 14th regnal year of Uttamachola-ganga *alias* Sembagachchipati Nayanar. It mentions a gift to the temple of Irungolisvaram Udaiya Nayanar at Koyarrur. This is the modern temple of Nilakanthesvaram at Laddigam and it is a foundation of the Irungolars of Koyarrur. See map of South India during Kulottunga I's time.

TEMPLE IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF LADDIGAM

There are a few temples round about Laddigam. It seems

*See, A.R. nos. 543, 555, 570 and 584 of 1906; also:

- (ii) Madanapalli, Cuddapah district, A.R. no. 295 of 1905 refers to the battle of Soremati during the reign of Ganda Trinetra.
- (iii) Bangavadi, Kolar district, Mysore (a) A.R.no. 102 of 1899 refers to the battle between the same parties and (b) A.R.no. 103 of 1899 (in Tamil) refers to a viragal (hero-stone) in the 24th year of Ganga-Pallava Vijayanarasimha-vikramavarman.

that they should be assigned to the period from the reign of Rajendra I to that of Kulottunga I. They are the following :

1. Yatavakili, Chandramoulisvarar temple:

This temple known in the past by the name of Irungolisvaram Udaiya Mahadevar was built by a Vellala at Ettavaykkal (the ancient name of this place) in Puli nadu, a sub-division of Perumbanappadi, included in Jayankonda-sola-mandalam (A.D. 1034—i.e., 22nd year of Parakesari Rajendra (I): A.R. no. 575 of 1906).

2. Edapanjani, Kasivisvesvarar temple :

There is a fragmentary inscription in this temple which refers to Karkadur in Puli nadu, a sub-division of Perumbanappadi in Jayankonda-sola-mandalam (year lost, of Parakesari Rajendra (II?): A.R. no. 586 of 1906).

3. Mugavadi, Pundisvarar temple :

There are two inscriptions in this temple, one of which is fragmentary, belonging to Parakesari Rajendra, whose regnal year is lost (A.R. no. 574 of 1906); and another of the 3rd year of Parakesari Adhirajendra (A.D. 1069-70) which refers to a gift of land (A.R. no. 573 of 1906). The village of Mukkaivadi was situated in Puli nadu, a sub-division of Perumbanappadi, in Paduvur-kottam, a district of Jayankonda-sola-mandalam.

4. Punganur, Somesvarar temple :

An inscription of the 4th year of Rajakesari-varman alias Udaiyar Sri Virarajendra deva (A.D. 1067) refers to this temple as that of Tirukkollisvaram Udaiya Mahadevar at Kunganur (modern Punganur) *alias* Valava-narayana chaturvedimangalam in Puli nadu, a district of Rattapadi-konda-chola-mandalam *(A.R. 541 of 1906).

*There is a big irrigation tank at Punganur. On a slab lying on the tank bund west of the fort at Punganur, there is an inscription of the 3rd regnal year of Rajakesarivarman *alias* Udaiyar Sri Rajendra-chola-devar which mentions the tank called *Rajendra-sola-per-eri* at Kunganur *alias* Valava-narayana-chaturvedi-mangalam in Puli nadu, a district of Rattapadi-konda-sola-mandalam. This irrigation tank is likely to have been constructed during the early period of the reign of Kulottunga I as he is referred to by the name of Rajendra in his early records.

5. Agastya-konda Hill, Agastyesvaram temple :

This hill is close to Laddigam; and the temple here would appear to have come into existence during the reign of Kulottunga I. There is an inscription in this temple of the 29th regnal year of Rajakesari-varman alias Chakravartin Kulottunga Chola deva I (A.D. 1099) which mentions the gift of a village to the temple of Tiruvagastisvaram Udaiya Mahadevar at Koyarrur *alias* Uttama-chola-puram (=modern Laddigam) in Puli nadu, a sub-division of Perumbanappadi, in Jayankonda-sola-mandalam (A.R. no. 556 of 1906).

ORIGIN OF THE TEMPLE OF LADDIGAM

Laddigam which is in the Cuddapah district of Andhra Pradesh lies about 3 miles to the north west of Punganur, between Madanapalli and Chittoor and is about 94 miles north west of Vellore. It was formerly included in the Zamindari of Punganur called in local inscriptions Kunganur alias Valavanarayana chaturvedi-mangalam. The earliest inscriptions mention that it was ruled by the Banas and their country was known as Perumbanappadi; and after the Chola conquest, this region became part of Jayankonda-sola-mandalam and Rattapadi-konda-sola-mandalam. About the 10th century this region passed into the hands of the Chola-gangas of the Irungola race.

The earliest inscriptions on the walls of Laddigam are those of the Chola-gangas. On the south wall of the temple there is an inscription of the 14th regnal year of a certain Uttama chola *alias* Sembakachchipati Nayanar which registers a gift to the temple. We are unable to know what the gift was, from the Epigraphical Report; perhaps it was a gift of land to the Irungolisvaram Udaiya Nayanar at Koyarrur. The Irungolisvaram temple of Koyarrur is the same as the modern Nilakanthesvarar temple at Laddigam. The Ganga-chola chief should have been in the enjoyment of a fair degree of political independence so as to enable him to issue grants with his own regnal year (A.R. 549 of 1906). This place derives the name of Uttama-chola-puram from that of the ruler. So, though it is not definitely stated that he was the builder of this stone temple, it is very

probable that he was the real builder.

In the next inscription figures a donor called Adavalan Gangaikonda Chola *alias* Irungolan (A.R. 553 of 1906). Perhaps he was the son and successor of Uttama Chola *alias* Sembakachchipati Nayanar. This Adavalan Gangaikondan makes a gift of the village of Madamangalam in Puli nadu, a district of Rattapadikonda-chola-mandalam to the temple of Irungolisvaram Udaiya Mahadevar built at Koyarrur *alias* Uttama-chola-puram in the same nadu. The village of Madamangalam was re-named Gangaikonda-chola-nallur after the donor. We have already stated that Koyarrur might have been renamed Uttama-chola-puram after the chief who is the previous donor. The present donor does not issue the grant in his own regnal year but in the 16th regnal year of the Chola king Rajakesarivarman *alias* Chakravartin Kulottunga Chola deva I. As the wording of the inscription 'built at Koyarrur' gives us the clue, the construction of this temple of stone begun under Uttama-chola-ganga was completed about the 16th regnal year of Kulottunga I (A.D. 1086). A gift of 96 sheep for a lamp is recorded in the inscription of the 20th regnal year of Kulottunga I (A.R. 550 of 1906) (Pl. 6).

On the south wall of the *prakara* of this temple, there is an inscription of the 9th year of Vikrama Chola (A.D. 1127) which, however, is incomplete. But the name of this temple finds mention, viz., Irungolisvaram Udaiya Mahadevar at Koyarrur *alias* Uttama-chola-puram.

In the middle of the 12th century this region seems to have passed into the hands of the Adigaimans of Tagadur and a chief called Rajarajadevan *alias* Adigaiman of Tagadur made a gift to the temple of Tiruvannam of the entire village of Malaiyanur on the bank of Pennar in Tagadur nadu, in the 10th regnal year of Kulottunga III (A.R. 536 of 1902). The Tagadur chief Rajaraja was perhaps a vassal of Rajaraja II (A.D. 1146-73). It is likely that Vidugadalagiya Perumal who figures in a large number of inscriptions at Laddigam and in other places in Salem and North and South Arcot districts was his son and successor and a powerful feudatory of the days of Kulottunga III (A.D. 1178-1216).

Tagadur Adigaiman *alias* Vidugadalagiya Perumal claims to be the Lord of Ten Tagadai (which is the same as Tagadur,

identified with the present day Dharmapuri in Salem district) and the conqueror of the land of the Kadava, the Magada and the Ganga. His bow emblem is inscribed along with the royal insignia. A Sanskrit inscription calls him the Kerala king Adikendra Vyamukta Sravanoj-jvala and claims him to be a descendent of the celebrated family of Elini of the Sangam age. Near Polur which is close to Tiruvannamalai between Villupuram and Arakonam on the Southern Railway in Tamil Nadu, there is a hill known as Tirumalai; at the foot of the hill is a village known as Vaigai or Vaigavur; the hill is also referred to as Vaigai-(or Vaigavur-) Tirumalai; there is a tank known as Kadapperi with a number of sluices and canals; there is a rock-cut cave temple here with paintings. On this were certain ancient sculptures attributed to Elini, a Chera king of the Sangam age; these sculptures were worn out and possibly damaged. There is an inscription on the outer wall of the doorway, leading to the painted cave; this is much obliterated: it consists of three parts: a passage in Tamil prose, a Sanskrit verse in Sardula metre and a third passage again in Tamil prose.

From this inscription we gather that the then Chief of the Chera kingdom with the capital at Tagadur (Takata, or Tagadai, modern Dharmapuri) named Vyamukta Sravanoj-jvala (in the Sanskrit portion) or Vidugadalagiya Perumal *alias* Atigaiman (in Tamil), son of Rajaraja, and a descendent of the Sangam Age Chief Elini, King of Vanji (identified with Karur), repaired and installed on the hill of Tirumalai the sculptures of Yaksha and Yakshi referred to above; that he also constructed a channel for feeding the local tank at the foot of the hill called Kadapperi and presented a gong for the deities.

A brief reference to his various inscriptions on the walls and the *gopuram* of this temple of Laddigam is given below :

1. To the right of the entrance of the *gopuram* there is a Tamil inscription in praise of the sword of Adigaman with his name and emblems carved beside it.
2. There is another inscription to the left of the entrance of the *gopuram* similar to that on the right depicting the sword, the emblems and his name (Pl. 7).
3. There is a third inscription in Grantha and Tamil on the north wall of the *prakara* which is in praise of the Kerala king Adikendra Vyamukta Sravanojjvala.

The Chera bow, a stand with an umbrella above and a fly-whisk (*chamara*) on each side are engraved here.

4. Finally, there is a Tamil verse on the east wall which is in praise of Vidugadalagian of Ten Tagadai, mentioning the Kadava, the Magada and the Ganga as his enemies.
5. There is one more inscription on the south wall of the central shrine which records a gift of money for three lamps and perhaps this too could be attributed to him.*

One Samanta Adigaiman is said to have presented a golden *prabha* to the deity of Tiru-manikkuli in the 19th year of Kulottunga III (A.R. 161 of 1902); and in the 22nd year of Kulottunga III he claims to be the Lord of the three rivers, the Palar, the Pennai, and the Kaveri and to have built a stone temple of Sirukottai on the banks of the Pennai (Kambayanallur A.R. 8 of 1900). This temple was called after his own name. Perhaps these two records have to be attributed to this Adigaiman chief; he seems to have been responsible also for the renovation of the Yaksha and Yakshini of the Jaina temple at Tirumalai near Polur (E.I. VI pp. 331-33). He seems to have been an over-powerful feudatory of the days of Kulottunga III. An inscription at Chengamma (South Arcot dist., A.R. 107 of 1900) which is undated, records a political compact between the over-mighty feudatory, Vidugadalagiya Perumal, son of Rajaraja Devan on the one hand and Karikala Sola Nadalvan and Sengenai Ammaiappan Attimallan Vikrama Sola Sambuvarayan on the other pledging their mutual loyalty and that they would consider the enemies of one party as the enemies of the other party also, and further that both of them would form no alliance with certain other chiefs like Siya Gangan. As the Central government became weak, local chiefs forged such alliances in their bid for political power and mutual protection against other formidable rivals. In spite of his boast, he has to his credit a large number of religious benefactions.

The last Chola inscription in this temple is one of the 9th regnal year of Rajaraja (perhaps Rajaraja III = A.D. 1225, A.R. 551 of 1906). It is inscribed on the south wall (left entrance)

*A.R. no. 544 of 1906, A.R. no. 545 of 1906, A.R. no. 547 of 1906,
A.R. no. 552 of 1906, A.R. no. 548 of 1906.

LADDIGAM
Nilakanthesvarar temple



Pl. 2 Sri vimana (rear western side)

Pl. 3 Griva koshta figure (northern side), seated Brahma ↓





↑ Pl. 4 Bhutagana frieze below
the cornice, adorned with
kudus



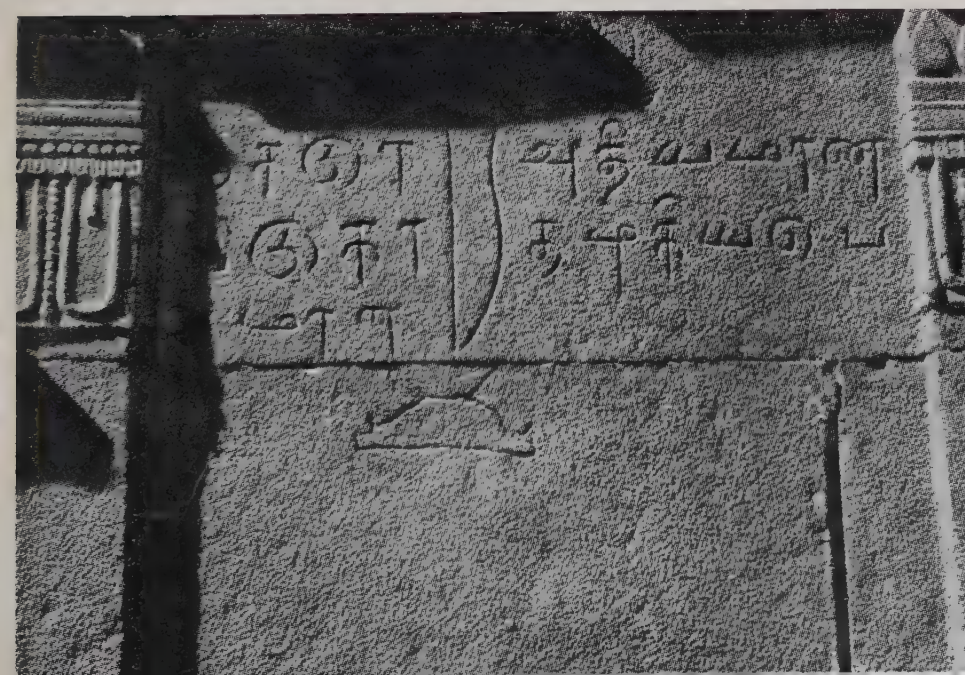
LADDIGAM
Nilakanthesvarar temple

Pl. 5 Griva koshta figure (eastern side
Balasubrahmanya



Pl. 6 Inscription of Kulottunga I, gift to Irungolisvaramudaiya Mahadevar—north wall
LADDIGAM, Nilakanthesvarar temple

Pl. 7 Inscription of Tagadur Adiyaman (with bow)—north wall





Pl. 8 Ornamental gomukham (gargoyle)

LADDIGAM, Nilakanthesvarar temple

Pl. 9 Nandi



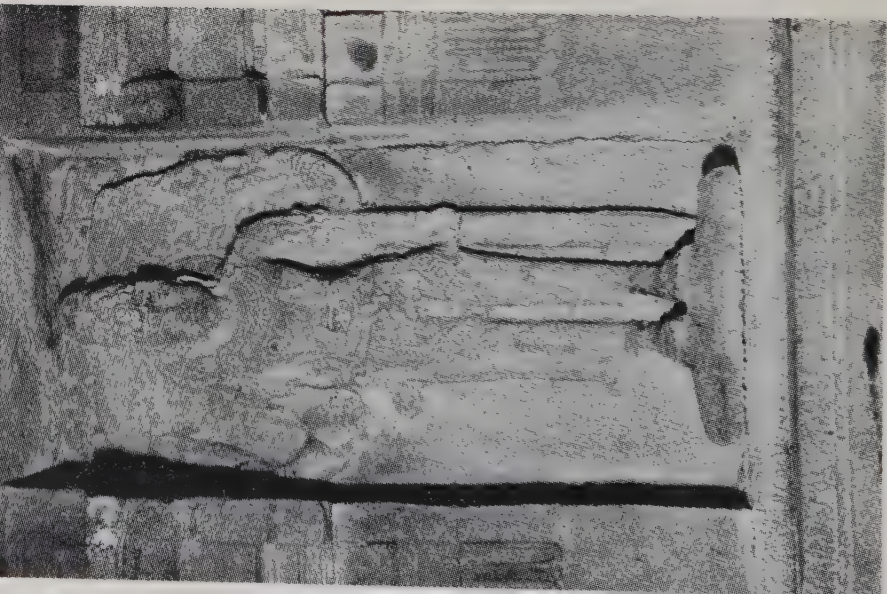
LADDIGAM
Nilakanthesvarar temple



Pl. 10 Ganapati

Pl. 11 Dakshinamurti

LADDIGAM
Nilakanthesvarar temple



Pl. 12. Vishnu

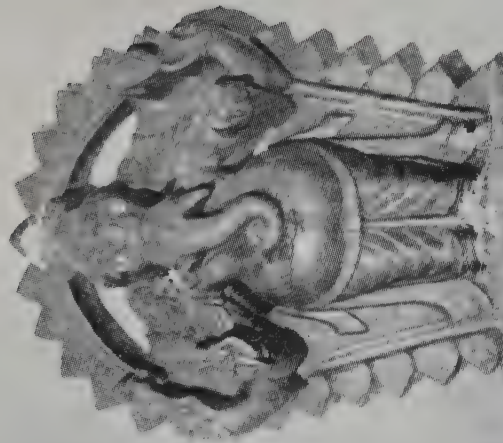


Pl. 13. Brahma

LADDIGAM
Nilakanthesvarar temple

Pl. 14 Ganapati
(date not definite)

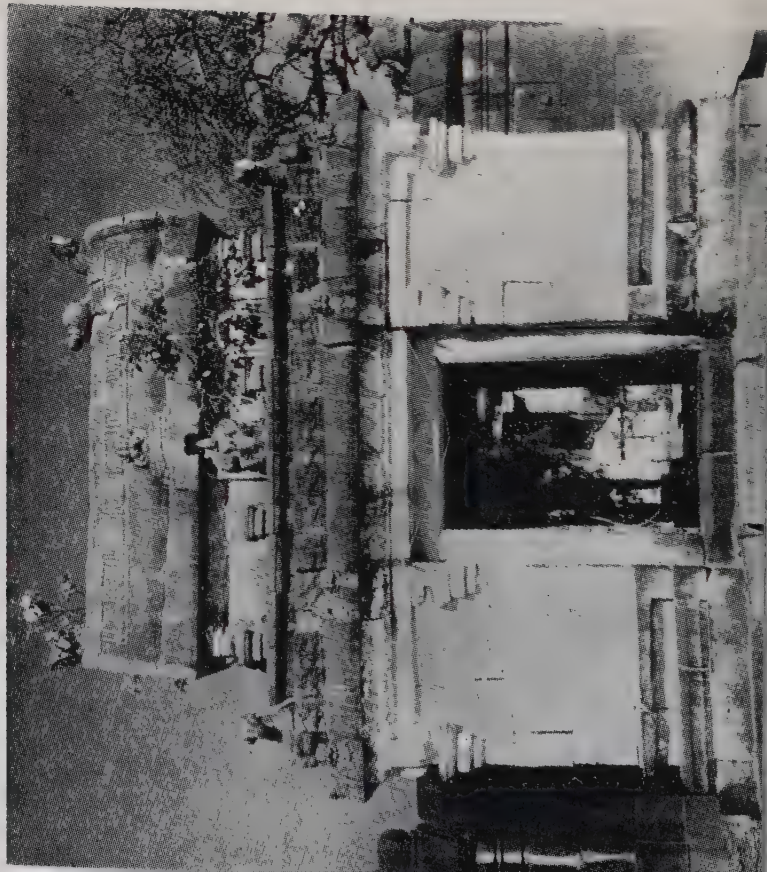
Pl. 15 Chandesvarar (a
stray sculpture found in
the prakara—parivara-
alayam deity (?))



LADDIGAM

Nilakanthesvarar temple

Pl. 16 Gopuram (eastern side)



Pl. 17 Gopuram (seated Brahmin in gopuram)

and records a gift of money for the merit of Uttama-chola-ganga Vettun Amarabharanar by the Akalankan Siyagangan *alias* Sitravida devar; The temple is called by the old name of Irungolisvaram Udaiya Nayanar at Koyarrur *alias* Uttama-chola-puram in Vada Puli nadu included in Perumbanappadi, in Jayankonda-chola-mandalam.

By about 1116 A.D., the Chola rule over Gangapadi was overthrown by the capture of Talakkad (A.D. 1116) and the claim of the capture of Koyarrur by the Hoysala Vishnuvardhana (A.D. 1100-1152) only confirms the overthrow of Chola rule in this region. It may be added that Koyarrur which earlier scholars indentified as Coimbatore should be Kovattur (A.R. 542 of 1906) or Koyattur or modern Laddigam.

DESCRIPTION OF THE TEMPLE

The Nilakanthesvarar temple at Laddigam is a foundation of the Irungolas who ruled over this region in the 11th century. Perhaps it was begun in the days of Uttama-chola-ganga *alias* Sembagachchipati Nayanar, and completed by the 16th regnal year of Kulottunga I. It was originally called Irungolisvaram at Koyarrur. We do not know if it was a renovation of an older temple; there is no evidence of its earlier existence (Pl. 1).

It is a small compact *eka-tala* temple built of stone (Pl. 2); it faces the east; it consists of the *garbhagriha*, the *ardhamandapa* and the enclosed *mukhamandapa*. The *garbhagriha* is 9 feet square, the *adishthana* is 3 feet high. On the north side, there is a stone gargoye resting on a makara-head (Pl. 8); above it on the northern wall of the *garbhagriha* there is inscribed a bow resting on a pedestal and crowned by a *chatra* (umbrella), there is a fly-whisk on either side of the vertical bow. There is also an inscription in Tamil which reads 'Tagadur Adiyaman Vidugadalgiya perumal' (Pl. 7). Below the cornice there is a bhuta-gana frieze (Pl. 4); the *griva* has *koshtas*, in which there are the following deities: Balasubrahmanya sitting on an elephant in the east (Pl. 5), Dakshinamurti in the south (Pl. 11), Yoga Nrsimha in the west and seated Brahma in the north (Pl. 17). There are *simha* heads over each of these *koshtas*; there is a spherical stone *sikhara* crowned with a stone *stupi*.

The deities in the *devakoshtas* of the main shrine are Ganapati

(in the south), Dakshinamurti (in the south), a standing figure of Vishnu with a *gada* in his right hand (in the west) and Brahma (in the north). Now there is no Durga figure in the other northern niche (Pls. 10,11,12,13).

The *ardhamandapa* stretches east by 7 feet in front; there is a covered *mukhamandapa* whose walls contain the main inscriptions of this temple, chiefly those of Kulottunga I, the Gangas and the Adiyamans (Pl. 6).

The stone sculptures of Valampuri-Ganapati and Chandessvara are lying loose on the *prakara* and they seem to belong to the *ashtaparivara* shrines (Pls. 14,15). There is a stone Nandi of this age in front (Pl. 9). There is a *madil* enclosing all the parts of this temple; in the centre of the eastern wall of enclosure, there is the *gopuram* (Pl. 16); this simple *gopuram* all in stone consists of a *dvara* (main entrance) a *griva* and a *sala* type of *sikhara* crowned by *stupis* of which only one has survived (vide figure 18, Temple Gateways in South India by J.C. Harle).

This simple single-storeyed stone *gopuram* resembles the elementary type of *gopuram* erected in front of the Shore-temple at Mamallapuram and in the Kailasanatha temple at Kanchi of the 8th century A.D. While in the days of Kulottunga I and his successor, Vikrama Chola, in the early 11th century, we see in the Nataraja temple at Chidambaram the evolution of seven storeyed *gopuram* (*elu-nilai-gopuram*¹), we have at Laddigam only a simple single storeyed *gopuram*. Hence great caution is necessary in assessing the stages of evolution of style in Architecture and dating them².

1 *Elu-nilai-gopuram* means a *gopuram* with seven storeys and not seven *gopurams* in a line, as mentioned by J.C. Harle in his book.

2 The following views:

- (i) "This temple is assigned to the reign of Rajaraja I" (Four Chola temples by S.R. Balasubrahmanyam, p. 38);
- (ii) "The small all stone *Gopura* of the Nilakanthesvara of Laddigam, although somewhat later in date, probably represents quite well the typical *gopura* of the *Early Chola Period*", (Temple Gateways of South India, J.C. Harle, p. 17); and
- (iii) "Another all stone *Gopura* is a small and beautiful one of Nilakanthesvara at Laddigam (North Arcot) of the time of Rajendra I" (The Colas, K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, p. 716)

require to be modified. This *gopuram* (as also the temple) belongs to the age of Kulottunga I.

5 Conclusion

Some important developments in the architectural style took place in the later Chola period beginning from the reign of Kulottunga I (A.D. 1070 to 1279). The most important development was the enlargement of the temple campus. In Chidambaram the temple area was increased by about six times the original area; additional walls of enclosure were built; in the Early Chola period, there was only one *madil* enclosing all the constituent parts of a simple temple; Rajaraja I built two walls of enclosure for the Rajarajesvaram at Tanjavur. In Chidambaram, the foundation was laid for the third wall of enclosure and in later times there were built five to seven walls of enclosure. Thus were developed the big temple-cities like Chidambaram, Kanchi, Madurai and Srirangam in South India. It was at Chidambaram that the first seven storeyed *gopuram* was built. It has been stated already that in the same period (11th century A.D.) there was built at Laddigam a simple single storeyed *gopuram* resembling the Pallava *gopuram* attempted at Mamallapuram and Kanchi by Rajasimha in the 8th century A.D.

Another important development is the construction of separate Amman shrine (*Tiruk-kamak-kottam*) independent of, and outside, the main central shrine of the deity. At Chidambaram the Sivakami Amman shrine on the north western side of the second *prakara* and west of the Sivaganga tank with a separate *prakara*, *madil* and *gopuram* came to take shape.

The hundred-pillared hall at Chidambaram was built during the days of Kulottunga I and Vikrama Chola and a similar hall was built at Tiruvadigai. There is a ruined hundred-pillared hall outside the temple of Tiruvilimilalai also; but we do not know when it was erected, but it may be assigned to this period. The thousand pillared hall came to be built at a little later date.

The Amritagatesvarar temple at Melakkadambur built during the days of Kulottunga I has peculiar and distinctive features. The *vimana* has a *ratha* shape, furnished with wheels

and drawn by prancing horses; there is an attempt at filling the whole of the outside of the *vimana* with sculptures of great artistic merit so that the *vimana* looks like a veritable art gallery. There is no attempt here at providing plain wall surface as a background to set off the deities housed in the *devakoshtas* as at the Virattanesvarar temple at Tiruttani. Big ornamented *kudus* projecting over the outer wall of the *vimana* adorn the *devakoshtas* of the *mula-tala*. The second *tala* has single storeyed *pancharas* on the four corners flanked by *sardulas*. This feature is different from the earlier *salas* and *karnakutas* adorning the upper *tala*. The *ratha vimana* (*terk-koyil*) of this temple made a profound impact on the future development of Dravidian architecture.

The building of an independent Sun temple at Suryanarkoyil is another unique development of this age.

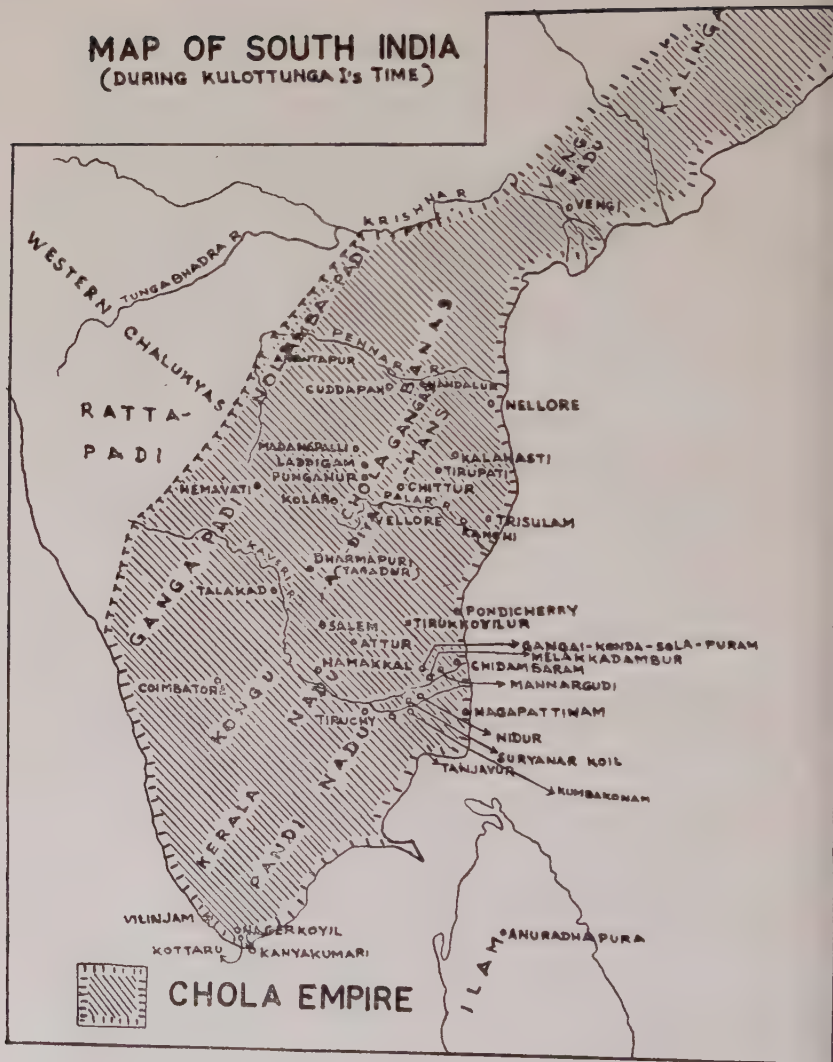
Yet another stylistic feature noticeable in this period is the building of an apsidal temple (*gaja-prishta* type), as at Trisulam.

Rajaraja I and Rajendra I started the practice of building Chola-type temples in the conquered land, as we find in the Pandya country, Ceylon and Gangai-mandalam. This example was followed by Kulottunga I. The temples he built at Nagerkoyil and Nandalur are examples of this spirit and movement.

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MAP OF SOUTH INDIA (DURING KULOTTUNGA I's TIME)



Glossary of Technical Terms

<i>abhaya-mudra</i>	hand-pose assuring protection.
<i>adhishthana</i>	moulded basement usually resting on an <i>upa-pitha</i> (optional).
<i>ardha-mandapa</i>	front porch (also, <i>tiru-idaik-kattu</i>)
<i>bali-pitha(m)</i>	altar for offerings to deities.
<i>devakoshta</i>	niche for subordinate deities (their occupants are called <i>vimana-devatas</i> — <i>parsva-devatas</i> in Kalinga). guardian-deity at the door or gateway.
<i>dvarapala</i>	the sanctum sanctorum, cella.
<i>garbhagriha</i>	
<i>(mulasthana)</i>	
<i>gopuram</i>	temple-gateway.
<i>gomukha</i>	gargoyle.
<i>griva</i>	literally, neck: part between the topmost <i>tala</i> of the <i>vimana</i> and the <i>sikhara</i> .
<i>jatabhara</i>	heavy mass of locks of hair.
<i>kalasam</i>	pot-shaped component of the capital of a pillar.
<i>katyavalambita</i>	pose in which the hand is held straight below the hip.
<i>kodungai</i>	cornice, moulded projection over a <i>tala</i> .
<i>koshta</i>	niche.
<i>koshta-panjara</i>	niche with cage-motif decoration.
<i>(-panchara)</i>	
<i>kumbha-panjara</i>	niche adorned by a vase and foliage.
<i>kudu</i>	chaitya-window motif (horse-shoe-shaped decorative element on the facade of a monument).
<i>kumudam</i>	a basement-moulding.
<i>kuta(m)</i>	square ornamental pavilion on the storeys of <i>vimanas</i> : see <i>sala</i> .
<i>makara</i>	motif of a crocodile with floriated tail.
<i>mandala</i>	halo.
<i>mandapa</i>	pillared hall.
<i>mukha-mandapa</i>	hall in front of the <i>ardha-mandapa</i> .
<i>mulasthana (garbhagriha)</i>	the sanctum sanctorum.
<i>nritha-mandapa</i>	hall of dance.
<i>palagai</i>	abacus or <i>tailloir</i> : part of the capital of a pillar.
<i>panchara (panjara)</i>	attique : a small pavilion (like a nest or cage) used as a decorative motif.
<i>(ashta-)parivaralaya</i>	one of the sub-shrines round the main shrine, housing subordinate deities.
<i>or</i>	

(*ashta-*) *parivara-*
devatagriham.

prakara

one of the circuits round the sanctum.

prasada

temple in general.

rudraksha

beads or a garland thereof.

sala(i)

rectangular ornamental *panchara* with wagon-roof, on the storeys of *vimanas*

sikhara

top-covering of the *vimana*, above the *griva*; of various shapes such as square, bulbous, octagonal and wagon-roof.

snahana-mandapa

hall for the ceremonial bath of deities.

stambha

pillar.

stupi

finial, pot-shaped crowning element over the *vimana* or *gopuram*.

tati

shrine.

tiruch-churrunaligai

peristyle: enclosure-wall with a *mandapa*.

tiru-nadai-maligai

covered *mandapa* round the sanctum.

upanam

the lowest moulding of the basement.

upa-pitham

the basement below the *adhithanam*.

vimana

the sanctum together with its superstructure (from the *upa-pitha* to the *stupi*).

vimana-devata

sculpture of a deity placed in a niche on the outer wall of the *garbhagriha* or on the upper talas of the the *vimana*.

yali

leogryph.

yajnopavita

the sacred thread.

Note : c.m—Chaturvedi-mangalam v.n (or v.g.) Vinnagaram or Vishnugriham

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Note : c.m. = Chaturvedi-mangalam
 v.n. (or v.g.) = vinnagaram or Vishnugriham

B. Venkataraman inherits his ardent love for Chola Art and Architecture, as also his flare for research, from his father, Shri S. R. Balasubrahmanyam, the well-known authority on the subject, with whose masterly works on the Early Chola period he has been closely associated. He has now taken up, on his own, the study of certain selected periods of this golden era.

A member of the Indian Administrative Service, the author has kept up his interest and utilised his spare time for research.

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(Parantaka I to Rajaraja I—A. D. 907-985)

S. R. BALASUBRAHMANYAM

Foreword by Dr. Karan Singh

Preface by Karl Khandalavala, Chairman, Lalit Kala Akademi

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