CHAPTER XII

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Adimārti

Among the seated forms of Viṣṇu, there is one in which the God is shown as seated comfortably on the coils of the serpent Adiśeṣa with the hoods forming a canopy over the head of the God. This form of Viṣṇu seems to have been the prototype of Viṣṇu images described as Adimārti in the Veīkhaṇadāsa. According to this text, Viṣṇu should be seated upon the serpent Adiśeṣa, in sākhāsana (the right leg extended and the left one drawn up and resting on the seat). The image should have four hands. One of the right hands should be made to rest upon the seat and a left hand is stretched out upon the left knee. The upper hands should carry the jānaka and sakra on the left and right respectively. The number of the hoods spread above may be either five or seven. The sages Bhṛgu and Mārkandeya should be figures as kneeling on one knee on the right and left of the figure respectively. Similarly, the figures of Brahmā and Śiva are to be shown in a worshipping attitude on the right and left sides.¹ As an illustration of this for Gopinatha Rao gives a seated image of Viṣṇu from Nageshājī answering to the above description.² He has also given the description of the image of Bhūghānasamārti and cited early images from Bādāmi.

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² Ibid., Pl.LXXVIII.
Ellora, Kāṇeś and Tādikkombu. Among these the only figure which may be accepted as representing the Bhūgāsana form is the one from Kāṇeś. The other three, of which the earlier ones are those of Bāṇadī and Ellora, do not seem to tally with the description of the image in the Vāikhānasa text quoted by him. On the other hand, they resemble the Ādīmārtti variety also mentioned by the same writer.

Attention has been drawn earlier to the fact that the Bhūga and Vīra varieties of Āsanāmārttis are not easily distinguishable. The Ādīmārtti image seems to be quite common in the south and the Deccan and one early example is also known in North India, from the Daśāvatāra temple at Deogarh described by J.N. Banerjee. Other examples from the south are from the Lākapālī Vārasimha cave temple at Nāmakkāl (8th century A.D.), the Vāikūpṭha Perumāl temple at Kāṇeś (8th century A.D.), the Pupjarīkā Char Perumāl temple at Tiruvellai (9th century A.D.).

The Nāmakkāl image (Fig.144) is a very fine specimen noted for the simple but elegant treatment of the bodily features and the other details such as dress and ornamentation. The figure is seated on the coils of the serpent with the right leg bent with the foot resting on the seat and the left leg hanging down. It must be noted that there is no uniformity in the particular position of the legs of the figure, as sometimes the right leg hangs

3. JI60A, XIII, pp.89-90; Cunningham, ASI, X, Pl.XXXXI.
4. E.Krishna Sastri, pp.311., p.52, fig.33. The sketch given here is incomplete as it does not include the attendant figures in the same panel.
down and the left is folded up. The God has four arms, the upper pair holding the śankha and cakra (prapāṇa) with flames issuing from the three sides of the śankha. The lower right hand is in vyākhyāna or preaching attitude and the lower left rests on the left lap or knee. The female figure shown below on the left kneeling and in añjali may represent one of the consorts of the God. The five hoods of the serpent are spread above like a canopy. The figure of Vīṣṇu wears a high kirīta, makara kurūjala, hāmavaḷaya and other ornaments including an udarabandha and elaborate loops are found hanging down from the katirātra. The yajñaśvāśita is like a thick chord. This panel is unique as it represents a number of attendant deities as stipulated by the Veṣṇuṣasana. To the left of Māruti is the figure Brahma, three faces of whom are seen, carrying the aksamāla in the upper left hand and the karnadala in the lower left hand which rests on the hip. The upper right hand of Brahma is not found to hold any attribute while the lower right is in kāśaka or simhakarma pose. The figure of Śiva is found to the right of Māruti. The two upper hands of Śiva hold the āska and pāsa on the right and left respectively and the lower right hand rests on the hip and the lower left hand is in the kāśaka pose. Below to the right are the kneeling figures of Bhūdevi (?) and behind her Markandeya in the attitude of praise and holding a pāda in the right hand. To the left below is the most interesting feature of the panel viz.,
the figure of Narasinha seated in sukhasana, the lower-right hand in the pose of praise and the lower left in katika pose. The upper right hand rests on the right lap but the upper left is not visible. Above the figure of Adinath are shown sriya and Candra in anjali pose with large haloes behind their heads.

Vidya is found sitting with greater ease on the coils of the serpent in the other's panel from Kanoli mentioned above. The left leg of the figure is bent and the foot is resting on the seat while the right leg hangs down. The right foot rests on a aparna-nilpa. The two upper hands hold the sankha and cakra and both the lower hands rest on the seat, which makes the figure appear to be more comfortably relaxing. There are other figures of adorers around Vidya, but the image standing to the left of the God is probably one of the consorts (Fig.145).

The Badami bas-relief cited by T.A. Gopinatha Rao and described as Bhogasanaaorti is more akin to the figures of Adinath in that it is also found seated on the coils of the serpent. But an important difference is that both the legs of the figure are on the seat, the left folded horizontally and the right bent with the foot resting on the seat. The upper pair of hands hold the sankha and cakra and the lower left rests on the lap and the lower right seems to be in varada. The hoods of Adisees above the figure number five. The additional features are the representations of the two goddesses on either side and the two seated figures
below the seat on either side. The Ellora panel may be classified as a Bhūgāsanaśārti like the one from Kānlī, as the former shows the figure of Viṣṇu seated in the fashion of the Bādāmi image but with the two Goddesses also seated on either side. The whole group here is found seated not on serpent coils but on stone seats. The Viṣṇu figure is four armed but owing to the mutilated condition of the hands, the attributes are not clear. Above are figures of female attendants with gaurīs. Seated below the pedestal are a number of gīr figures playing on musical instruments and the figure on the right corner represents the figure of Gāruḍa.

The figures of Śivāṁśtī depicted in the above manner are found in greater numbers of in the temples of the 15th-17th centuries in the Tamil country and they are often called Vaikūpṭhanātha or Vaikūpṭhanārāyana or Paramapathanātha. According to H.Krishna Nastri, Śivāṁśtī and Vaikūpṭhanārāyana are the same. 5 P.R.Srinivasah describes the Namakkal image as Vaikūpṭhanātha and even points out without realising the significance of it that it differs very much from a Bādāmi relief which is described by Īopinatha Ṛao as Vaikūpṭhanātha. 7 J.N. Banerjee, however, does not accept the identification of the Bādāmi relief as Vaikūpṭhanātha and also the identification proposed by R.D. Banerji for the same relief as that

5. op.cit., p.52.
of Virāsa-Puruṣa. However the textual descriptions of the Vaikupṭha represent a composite figure of Viṣṇu or the combined vyūha forms of Viṣṇu, of which we have hardly any example in the Tamil country. The आदिमुर्ति describes Vaikupṭha as four faced and eight armed, the central, the right, the left and the back faces being that of man, Narasimha, Varaha and a woman respectively. The विश्वविश्वासनती mentions a composite icon as Vaikupṭha in which the four faces represent the four vyūha forms, the human that of Vāmudeva, the lion that of Samkarṣana, the boar that of Pradyumna and the terrific face (rāmā or Kāpila) that of Aniruddha.

The panel from Aihole described as representing Virāsa-mūrti illustrated by T. A. Gopinatha Rao also partially answers to the description of Ādįmūrti (Fig.146). It is found seated like the Ellora image on the coils of the serpent. The upper pair of hands hold the अंकष्ठ and नक्र and the lower left rests on the

8. DHI., p.401.
9. Vaikupṭha tu prakṛpyām मुः सपथमाहाहनक /
    tārāpyhasāgamakrtvākṣa kartavyāśāntimātih //
    kāčān kṣaṇam āsram nākram daksina'ya satkṣayasv /
    अंकृष्ठ kpaṇam kheṣan dhamp nākram vāmā dadyasāntikṣayasv //
    +kṣayasv kṣayasvākṝram nārayana nan daksina /
    +kṣayasv ātāmahākṛtaḥ varāhavan rāmāntika //

12. sālaṅkāra, pp.89-90 & pl.XX.
lap and the lower right is stretched over the right knee. There are four attendant figures around the main figure of Vīṣṇu. No additional features are found. None of these images with the exception of those at Ellora and Kāśī could be described as mere Bhūgāsana and Virūsana mūrtis. In the description of the two varieties given in the Vaikūnṭhásana quoted by Copinatha i.e., no reference at all is made to the coils of Adīśeṣa as forming the seat of the God or to the hoods making a canopy above. Both of them are to be seated on a simhāsana.

The Adīmūrti figures may be described with the help of the Atri Śāhita in the Kṛiyā portion of which is given a detailed description of the image of Adīmūrti, with various attendants and subsidiary figures. According to this text, the figure of Vīṣṇu should be represented as seated on the coils of Ananta, and as red in colour. Five serpent hoods must form a canopy over Vīṣṇu's head. The left leg of the God should be bent, the foot resting on the seat, the right leg should be shown as hanging down. The two upper hands should carry the Ṛkṣa andṇakra, the right lower hand should rest on the serpent seat, while the left lower hand should be extended and placed on the left knee. Bhūgu, Pupya and other Pājakas should be shown either in yurasana or mūkhaṇa and the two hands of these figures should be shown accordingly i.e., stretched over the knees. The figures ofŚrīdevi and Bhūdevi

13. Śaura, pp 131-3
seated on ambhāsanag should also be shown. They should be well ornamented. Narasimha and Vārāha should also be shown seated in ambhāsan as Pājakas. They should be in anāl-bhāsta and well ornamented. Among these attendant figures the Nāmakkal panel shows a few such as one of the Pājakas (Nākapādeya), Bhidevi (one of the consorts kneeling at the foot of the God) and also Narasimha below, seated to the left of the God. The additional features in this panel are the figures of Brahmā and Śiva and Śrī Sūrya and Candra.

14. Ataḥ param uravakeṣvān śūndinārtividhikraman
kumbhākāre trikūta vā naśyā yartakāthāvā munap //
anantotsanam āśīnā pravāhāsana prabhan //
paravānam tridhā kṛtvā tatralam pithanācaraṇa //
anantaśya tu sampraktāsanta maṁsa ohanāstu yā //
anopari bhapā kṛtvā urdhva maṣheśḍakāśa kramāt //
tritya sarpaḥātdha-saṁśānaḥ harā param //
yāna nādas asamāyoga daksipam samāraśāya na //
ānkhānkaladharan kuryātaśvabharpahāṇḍhitam //
sarpaḥātdha-vatād rāgī daksipam saṁyasaṭṭhā //
yāna na kūṣcitar āśīram prasārakaprasārītan //
yidhinaiva saṁśānaśārityān tu kārayat //
bhau māyā tathā kuryā pālaṇāvātānāḥārtya //
evam yāntasam proktan yakṣavatadāvā mukhāsanam //
vānaḥastān tathā yāna āśīr maṁsa samvakramaṇa //
harātān na daksipam āśīra viyasaśdaksipam kramāt //

(Contd.)
The Adinārti image is also sometimes called Vaikunṭhanātha, different the Vaikunṭha or composite figure with four faces described by the Viṣṇudharmottara. The abhānaśloka of Vaikunṭha-nātha mentions the god as seated on the serpent coils with the left leg hanging down and the right leg folded and kept on the seat. The other details are the same as those mentioned for the figure of Adinārti. 18

Venkaṭesāna

The name Venkaṭa is very sacred to all the Hindus and the famous God of Tirupati goes by this appellation in the South. Venkaṭa is the name by which he is more familiarly known to Hindus of North India. The temple of Venkaṭesāna is on the top of the hill called Tirumalai. The iconography of the God enshrined in this temple has evoked much controversy, opinions regarding the deity varying a great deal. The Vaishnavas have always contended that the God is Viṣṇu, the Saivas claiming that the God represented here is Śiva or Subrahmanya and a third view is that the temple

14 (contd)

Simhasana sukhañamāryaḥ prabhāsāyati kāravat /
parvato'par pareṇaiva sārvabhūparaśvamāditaṁ /
parāsāva varaham eva dviśakam tu sāmārīgam /
navatākramānapaiva tat-taduṇām prakalpaṁvataṁ /
prāṇāyāmastaṁ tu sārvabhūparaśvamāditaṁ /
ayaṁ sukhañanam kūrva-athānānārahaṁbhavasstevayat //

- Saṁśītuśanṛṣīdhikarana, ch.62, vv.1-11.
was originally dedicated to Devī and was converted into a Viṣṇu temple at some later period. The controversy dates from a very early period for, even in the days of Rāmacarja (12th century A.D.) it is said that the Śaivas claimed possession of it but Rāmacarja succeeded in retaining it for the Vaiṣṇavas by affixing the Ānka and Ākra to the deity.

The widespread traditional belief that the deity was Sītā all along Kārtikeya or Kumārasvāmi till the days of Rāmacarja, the great Vaiṣṇava teacher of the 12th century, is not substantiated by the existing image and its features. However, the belief may have originated from the fact that in the Tamil country Kārtikeya or Subrahmanya is also associated with hills and quite early in Tamil literature the sanctity of Tirupparankundram as a place of Muruga (Subrahmanya) worship is emphasised. All the notable holy shrines of Subrahmanya are found to be situated on hills.

The observations made by pioneers in this field are also important and seem to indicate their belief in the dual character

15. Śaṅkya nādiā naśārya śyā ārta śūrka hanam dakṣipam kūrṇavikā śaṁyātāhā śaryatabam itara hūrba śaṁbhovasantāhā //
naśātāhā hānadunāya anuttibhāṣ分区āhā śaṁyāḥ āṅkha nākra //
devi hūrbdidūpto jānayātā jāgatām āsama vaṅkupnāḥ nākha //

16. Parṇāj, vv.5, 8, 9, 14 & 17.
of the God as combining the forms of Śiva and Viṣṇu. This belief is shared by others, according to whom, the image of Venkaṭesā, as it stands to-day shows on the right half the Śiva form with the jatāmukta and the bhūjanavala or snake ornament on the right forearms, emblems peculiar to that God; the left half shows the usual features of Viṣṇu and the figure of kāṃkāli is found on the chest. Further it is said that as the deity is usually richly attired and heavily ornamented the dual character cannot be make out and hence one can see only a figure with four hands, the śankha and cakra in the upper left and right, while the lower left and right hands are in kāṭravalaṁbita and yārada respectively. The high jewelled ḍanti adorning the head is said to hide the original features like the matted hair etc. The dual character of the God is also said to be known to one of the first three Ālvars (6th-7th centuries A.D.) Pey, who in a hymn addressed to the God of Tirumalai, describes the image as representing a combination of the two Gods.

Another interesting suggestion has been made that the Dhruva-bera of the shrine at Tirupati presents itself to us as a combination

18. त्रि इष्टाः निष्कल्प निष्कल्पम् नामस्यनामः
    हिलारामासनपर्वम् चिरुकाले – हिल्या
    तिरुपातीनिविद्वम् तिरुमलै निन्दा। शिलाना
    तिरुप्तरामनाम सप्तिष्ठ-निर्माणः

    ल्याराले, तिरुवान्तपुरले, 63.
of the Trinity, though two alone are visible in the manifested form. The Brahmā aspect representing creation has been omitted because this aspect was not at any time supposed to be an object of meditation for the created. In other words, there are in this idol the \textit{avyakta} Viṣṇu, the \textit{avyakta} Brahmā and \textit{avyakta-avyakta} Śiva.\footnote{C. Doraiswami Aiyangar, \textit{Tirumalai Śri Vaiṣṇava Tattvavāda}, Vol. I, pp. 112 & 166.}

The name Vānagām is known to Tamil literature from the Sangam period onwards. While the \textit{Tolkāppiyam} mentions it as the northern limit of Tamīḷagām, the \textit{Silappadikāram} clearly describes the hill Vānagām as sacred to Viṣṇu, who is found here in the standing or \textit{sthānaka} form. This description is as much important for its iconographic content as it is for its lyrical beauty. It says that on the summit of the mountain of Vānagām with the beautiful waterfalls, stands Viṣṇu, like a cloud, holding the ṇānaka and nakra comparable to the moon and sun on either side of the hill, wearing the long garland (vaṇamālā) and the golden garment.\footnote{\textit{Silappadikāram}, XI, 11, 41-51.}
Numerous are the references to Vengagam and the God of the hill in the hymns of the Vaippava saints of the 5th-9th centuries A.D. Thus the fact that the temple was originally built for Viṣṇu is amply borne out by literary references. Inscription in the temple confirm the evidence of the literature and prove the sanctity of the temple as in a Vaippava kṣetra from very early times.

The name Venkaṇa may be said to have some special significance especially in South India, as we find no such term used in the north. The word has been ingeniously interpreted as the "burner of all sins". The term, as it is used by the Alvars, often occurs in association with the Vedas, as Viṣṇu is stated to be the god of the Vedas. There seems to be a close connection between the term Venkaṇa and some characteristics of Viṣṇu derived from the Vedas. Viṣṇu is closely associated with the hills. The earliest known Viṣṇu shrines in the Tamil country are those of Alagarmalai (Parunagāl) and Vengagam, besides those situated on river banks such as Śrīrangam and Veṅkāṭ at Kīмеча. It is frequently stated that Viṣṇu resides on hills and in river valleys. His stature is often compared to the mountain. Even the term Māl in

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21. Sarvanāgānī yān prāmbh katākṣadābe vṛṇyate /
Sarvanāgadābe vamāt-karaṇādvenkāttanāmarine /

H. Rupinavani Sastri, Śrī Venkatesavara, Tirumalai
Tamil seems to indicate greatness & loftiness. The description in the Parināmaḥ is of particular importance in this connection, for, in this work the hill of Irunkungam (Tirumālinījolai or Alagarmalai) is itself compared to Viṣṇu and the various parts of the hill including its natural and vegetal associations are said to bear resemblance to the various attributes of Viṣṇu. Of great interest, therefore, are the references in the Rg Veda to Viṣṇu, who, because of his mighty deed of measuring out the earthly spaces, striding out the triple regions, wide by pacing, is leaved, like some fierce beast that is dreads, that wanders as it lists, that haunts the mountains. He is also called the mountain dwelling bull. The idea of Viṣṇu dwelling on the mountain seems to have influenced early Tamil literature, where this characteristic is frequently emphasised. The Veṣṇuva hymnists, besides referring to the mountain associations, often couple the name Veṅkaṭa with the Vedas, or Viṣṇu as the Lord of the Vedas.

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22. v, 15.
24. यदाप्रवलाहि ! स्व क्रृष्टदाक्षण !
विभप्पलाहि! इमा ब्रह्मायणा॥ -- Periyāiyar Tirumoli. IV-8-6.
"विन तिरल हुष्मुः वेष्का गितानाथि
मार्वा वेढा नाय विलक्काकि" -- Tirumāṅgal, Periya tirumoli, IV-8-9.
valamurti mālivanai varaiyār tiral ēlai lengal
valamurti mālivaṇant-ōṭil vēnaṇa vālivanai - Ibid., IX-8-9;
(south)
Even the hills underlying and surrounding the shrine of Venkata are said to be the manifest Vedas.

The nature and importance of the deity is indicated by the Idiyya Purana which says that the lord of Venkata has descended into the world in the Kaliyuga just as Narasimha, Rama and Vasudeva (Krishna) did for the Krita, Trsta and Drshana Yugas.

24 (contd.)

Vippattavyam rapparattavyam vinasaattavyam ndyanan-
rapparattavyam ni vijanda nahi - Raman, Iyarp, 68.

Padanipuñjair upjalalangal
Tajartela tanamukthi vrr - Ajavariya
Rddattyam vinasaattasya vippor mañjithwam
Rddattam pada samayam

25. Vippavanam rapparavanam viyusum vakk
Venkata vasppat vijanaum yeda vakk C. Darsawami Aiyangar,
Hindu Iconography in relation to the Tirunati Temple,

26. Kre tu narasimhahit trayavek rastyanandapat /
Avapata vasudewaca kalau venkapnapakap //

Cited by N. Kupparwamy
All available evidences would thus point to the great antiquity of the shrine and its early Vaishnava associations. The figure of the God Venkatesa in the sanctum sanctorum cannot be studied closely due to rigid ritualistic injunctions.

Eight-Armed Viṣṇu

Composite figures of Viṣṇu, especially of the vyūha forms with multiple heads, are conspicuous by their absence in the Tamil country. On the other hand, the multiple handed Viṣṇu images, are well known. Viṣṇu is invariably represented as four armed carrying the four usual attributes in all the four or two at least in the two upper hands. Eight armed figures are equally well known in this period as both literature and actual representations point to their existence. It may be noted that the eight armed form of the God is most common among the Trivikrama and Narasimha images. In these varieties the figure carries the usual weapons śankha, cakra, gada, padma and also khādagha and khutaka, and ūrma and ārṇa.

Mention has been made earlier of the idea of the multiple handed God known to the Parīkṣėgal of the Sangam age. The hymns of this period contain scattered ideas derived probably from earlier sources referring to the god with thousand hands, thousand heads, thousand y eyes, thousand feet and thousand names. The same

Nāmāyānī, Śrīvāṭsa, VIII-1-109.
attributes are given to the primeval Purusa in the Rig Veda. The idea is found in the Buddhist Jatakas where Mara is said to have endowed himself with a thousand arms for assaulting the Buddha prior to the latter's enlightenment. However, in Buddhist literature and iconography the prophet is always represented as two-armed, obviously due to the fact that Buddha is known as a historical personality and his representation in human form is a later development from earlier symbolism. Similarly, the Jain Tirthankaras are also spoken of and represented as two armed. Still the idea of the multiple headed and multiple handed deities influenced the representation of the subsidiary deities of the two pantheons particularly deities like Tara which were influenced by tantricism in the Vajrayana form of Buddhism. The Jain attendant deities are also of the same category. In Hinduism, on the other hand, the chief deities receive these traits whereas the attendant deities (Vasanthas) are never shown with more than two or four hands. Even the consorts of the gods remain two-handed. No female deity is normally endowed with more than two arms when represented along with the gods. Here again the development of the cult of Sakti, influenced by tantricism, has led to the introduction of multiple hands for Sakti images. Lakshmi, when shown independently is

29. Rig Veda, X, Purusa Sukt.

endowed with four arms and in the Aspsalakṣṇī forms with eight

The same idea is found in other countries as well. The Romans and the Greeks were not content with their mental pictures of gods with more than one head and two arms but attempted to translate their phantasies into art. 31 But these experiments did not take root in those countries whereas in India they have resulted in the development of a veritable galaxy of multihanded deities. The theory of A.A. Macdonell that an additional pair of arms was added by sculptors to carry the attributes which enabled the worshipper to identify the god, 32 is no doubt interesting, but fails to answer satisfactorily why multiple hands were considered necessary to carry the attributes when the method of representing them, either personified, or even in the inanimate forms, around the main deity, was known.

A more interesting but less convincing hypothesis is put forward by A.M. Hocart, who says that there were two distinct developments of art forms in India, one being the rich man's art (he probably means art patronised by the court and nobility) and the other the popular or demotic art and it 'is the latter which brought into existence forms with multiple hands etc., and

32. The Development of Early Hindu Iconography, *JNAS*, 1916, p. 120.
these gained access into higher art. Some of the statements made by A.K. Coomaraswamy on the origin and use of images in India are of deep significance in explaining the forms endowed to the deities. He has pointed out that when a material image is to be produced for purposes of worship this, as a technical procedure must be undertaken by a professional (śilpin or yugin or simply rāmakāra or pratimākāra). Such a craftsman goes through the whole process of self-purification and worship, mental visualisation and identification of consciousness with the form evoked, and then only translates the form into stone or metal. The trance formulas (āhyāna mantras) become the prescriptions by which the craftsman works, and as such they are commonly included in the Śilpa Śāstras, the technical literature of craftsmanship. Technical production is thus bound up with the psychological method known as yoga.

The artist does not resort to models but uses a mental construction, and this condition sufficiently explains the cerebral character of the art. In the words of the encyclopaedist Śukrāchārya “one should set up in temples the images of angels who are the objects of his devotion, by mental vision of their attributes; it is for the full achievement of this yoga-vision that the proper lineaments of images are prescribed; therefore the mortal imager should resort to trance-vision, for this and no otherwise, and surely not by direct perception, is the end to be attained.”

Even philosophers perceive the inevitability of the use of imagery,

verbal and visual, and sanction the service of images. This is evidently based on the belief that God himself makes like concession to our mortal nature, "taking the forms imagined by his worshippers."

The above ideas are found scattered through the hymns of the Ālvārs, who speak of the four armed Viṣṇu, the eight armed and even of the thousand armed God. They also believe in his assuming any form and many forms and thus their hymns are a revealing record of a devotee's (bhakta) visualisation of his God in the forms in which he believed God manifests himself through his viśvā (not delusion but creative power). It is against this verbal imagery as the background that we have to view their references to the four and eight-armed Viṣṇu. It has been noticed already that the four-armed variety of Viṣṇu images are the most common and the eight-armed variety is met with in some specific images vis., Trivikrama and Narasimha. In the Gauḍāvāhana form also Viṣṇu is shown with eight hands. Ordinary standing images of Viṣṇu with eight arms are also known and we have referred to the earliest of these images made of wood (Aṭṭabhimāsvāmi) mentioned in an early inscription from Negārjunakopaḍa. 35

The temple of Aṭṭabhimāsvāmi in Kāṇṭī appears to date from at least the 6th century A.D. as there is a reference to it in one of the hymns of Rāmāyān. In this hymn, he describes the God as holding eight weapons in his hands and also refers to the episode

35. Maha, p. 63.
of Gajendramokṣa.  The present temple of Aśṭabhujaśraya in Kāñcī is said to be specially associated with Gajendra before whom Viṣṇu appeared in the above form. The image enshrined in this temple is a standing one (samāndarathāna) of considerable height holding the cakra, kroda, padma and śīra in the right hands and śankha, kāpta, kūrma and gada in the left hands. One of the panels in the first story of the vimāna of the Vaikunṭha Perumāl temple shows Viṣṇu with eight hands in a fierce attitude, obviously in the act of killing a demon (?), but the sculpture is so damaged that neither the scene nor the attributes in the hands of the God can be identified. 37

The term 'aśṭabhuja' is often used by the hymnists for the eight armed Viṣṇu without, however, particular relevance to the image of the God, to whom the hymn is dedicated. 38 Inscriptional texts like the Agni Parāśa refer to two varieties of Aśṭabhuja Viṣṇu, in one of which he is seated on Tārāṣa or Tārāṣa

36. A. Hoc, Pallava Architecture, PI. LXXXIV, fig. 3.
37. A. Hoc, Pallava Architecture, PI. LXXXIV, fig. 3.
38. Inākkalavu timukulattuvalaṇeḻa
   sāḷiṇdaṇa aluṇadu āṇidu ulaanūṇḍa
   timukulattuvalaṇeḻaṇ āṇnda kōvīl
   timukulattuva māṇīṇdu sāṃsajня
(śarūga ?) with the sword, mace, arrow and vārada mudrā in the right hands and the bow, shield, disc and conch in the left hands. An almost identical description is given in the Arhat-
asmhitā, where the gesture of abhaya (śāntida) replaces vārada in the right hand and Tāraka is not mentioned. The eight armed Viṣṇu in Kāṇḍa does not answer to any of the two descriptions.

39. Viṣṇur astabhimā sa Tāraka kare khaṭakas ni daksīna !
    gati āvara na vārada vāna kārmukakhaṭakas !
    Ṛkra śankhaḥ . . . .
    Aṣṭi Purāṇa, ch.49, vv.16-17,

40. Kāryāśabhinībhayaśaṁcaturbhabhīdhi dvibhinī ēva vā viṣṇuh /
    ēriyataśāmikāsānā kauśikabhanubhīṣṭātātātākāh //
    atiśāpostītāvāāśī vāmaḥbhandarītā prasannāmokhaḥ /
    kuśalakālakāriśādhi śītakalāraśābhaśāmbhumīṣā //
    khaṭakarēṇa ākaśa nāpi daksīṇatāṁ śāntidadacaturbhubhārap /
    Yānacakūna ca kārmukakaṭaka sakrant śankhaśa ca //
    ati sa tātubhyāmānaghati śāntiśa ēko gadoḍharaśānuvāy /
    daksīṇadārśavā dvibhāva vān śaśankhaśa ca sakram sa //
    dvibhīnāya na śāntikaśa daksinabhaśaśānāvāca sankhedbhabhā //
    ēva Viṣṇu pratidī kartaśvā bhūtāminśaḥadbhū //
Further, the texts also do not precisely indicate which of the hands are to carry the respective weapons. Though there are a few Viṣṇu images from the north with eight arms carrying the same attributes as arms mentioned in the above texts, they do not correspond to them in all the details, for Viṣṇu is shown in some of them with more than one human head.

The other variety with eight hands mentioned by the Amī Parāśa is called 'Trailokyaśabdana', a form which is not found represented in the Tamil country.

Garuḍāntikā:

There are a few sculptural representations of Viṣṇu which go by the name of Garuḍāntikā as Garuḍa is shown along with Viṣṇu, standing on the left in a humble (vinaya) pose holding the hands folded across his breast or in anjali. In such representations Viṣṇu is usually shown with four arms, the upper two holding the Sankha and cakra and the lower left resting on the shoulder of Garuḍa, who appears to slightly bend under the pressure. The right hand of Viṣṇu is shown in abhaya or varada. C. Sivaramasuri calls

41. Maria Thérèse de Mallman, op.cit., p.41.
42. For description see Maria-Thérèse de Mallmann, op.cit., pp.41-42. The Hiranyakasipu also gives the description of Viṣṇu as Trailokyamahana, in which however, only six arms are mentioned — T.A. Gopinatha Rao, op.cit., Vol.II, App.C., p.89.
it an iconographic rarity. 43

The Garuḍāntika form occurs in the early sculptures of the Pallava and Pāṇḍya countries. One of them is found in a panel on the north wall of the Dharmarāja ratha in Mahābalipuram. The main figure wears a high tiara and holds the conch and the wheel in the upper left and right hands respectively. The lower left hand rests on the shoulder of an "attendant", who is stooping and presses two fingers of his right hand on his līpa, the left being placed on his knee." 44 This panel evidently represents Viṣṇu as Garuḍāntika (Fig.147). Attention may be drawn to the figure in the Gūvardhana relief in the Kṛṣṇa mandapa in Mahābalipuram, on which Balarāma leans, resting his left hand on the shoulder of the figure which stands in a similar attitude. Another shallow panel in the same rāja has a figure with four arms holding a bow (?) in one of the left hands and resting the other on the shoulder of a figure on the left. The presence of the bow is interesting but the identity of the image cannot be determined. The bow is associated with Śiva but Śiva was never represented with four arms in early periods.

The characteristic Garuḍāntika form is also met with in an early Pāṇḍya cave temple at Kuppayakudi. Viṣṇu is shown here with four arms, of which the upper pair holds the āṅkha and cakra; the

43. Kailasanātha et al., p.36.
44. J. Ph. Vogel, 4.81., p.51.
lower right hand rests on the hip and the left elbow rests on the shoulder of the attendant Garuḍa (Fig. 143). This form of Viśnu represents a close parallel to the Viṣabhāṇṭika or Viṣabhāvāhana form of Śiva.45 The figure of Viṣṇu wears the characteristic high kirita, a thin vajrapāda and a girdle. The sankha and cakra have prominent flames and are shown parallel to the wall panel instead of with their thin edges to the front as in early Pallava sculptures.46 This is yet another instance of the prominent depiction of the flames, the other one being found in the Namakkal image of Sankara Narayana, in which the conch on the left has similar flames.

The posture of Garuḍa with folded arms across the chest in deep humility is again characteristic of these sculptures. However, Garuḍa is represented completely in the human form without wings or beak, a feature which is introduced quite late in the images of Garuḍa, especially those found in a small shrine near the flag staff of Viṣṇu temples. The Garuḍa images in these sculptures would suggest that the patron or king who caused the images to be cut intended himself to be represented thus, in the position of an attendant to the God.

A similar Garuḍāntika panel is also found in the second cave.

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45. R. Nagaswamy, op.cit., p.268 & fig.4; C. Sivaramamurti,
Kalumalai etc., p.17.
46. R. Nagaswamy, op.cit., p.268.
at Koppakkudi (Fig.149). Here, the pristine purity of the original features is left untouched by later restoration and hence it is more important and interesting. Vijaya stands in tribhanga pose, wearing a high crown and a gammadhi across his breast, which is an unusual feature. The upper left hand holds the jānaka, without flames, and the lower left elbow rests on Garuḍa's shoulder. The attribute in the upper right is not clear but must be a sakra and the lower right appears to be in varada. The long garland of beads hanging from the left shoulder and reaching almost down to the ankle may be the vanamala, very rarely found in early sculptures. Here Garuḍa is shown with wings and wears a peculiar cap. Certain peculiarities in the treatment of the sculptures in Koppakkudi may be mentioned. They show an archaic tendency and are flatly conceived and heavily treated.47

One more representation of the Garuḍāntika form may be recognised in one of the panels on the south wall of the arha-mahāmuni in the Vaikuntha Perumal temple at Kāṇū (Fig.180). The figure of Vijaya here stands in tribhanga with a high kirti and the other usual attributes in the two upper hands (sakra in pravasa). The left arm rests on the right shoulder of Garuḍa in añali. The figure of Garuḍa wears a conical cap (?) and bends slightly to the left with right leg brought forward and placed towards the left. The main figure is flanked by other figures on the right and flying

47. See R. Nagasvamy, op.cit., p.274.
figures above. A parasol is seen above the head of the Viṣṇu figure. As noticed earlier, the figure of Gāruḍa may stand for the donor himself in some of these early sculptures. In the case of the Vairācārya Perumāl temple it may stand for Nandivarmān II, the author of the temple.

There is no description of the above type of Viṣṇu images in any iconographical text. This type may well have evolved out of the needs of the donors or even out of the imagination of the sculptors, whose individual skill and fantasies often influenced the themes adding to the repertoire of subjects and motifs to be represented. Regional and stylistic peculiarities owe their origin to the artists themselves. Strict conformity with the textual prescriptions, as is well known, leads more often to stylised and conventional ways of representation, though such methods are of great help in identifying and explaining the presence of many motifs and figures in a composition.

There are various other legends of the Bhāgavata Purāṇa from which interesting concepts or motifs have been taken up for representation in sculptures. One of them is the story of Gaṇḍīkāla. Once Gaṇḍīkāla went to sport with his wives in a beautiful lake in the Trikūṭa mountain, when his leg was caught by a fierce
crocodiles, 'śrāvaṇa' and he began to be dragged into the deep waters of the lake. In spite of his greatest efforts he could not get rid of the terrific animal. So he intensely prayed to Lord Viṣṇu to free him from the clutches of the monster. Viṣṇu, in answer to his prayers, hurried on his vāhana, the Garuḍa and killed the 'śrāvaṇa' with his pāśa. The latter was none other than the Gandharva king Bhum who was cursed by the Sage Devala for offence to be born as a crocodile. Bhum was also freed from the curse and regained his previous form after the destruction of the crocodile form. The Purāṇa further says that Gajendra was the old Pāṇḍya king Indrayavana, a devotee of Viṣṇu and the greatest of the Drāvīḍas, in one of his previous births; he was cursed by the Sage Agastya to be born as an elephant, because the king failed to pay respect to the sage and his disciples as he was preoccupied in deep meditation on Viṣṇu. The Sage, not realising the real cause of the neglect, thought the king did not attend to an aśīthi àśikhe him in the approved manner. But the king who was greatly pleased at the curse requested Agastya that even in his aśīthi he may be permitted to maintain and continue his devotion to Parupottan and the Sage agreed and further said that the king would be relieved of the curse by Hari on the day when he was caught by a crocodile. This beautiful story has given rise to the concept of Viṣṇu as Karivaradā or Gajendravaradā, and it forms the theme of one of the most remarkable sculptural representations in the sixth century Gupta temple at Deogarh. 49 The same theme along with others such

as Viṣṇu Śeṣaṇāyīl and Nara-Nārāyana forms are found also in the remains of another temple in the same place, which is perhaps a later imitation of the earlier Gupta temple. 50

The Vārāharāja Temple at Kölni is one of the oldest shrines containing the Gajendravārada form of Viṣṇu and it has been sung by the great Vaipāvā dīvār of this period. The ancient name of this temple, as mentioned in their hymns and in Gōja inscriptions, is (Tiru) Attyiyūr and that of the God Attyiyārāy. Mādam, in one of his hymns, clearly addresses the God as Attyiyāraya who rides on the Caruḍa or Caruḍavāhāna. 51 Apart from the particular reference to the Vārāharāja of Kölni, Viṣṇu is praised as the deliverer of Gajendra in several hymns of the Mālavālārtiyavāravahāman- dham. The whole episode comes in for elaborate versification in one of Tirumāngai's hymns in which the details of the incident such as the elephant collecting flowers from a tank and being caught in the leg by a crocodile, his fervent appeal to Nārāyana-Viṣṇu


51. "Attyiyāraya millai ṇāravā" — Tiruvandāli, 96; Even to-day the annual festival connected with the Caruḍavāhāna form of the God is a special one in this temple.

52. Ruyai, Tiruvandāli, 17, 22 & 29; Mādam, Tiruvandāli, 13 & 96; Ruy, Tiruvandāli, 50 — "Attattak-koḻ mandai mūḻakmuḻ- terindasakkarattāṉ"; Tirumalīśai, Tiruṇand, 40 & 46; Kāyyaṇ Kair Tiruvandāli, 18; Periyāḻvār, Tiruvāli, II-1-9; 10-6; Toppāḻippodi, Tiruṇālṭiyvalūśi, 2; Nānūḻvār, Tiruṇāli, III-1-9; IX-8-8.
and the God hurrying on Garuḍa to his succour and killing the crocodile with his sakra are narrated.\(^3\)

The philosophical interpretation of the Gajendramokṣa episode is that when all other sources of help fail, God alone can give emancipation to a person in distress. A sincere appeal, marked by genuine dedication to God is the only way to be freed from worldly ills. God Karivarāda's immediate response to the call of a tormented, giant elephant is said to have a direct bearing on life. Commentators often compare the water in the pond to life (narâyana), the breeze which causes the ripples to lust and desire, the resulting waves to powerful evil influences, the shoal and the crocodile to the kith and kin and the elephant is said to symbolise the ego. When the crocodile gnawed at his foot and the elephant started loosing the struggle, its associates deserted it. Gajendra uttered a soul-stirring cry appealing to God for succour.

The legend is localised in the Pāṇḍya country at the place called Śrīkanattur on the basin of the river Tāmraparṇī, where it

\(^{33}\) Kīרגarav yuvakā nāl malar kavyān
yat仅仅giśa इप्रिलम
kīrgarav yāla kaiyavātalara la
khā adan kālīnaik-kamna
kāvya mūtara baṅga-mallām
īmbu mīru āli roṭṭhām
kīragarā śolai nāja sūnavāleit
śrīvalikēsika-kapṭhā

-- Pariva Tirumoli, II-3-8--
is held sacred and a special festival is celebrated on the
Makaraki śādi day in memory of the deliverance of Gajendra from
the crocodile. The Tārakāntī Mahābhārata, a later Athālāmudrāda,
gives the details of the story. The deity in the temple of
Gajendravarada at this place is called "Māyākūrūā śādanarcha" or
"Māyā śādanarcha" in the Cōla inscriptions of Kāḷītunga I,55
and in the Pāṇīya inscriptions of the 13th and 14th centuries
A.D.56 The name "Māyāśādanālīlī śāna" of special interest to us
as Namālvar used the very term "Māyāśādanāli" at the beginning
of one of his hymns describing the task while singing the praise
of Vīṣṇu at Gajendravarada.57 It is doubtful whether Namālvar
had in his mind the shrine of Āṭṭālānallūr when 22 he rendered
this hymn, but it is quite possible that the Cōlas and the Pāṇīyas
were inspired by the hymn to use that name for the deity in the
temple. In most cases the Āḷvārs sing about the feats of Vīṣṇu
or Kṛṣṇa and the legends connected with them without any particular
reference to the deities enshrined in the temples which they visited

54. Ms.No.R. 40 - Myar Library, Madras; A.N. Krishna Aiyangar,
55. 429 of 1916.
57. "Māyāśādanālilo nisrai sudaśai śādanarcha niśra-
Kalmāvukku aru āruva kārmaśālvala ruppan kappan"
-- KALVĀMPALI, III-5-1.
during their itineraries. Their intense devotion to God Vinya inspired their verses in praise of the attributes and achievements of the God, but these details cannot be taken as referring to a specific idol or image in a particular context. For instance, in the hymns addressed to the God at Tiruvallikéni, Tirumangai sings the praise not only of Parthasárathi but also of other aspects such as Narasimha, Ráma, Ranganátha and also of Gajendaravara. The shrines which contain the images of these four forms are later additions to the temple and it is doubtful if they were in existence at the time of the Alvar. Such instances can be cited in the case of in every one of these Alvars.

To return to Attalannallur, the local Ethalamuripen mentioned above gives an account of the story of Gajendaramoksa which is very similar to the account in the Bhárayata Purána. The main difference is the place of occurrence, which is the Támarapadí basin in the former whereas in the latter it is the Agábodasaram or the Yamnávaras in the Mílláyás. Attalannallur seems to be the holy place meant by the name 'Gajendaramoksa' given in the Havyágam to one of the places said to have been visited by Kripádvaréy during a tirtharátra in the South.

As a sequel to the story of Gajendaramoksa, it is stated that as a reward for his good deeds in the previous birth, Gajendra

58. For a discussion of some specific instances see Appendix A on Pañcasáras.

was received by Vīṣṇu to be one of his nārīśān or body-guards. One significant iconographic feature which seems to have evolved out of this legend and its sequel is the inclusion of a bodyguard called Tumbikkai Ḍēvēr in the doorways of Vīṣṇu shrines in the place of Vīṣṇukṣennas or Śivāśaśāmudaṉar, who is the chief of the army (or war lord) of Vīṣṇu. In the representation of Tumbikkai Ḍēvēr (Fig.156) the deity is shown as elephant faced with the trunk just like Gajēśa but sometimes the attributes held in the upper hands are Sānkhē (left) and Cakra (right) in the case of the former. The concept is no doubt derived from Cājēndrāśēvēr of our interesting legend.

As for the representations of the scene of the deliverance of Cājēndra, reference has been made earlier to the fine relief at Deogarh. Cāḍukya sculptures of the 6th-7th centuries in Bādānī and Aihole also represent Vīṣṇu as Āruḍāvāhana (Fig.151).

In a panel on the first storey of the vīṣṇa of the Vaikuntha-Perumāl temple in Kāṇelah, Vīṣṇu is depicted as riding on Āruḍa. The two upper hands of the god carry the Sānkhē and Cakra and the lower right is in teriāṇi and the left lower is pointing to the figure of an elephant below. The scene represented here is the Cājēndra-mokṣa and hence the figure of the Āruḍa elephant is shown on the right side of the lower part of the panel and one of Vīṣṇu's hands shows the warning mark of teriāṇi.

60. A. R. A., op. cit., PL.LXXIV, fig.1.
Another early representation of Vīśṇu riding on the Gāruḍa is found in one of the panels on the other walls of the main shrine in the Vaiṅkapīṭha Perumāl temple in Kānūl, in which Vīśṇu has four arms with the usual attributes in the upper pair of hands and the lower ones remain free. He is seated on Gāruḍa who is shown as flying and the feet of the God rest on the palm of the two hands of Gāruḍa. A number of adorers are found represented above and below (Fig. 152). In these early sculptures of the 8th century A.D., Gāruḍa takes the form of a human being with wings at the back, and Vīśṇu is found seated on his shoulders.

A remarkable narrative panel from the early Gōla temple of Nāgeśvaraśvāmi in Kumbakonam contains a dynamic representation of the Gajendramokṣa theme. The four armed figure of Vīśṇu is seen riding on Gāruḍa. The upper right hand of the God is lifted up in the act of hurling the sakra at the fierce graha. To the left of the Vīśṇu figure on Gāruḍa is shown the head of an elephant in a conventionalised tank. Above the head of the elephant is a flying human figure, the identity of which is not very clear (Fig. 153).

A medieval panel of about the 14th-15th century A.D. from the Alanīyanambirāyar temple in Tirukkurungudi represents the Gajendra-mokṣa episode in a schematic composition. The figure of Vīśṇu on Gāruḍa is eight handed holding in the respective pairs of hands the samśaṇa and sakra, khaṭaka and amūla, sāṃjakā and jāra and the last pair holding the sword. To the left is seen the figure of an
elephant in fervent appeal to the God, with upraised trunk in which a huge lotus bud is held. In the same way, a crocodile is represented holding one of the hind legs of the elephant by the mouth and gnawing at it. The tank is depicted by means of the conventional lotus leaves and flowers, carved in the background. Figures of goddesses with amalaka baha are shown above on both sides (Fig. 154). T.A. Gopinatha Rao has cited two medieval sculptures of Varadaraja, one from Mysore and another from Tadikombu. The first one is earlier in point of time and depicts all the details of the story in a vertical panel of considerable artistic merit. The second belongs to late medieval times and shows only the figure of Viju with eight arms holding different weapons, seated on Garuda and it is an image almost in the round attached to a pillar in the mandapa of the Varadaraja temple at Tadikombu.

Annamūrti

Another form of Viṣṇu as the presiding deity of the kitchen, called Annamūrti, deserves special mention. In the Ranganatha temple at Srirangam, there is a shrine dedicated to Annamūrti. The image is here represented as a two armed-one holding a lotus of curd-rice in one hand and a kalasha containing pāvāla in the other. In the Prabhāśāngala behind the head are carved the emblems of jambha and sakra. The shrine seems to date from a period

61. op. cit., pp. 268-9, PI. LXXI.
62. Ibid., PI. XXX, fig. 2.
before the 16th century A.D. As structural improvements were made to it by one Gakrāya who also improved the Kārtti shrine and the kitchen in the temple.63 This Gakrāya was a contemporary of Devarāya II, as he is known to be a brother of Uttamanambi.64

Two bronze images from the Museum in the Āḷirangan temple illustrated in figure 185, show the God as seated in parvāṇāśana on a lotus seat. The bigger image carries the vessel of śivāja in the right hand and the ball of vṛnd-rice in the left, while the smaller one carries the same objects in the opposite hands. Both the images have a prabhāmaṇḍala behind their heads, on which are shown the śāṇkha and cakra, emblems of Vīṣṇu. Though it is the smaller figure which satisfies the textual prescription for the representation of the image of Annamūrti, the bigger one seems to be earlier in date. The latter shows some characteristics of Cōla art, particularly in treatment of the head gear and other ornaments and in the delineation of the facial features and may be dated in about the 12th century. The former, however, is a later image.

The Cāma-gan蔽tā, a Chīṣṇukātra text gives a description of the Annamūrti image to which the above images answer in all the essential details. 65

63. 88 of 1937-38.
64. 88 of 1937-38, Pt. II, para 63.
65. Ṛṣmendra-śāhna-madbhūnaśita-sītananda vikāśvāra //

(continued.)
The Lakṣṇī Narāyana variety of images also belong to the same class as the Lakṣṇī Narasimha and other combined forms of Viṣṇu and Lakṣṇī and date from a period as early as the 9th century A.D. The earliest datable temple dedicated to this form is the one at Kavāntapālānas in the Chingleput district. An inscription of the 14th year of the late Pallava ruler Kampaṭvarman (close of the 9th century A.D.) records the construction of the temple by a Mānasarpa who was in the service of the king. The temple is referred to as Mānasarpa Viṣṇugṛha after its author, but mention is also made of the God as pleased to be seated in the shrine. Though the contemporary name of the deity does not indicate the form enshrined in the temple, there can be no doubt as to the cult image in the sanctum being that of Lakṣṇī Narāyana.

The Lakṣṇī Narāyana temple in Śigamānār, in the Madurai district, contains an early Cōla inscription of the 26th year of a Parakesara (Parāntaka I - 943 A.D.), thus indicating that the

65 (contd.)

\[
\text{dāsikā karaṇa vaṣanaṃ bālayaḥ vibhūṣapam /}
\text{kale svāmīṇam pātraṃ ṛṣayāt tāsaṃ tāsaṃ vairītaṃ //}
\text{vibhūśapam dāsikāna kāṭaś ca ṛṣayāt tāsaṃ tāsaṃ dāśagītātām /}
\text{dāśagītām ekṣatriyaṃ dīnaṃ samat tattvamānasaḥ //}
\]

MNB, 1936-37, Pt.II, para.9.

66. 207 of 1901; SII, III, 420.
temples enshrining this particular form date from early times.

In the Hoysala inscriptions in the temples built by them in various parts of the Tamil country, the name Lakṣmi Narāyaṇa is frequently met with as the name of the deity enshrined. Mention may be made, in this connection, of a Lakṣmi Narāyaṇa temple consecrated in the time of the Hoysala Vīra Rāmanātha, in his 9th regnal year (1264 A.D.) as recorded in an inscription from Śrīrangam.68 Another inscription from the same place dated in the 10th year of a Tribhuvanacakravartin Kondērīmaikōṇḍāg records the consecration of God Lakṣmi Narāyaṇa Porūmāḷ in a new schenzy or akṣara called Kōḍapāḷamāsāturvēṅmangalam founded in the name of the king in Tiruvārangam Tirupati (Śrīrangam).69

Two more temples dedicated to God Lakṣmi Narāyaṇa date from the period of the Hoysala rulers of the 11th-12th centuries A.D. One of them is the temple in Muṇḍikōṇḍān in the Coimbatore district containing inscriptions of Hoysala Vīparvardhana (1108-1142 A.D.) and his successors Vīra Ballāḷa and Somēvara.70 In Kōḻḷēgāl in the same district is another temple of Lakṣmi Narāyaṇa containing the inscriptions of Vīra Ballāḷa and Vīra Narasimha (12th-13th century A.D.). The former is called the temple of Narāyaṇa

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68. 377 of 1912-56.
69. 18 of 1936-37.
70. 3 to 16 of 1910.
71. 13 and 16 of 1910.
Perumāḷ and the latter, the temple of Vippirunda (seated) Perumāḷ in the contemporary inscriptions.

In the Hoysala temples at Somnath and other places in the heart of the Hoysala country, images of Lakṣṇa-Nārāyaṇa are represented frequently on the temple walls. An image from the Kappesammagāra temple in Somnath, illustrated by T.A. Gopinatha Rao, shows Vippa seated in Lalitāsana with Lakṣṇa on his left lap, the lower left hand of the God holding her by the waist. The image answers in all important details to the description of this form in the Viśvakarmaśāstra, according to which, the Goddess Siddhi wearing all ornaments should be represented as standing with a śārā (fly whisk) in the hand, to the left of Lakṣṇa-Nārāyaṇa. Ganaṇa is also sometimes represented near the figure of Lakṣṇa-Nārāyaṇa as prescribed by the text.

In the bronzes representing this form of Vippa from the Tamil country, the subsidiary figures are absent but the main figure corresponds to the description given in the text. The figure is shown seated in Lalitāsana, with the right leg hanging down. The figure usually has four arms and carries the jānaka and cakra in the upper ones while the lower right is in abhayā. The lower left holds the Goddess by the waist. The Goddess is shown with a flower in the left hand and the right one holding off to the God (Fig.183). The figure illustrated may be assigned

to the 14th or 15th century but represents a good example of the images of this type, both of the early and later periods.

A rare specimen of Viṣṇu with Lakaṇḍa seated on his lap, both being carried by Gāruḍa comes from Aṭṭār Tirunagarī and may be dated in the 12th-13th century A.D. (Fig. 187). It is in the late Cōla style, but is a product of the Pāṇḍya country and depicts an eight armed Viṣṇu with Lakaṇḍa carried by Gāruḍa. Viṣṇu holds the stambha and jyāa (broken), pāśa and amūṣa, kṣapaka, and khaḍ作文 respectively in the first three pairs of arms and of the fourth pair the right hand shows yarada and the left holds the Goddess by the waist. The Goddess is seated on the left lap of Viṣṇu with her left hand also in yarada and the right thrown across the lord's waist holding on to him. Both the figures are carried by Gāruḍa shown below in human form, with wings at the back and two protruding teeth shown on the sides of the mouth. The figure of Gāruḍa wears a karapḍaamākuta and other ornaments including a udara bandha of snake.

The figure of Viṣṇu wears the usual ornaments and the lower garment is shown with the folds in relief. The figure of Lakaṇḍa wears the karapḍaamākuta and other ornaments. The ornaments of both the images are treated simply, with the barest minimum of details. Apart from its significance as a fine specimen of the medieval Pāṇḍya bronzes, it is also important for its iconographic peculiarity, corresponding a description given of the Lakaṇḍa Narāyaṇa.
image in the śāradāpāṇa. However, the text mentions only two hands for both the God and the Goddess and at the same time says that the God should be shown with his weapons, without specifying the names. In all other respects the above figure of Laksma-śrīnārāyaṇa carried by Garuḍa answers to the description in this text. The text further adds that similar images of the combined representation of other Gods with their consorts should be shown in the same manner with their respective attributes and yāhanas.

Two more forms, which may be classified with the Laksma-śrīnārāyaṇa type, are the images of Bhūvarāha and Laksma Hayagrīva. In the former, God Viṣṇu as Varāha is represented as seated in the same posture with Bhūdevi on his lap and endowed with the same attributes. The latter form is that of Hayagrīva represented in the same manner with Laksma on his lap (Fig. 134).

74. abhun ca dhībhūtena kurvā-lakṣmaṇa nārāyanākṛtī / devam āstraśa-avakāvalāsa garudānā rasmātāna \ dakṣipap kaptha laksmaṇa vāmo hastas-ārthaśāyik / vibhoryṇaśakam laksmaṇa kukṣibhāsasthitāsa sadā // nārāyaṇavā daśānmaṇa viśrāma = viśāvata / tāpiḥ saktiḥ nyāthātipi tadasāstrāvahānākṛtī //

Śāradāpāṇa.

quoted by T. A. Gopinatha Rao, op. cit., Vol. I, Pt. II

App. C., pp. 57–58.
APPENDIX B

ŚĀLAΓRĪMĀ

Worship of Kārya (Vīṣṇu) in the aniconic form called the Śālagrīma, is an important part of the daily rituals of a Vaishāvīna household. Śālagrīma is a flintified ammonite shell and the river Kapśaki, one of the tributaries of the Ganges, is famous for its deposits of Śālagrīmas. Each of these has a hole and the spiral grooves visible through the hole are believed to be the self-evolved representations of the nākra or discus of Vīṣṇu. The number as well as the disposition of the spirals is said to determine the particular aspect or āyaśīṇa of Vīṣṇu symbolised by a Śālagrīma. The various colours of the Śālagrīmas are associated with different aspects of Vīṣṇu, as for example, a brownish black one with Narasimha, a green one with Viṣṇu, a white one with Viṣṇudeva, a red one with Sankara and so on.¹

Śālagrīmas are found also in temples, mathas or monasteries. A garland of Śālagrīmas sometimes adorns the Vīṣṇu image in the sarhastrama. But the unlike the linear of Śiva, which is the chief cult object enshrined in the sarha strama, the Śālagrīma is occupies only a secondary position in temples. Hence one finds only images of Vīṣṇu as the main cult objects enshrined in the garhastrama. The aniconic worship of Vīṣṇu in the form of the Śālagrīma (also called Vīṣṇulīla or Ṛṣiṇī sīka) seems to be of late origin, whereas the worship of the linear is a considerably ancient phenomenon in Śaivism.

Silagrama (Śālagrama) is also the name of a Vaipūya śīrṣa in Andhra Pradesh. Frequent mention of this śīrṣa is made by the Ālvārs in their hymns addressed to the holy places of Viṣṇu worship. The earliest reference to this śīrṣa seems to occur in the Mahābhārata. Attempts have also been made to interpret the term niśālla in the Chōpūṭi inscription ("niśālla prākāra māryaṇavāṭīkā") as referring to the aniconic object of worship. But it is more probable, as seen earlier, that the "māryaṇavāṭīkā" was a compound built for a shrine containing the images of Śaṅkarṣeṇa and Viṣṇudeva.

Curious accounts of the origin of Śālagrama are found in the Brahmaśaivārtha Purāṇa and the Varāna Purāṇa. According to one of them, Vaiṣṇavaśāstra Purāṇa, the Varāna Purāṇa. According to one of them, Viṣṇu (the Basil, which is sacred for Viṣṇu worship) was born as the river Ganges and Varāṇesha promised to be born as her son and hence the deposit of Śālagramas on the river banks. In the Varāṇesha Purāṇa account of the origin of the holy place Śālagramakṣetra the God is said to have appeared before the sage Śaṅkārya in the

8. Tirumangai, Pariva Ximulai, I-8; Parivālvar, Ximolai, II-7-9
3. para xirvar, ch. 84.
5. Anu, p. 58–59
form of a δάμ tree and the village is believed to be named after the δάμ tree. Such stories are pèreile and of late origin. However, great sanctity is attached to the Ṣālagrāma and its worship. Sale or purchase of Ṣālagrāma is prohibited. Women and Śūdras are also forbidden from touching it or offering worship to it by themselves. The Ṣālagrāma is also included as one of the five symbols connected with the Pañcāyatana pādā, believed to be initiated by Śāṅkara, the great philosopher of the 8th century A.D.

The Tulasī or the Basil plant is specially sacred to the Hindus and every household has a plant which is worshipped. The garland of Tulasī (Tulāy) is said to be worn by Vippu is known in all the early Tamil works. In the daily ritualistic worship of Vippu, Tulasī is offered to the God and later distributed to the worshippers. The significance of the plant may be clearly understood from the descriptions given in the hymns of the Śivaśa, particularly Nāmāḷyār, who says that Vippu wears it on the shoulders (garland), on the chest, on the head and on the feet, implying the sanctity of the plant. The plant is well known for its medicinal value and is largely utilised in Ayurvedic system of treatment.

6. Śāṅkara, p. 95

7. Śivāvani, I-9-7:

"तालिताल शुल्क कर्मन्तर्को शुल्क अपरा मृगीश्वर
तालिताल शुल्क निन्देन्ते तीघामवंशियान्म"

transl. "Tālītāl shulūk karmanāṅkarākho shulūk aparā mṛgīśvara
tālītāl shulūk nindante tīghāmvanāṃ"
Fig. 144  
Adimūrti -- Namakkal -- Adīgaimān

8th c. A.D.

145  
-- Kamēl -- Pallava -- 8th c. A.D.
Fig. 148 — *Gamaqantika* — *Kurunakkuṇi* — Pandiya

--- 7th c. A.D.

149 — " " " "

150 — " Kāṇci — Pallava

8th c. A.D.
Fig. 163 — Cakendramokṣa — Kumbakonam — Early Cōla —
10th C. A.D.

154 — Ṣārikkurungudi —
14th-15th C. A.D.
Fig. 156 -- Annarātri figures -- Śriyamagā -- 13th
15th C.A.D.

156 -- Ḍakṣaṭa Narāyaṇa - 14-15th C.A.D.

157 -- Lākṣāṇa Narāyaṇa on Garuḍa -- Aḻvār Tirunagari
12th-13th C.A.D.