ICONOGRAPHY OF SOUTHERN INDIA

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH

BY

A. C. MARTIN

PARIS
LIBRAIRIE ORIENTALISTE PAUL GEUTHNER
12, RUE VAVIN, 12
1937
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G. JOUVEAU-DUBREUIL

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APOLGY

Not only among the educated Indian people, but among Englishmen there are many including myself who are « sufficiently ignorant of French to require the aid of a translation ».

When in 1915 I came across Professor Jouveau-Dubreuil’s admirable work, I was nevertheless able to follow it sufficiently well to think it a pity that it should remain a sealed book to the majority of people in that part of India with the iconography of which it deals.

I submitted a translation of part of it to the author of the original who was kind enough to approve of my effort. He readily gave his permission to my continuing it on certain conditions, the most important one being that I should undertake to publish it. Having done so I was bound to go on.

My time was limited, so I called my son who had made better use of his educational opportunities than I had, to my aid. Without hesitation he condemned my work as being too literal. This saved me a lot of trouble at the time for it enabled me to sentence him to make the translation de novo, which penalty he could not evade without defiance of parental authority. In course of time it was done. We thus became partners in the obligation imposed by Professor Jouveau-Dubreuil to publish the book in English.

Our next difficulty was to obtain the blocks for the illustrations, without which the work would only be fit for book-worms. It was not till the glorious summer of 1925 during a short stay in Paris, that we discovered their fate.

They belonged to M. Guimet, the famous archaeologist, at whose instance Professor Jouveau-Dubreuil had so ably and
arduously explored the subject. Mr. Guimet died and left his museum to the French Government. The Curator of the Archives was called up for service during the Great War, during which in company with so many heroes, he fulfilled the Great Sacrifice. R. I. P. His successor found that the blocks were lost.

We were still bound by our promise to the author and even if he should absolve us, we were unwilling to become « quitters ». So new blocks had to be made at great expense, which added much to the cost of this book.

The long delay was not without advantage, for in the meantime by residence among French people, my son added much to his proficiency in their language, while I took the opportunity of my short leave in England to learn a little English.

The result of all this may benefit our readers, but was deplorable to me personally, for to my horror, my son condemned his own translation and threw it at my head. With sweat sufficient to bring forth the infant Pulliar (see page 40) I laboured. This is the result.

For the text, my son who has adopted the diacritics and accents of the original with meticulous care, deserves the credit. For the translation of the voluminous footnotes, I take the blame. With those of Burnouf from Sanskrit poetry into French, I have assumed more freedom than I would with the author's text. The sense has not been altered and I hope my daring has not failed to preserve to some small extent at least, the spirit for which M. Burnouf had so remarkable a gift.

July, 1926. A. Ff. M.
ICONOGRAPHY
OF
SOUTHERN INDIA

INTRODUCTION

Southern India is rather a vague term. In this book it denotes the stretch of country along the Coromandel coast, from the mouth of the Northern Pennar river to cape Comorin. It is a region with certain distinctive characteristics. Its monuments belong exclusively to the Dravidian style, and its principal language is Tamil.

Elsewhere, there is a marked difference in the language, people and style of monuments. In those regions, Malayalam, Canarese or Telugu are spoken, and the monuments belong to the Chalukya or Northern Hindu style.

This work concerns the iconography of the country of Dravidian Architecture and the Tamil language, which comprises the ten districts of N. Arcot, Madras, Chingleput, S. Arcot, Salem, Coimbatore, Trichinopoly, Tanjore, Madura and Tinnevelly (1).

This iconography is almost entirely Hindu. The Musulmans and Christians have always been relatively few in this part

(1) Ramnad District is now made up of N. Tinnevelly and S. Madura. (Tr.) A few footnotes in this book have been added to those of the author of the original. Each of these for which the translators are solely responsible is marked (Tr.).
of Southern India. South of the Pennar river hardly a trace of Buddhism is found.

Some images of Jain saints occasionally occur, sometimes standing naked, at others seated with legs crossed and with a halo surrounding their heads (1). But Jainism never seems to have flourished in this region.

From the time of the oldest historical documents, the Tamils have been what is called in India, Brahminical. Their religion is Hinduism, which we cannot define in a few words. In fourteen centuries this religion has become much modified, and has split up into numerous sects. Eminent teachers have preached ideas of a very exalted philosophy as appertaining to it, but these have only served to increase the differences of cults and dogmas.

We are concerned only with iconography, and therefore the matter becomes comparatively simple, for although the Hindus do not often agree about philosophic ideas, they have always been in complete accord on the manner in which their gods and religious scenes should be portrayed.

Iconography in Southern India is entirely religious, and as liturgical subjects cannot be treated according to the fancy of the artist, extremely strict rules always govern the method of representing the gods and the sculptors chisel is invariably guided with exact precision.

For example, in our days an artist who wishes to delineate Pulliar (Ganēśa) cannot depart from the exact form fixed by custom. Not only must he give the god an elephant’s head, but he is compelled to direct the end of the trunk towards the left hand which holds a rice cake. One of the tusks must be broken, and that tusk must be the one on the right. The order of the emblems must not be inverted. The symbol called aṅkuśa must be in the second right hand and the pāśa in the second left hand.

A sculptor who wished to represent the god in any other way, would be accused of not knowing his profession, and of

(1) At Ariankuppam near Pondicherry, not far from the burning ground of the dead, there is a statue of this kind. It is about 1½ metres high, and is protected by a hut which the Indians call Brahmā-Kovil.
violating the most sacred laws of religion. The Brahmins would refuse to pay for such work, or to worship this heterodox divinity. An idol which was not made in accordance with the rules, would not be reverenced.

In the course of centuries the rules have been modified. If an ancient or modern relief of the same subject are compared, differences, often considerable, would be obvious; but if instead of contrasting images of different eras, contemporaneous images are compared, it will be seen that they are identical, except in trifling matters.

It may therefore be taken as true that, with regard to the country of Dravidian Architecture and Tamil language: when the same subject is represented on monuments of the same age it is depicted in the same manner.

So in each period the way of portraying gods and religious scenes are ruled by strict laws. It is for this reason that iconography has become truly a Science.

This work on the religious iconography of Southern India is divided into two parts which differ in their object, method and results:

1st, the study of Modern iconography;
2nd, the history of iconography.

Modern iconography can easily be studied in its entirety. All that is necessary is to obtain a good specimen of each of the modern images which represent gods or religious scenes which are the fixed patterns copied identically everywhere at the present time. By enquiry from artists, sculptors and painters the following facts may be ascertained about each image:

1. What it represents, and the legend to which it refers.
2. The name of the subject itself, and the technical names of the parts which compose it, such as people, dresses, emblems etc.
3. The rarity or frequency of the subject in modern iconography.

On the other hand, the study of ancient images is difficult and uncertain. To know exactly what those painters and sculpt-
ors wished to represent, it would be necessary that they should have written complete treatises on iconography, that their books should be extant in our own time, and present full proofs of authenticity.

We do not possess any work of the kind. We must fall back on other methods. In default of technical literature, a search has to be made in religious and literary writings for information on iconography. Archaeologists must seek for texts which they can apply to images.

Often no one can be found who is able to explain iconographical details. It frequently happens that several legends differing totally from each other can be applied to the same image. From the texts alone it is impossible to arrive at an exact knowledge of what the artist wished to delineate.

Finally, for this method to be of value it is important that texts used to interpret the images, should deal as nearly as possible with the same locality and be contemporaneous with the images themselves.

It is clear that it is not right to interpret a low-relief carved on the bank of the Cauvery by means of a text written on that of the Ganges, — again it would be illogical to interpret a 7th century image by a 10th century text.

For the iconography of Southern India it is evident that the greater part of the classic Sanskrit works of which translations are found in European libraries are of no avail, as they are in no way applicable to South India. It is Tamil literature that must be the subject of research. Unfortunately works written in the South of India are still very little known and their age uncertain. The greater part of them are modern and could only be used for modern iconography, for which no such help is required. The first thing would be to find the age of the Tamil works of which only copies are available. It would be necessary to make sure that these works had neither been altered nor interpolated. We shall not therefore try this plan (1), but make

use of a purely archaeological method, which is simply comparative iconography.

The age of the greater part of the sculptures which adorn Dravidian shrines can be ascertained with fair exactitude, because each low-relief is nearly always an integral part of the monument. The images which decorate the edifice were carved at the same time as the other ornamental parts of the design (pillars, capitols, brackets, attics, etc.) which declare the style of the building. We believe we have proved above that the style of a Dravidian monument is enough to give a clue to its approximate age.

We shall therefore arrange the images in classes according to the periods to which the monuments belong:

The **Pallava** period, 7th, 8th, and first half of the 9th centuries.

The **Chōla** period, second half of the 9th, the 10th, and 11th centuries.

The **Pândya** period, 12th, 13th, and first half of the 14th centuries.

The **Bijayanagar** (1) period, second half of the 14th, the 15th, and 16th centuries.

The **Madura** period, 17th century up to and including the present time.

Even a superficial examination of these images will show that the most ancient ones differ considerably from those of modern times, but the images of one period do not differ much from those of the epochs which immediately precede or succeed that period. That iconography has become modified in the course of centuries, and that the transformation has been slow and progressive, are therefore established.

The different phases of iconographical history form a continuous series down the centuries, so the last period of the series, modern iconography, may be completely known. Modern artists are the heirs of those of olden days, and the repositories of their traditions. Starting with modern iconography, we shall compare the images of each epoch with those that precede them.

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(1) Also called Vijayanagar, b and v being interchangeable. The extensive ruins of this place are near the village of Humpi in the Bellary District. (Tr.)
It being evident that the traditions have become modified during the course of time, we shall be content to note the differences, without forming any hypotheses. To take an example: Vishnū is usually recognized because he carries as insignia the śarīkha and chakra, the conch-shell and the disk. The latter is a wheel, which in our times is surrounded by a scarf (vastram) and by four flames (sudhar) which issue from the rim of the wheel. In the Bijayanagar period (15th century) the wheel is without a scarf. In the preceding (Pāṇḍya) period (12th century) the flames issue also from the axle of the wheel. In the Chōla period (10th century) the wheel is still decorated, but it is seen end-ways. Finally, in the Pallava period (10th century) Vishnū’s chakra is without flames. It may be said that there is not a single design which has not been subject to discernable transformation in the course of ages. It is important to follow from century to century the history of these modifications, in order to show clearly the identity of ancient images.

The study of comparative iconography is not limited to the textual rules which are used to represent religious subjects. It includes also statistics of these at the different periods of the art. In each epoch it is important to know which subjects were most often depicted, and on the other hand which were rare or even totally neglected.

It is not without use to know that the subject called Sōma-skanda (Śiva with Pārvatī and Subrahmanya) is found over and over again in the Śivaite temples of the Pallavas. This design shows what was most essential in the religion of that period. Nor is it without interest to compare the different periods with each other, from the point of view of the statistics of religious subjects.

It is thus that we find that certain subjects often represented in our days seem quite unknown to ancient sculptors.

Is it not remarkable that the images of Rāma, Sītā, Lakshmanā and Hanumān are nowhere to be found in temples prior to the 10th century? That Krishṇa and the bathing girls (Jala-krīḍā), Krishṇa playing the flute (Vēṇugāpāla) are never found in ancient temples and that the Vishnuvite symbol called nāmam never appears in sculpture until after the 15th century?
INTRODUCTION

The importance of the study of iconography is useful not only for the history of the art, but for the history of literature and religion. Southern India is a country where monuments are very numerous, and of very great size. These monuments, which date from different times, are covered with sculptures which form an inexhaustible mine of historical documents.

But they have even greater interest when it is considered that they express the soul of the people. These are the manifestations of the human mind in a country which has long possessed an advanced and extremely particularized civilization.
CHAPTER I

SIVAITE ICONOGRAPHY

§ 1. — Śiva.

The Liṅgam.

Śiva (1) the great god of Southern India (where his Sanskrit names are Mahādēva, Mahēśa, and Mahēśvara) is made manifest in the Liṅgam.

![Liṅgam Image]

The shape of the Liṅgam is very variable. Figure 1 is the most ordinary. It is composed of two parts:

1. A pedestal called avaddeyar (pīṭha) (2). This is sometimes

(1) In Tamil Śivan, from the Sanskrit Śiva (the propitious), also called Sadāśiva (the eternally happy), Paramaśiva (Śiva god of heaven), Paramēśvara (the sublime god), Viśvanātha (the god of the world), Iśvara (the glorious), Hara (the almighty), etc.

(2) Some times also called saluṅkha or vedi.
rectangular, but more often circular. Its usual shape is shown in Figure 1. The lower part is supposed to represent Brahmā, and the upper part Viṣṇu, these two acting as a support to the Līṅgam proper, which is Śiva.

The part played by the avāḍeyar is not only to support the Līṅgam, but to collect and draw off the fluids with which it is anointed (1). So, the upper part of the avāḍeyar is hollowed like a vase. A sort of gutter or spout called komugam (2) which ought always to point to the right of a person looking towards the shrine, acts as a drain for the liquids.

2. The Līṅgam proper. This is a cylinder placed upright on the pedestal the upper part of which is ended off by a spherical cap. It represents the Phallus: the vertical part of the cylinder is inscribed with upright grooves which indicate the ligaments of the foreskin and are called the Līṅga-rekai (see Fig. 1).

What we have just described is the sthāvaram, that is to say, the immovable līṅgam of the temples (3); the Mūla-līṅga which is found in sanctuaries, is made of granite. There is an infinite variety of līṅgams. Entire mountains (Tiruvannamallai for example) are sometimes considered to be līṅgams. Several temples are famous because they contain a līṅgam made of an element.

Conjeevaram (Kaṇṭhīpuram) (4) has the Līṅgam of earth, Jambukēvara the Līṅgam of water, Arunachchala (Tiruvannamallai) that of fire. The Līṅgam of air is at Kalahasti, and that of ether at Chidambaram. Some līṅgams are made of earth (pārthīva-līṅga). There is an immense variety of jaṅgamams or movable līṅgams. The religious of the Līṅgāyat Sect called pandāram and andi (mendicants) carry miniature līṅgams.

(1) All statues in temples are thus supported by pedestals which act as receivers for the sacred oils. The avāḍeyar of the Līṅgam is nothing else, and does not have the signification of yōnti.
(2) Called also sōmasūtra.
(3) In large temples there are 108 līṅgams, each of which has a special name.
(4) Throughout this book the spelling of the name of this town is usually Kaṇṭhīpuram instead of Conjeevaram. The pronunciation of the i is the same as ee. (Tr.)
shaped something like an egg, which are kept in a silver box fastened to the arm, or neck, or in the hair.

**Historical.** — It is not a fact, as several authors make out, that the worship of the *Liṅgam* is a relatively recent acquisition of Hinduism. Iconography proves the contrary. From the beginning of the history of monuments in Southern India, the *Liṅgam* has been an integral part of Sivaite Hinduism (1).

In the *Pallava* monuments (7th century) the *Liṅgam* is found everywhere, and it is absolutely impossible to believe that it was only placed in the shrines at a later period.

*Siva*, god of the *Liṅgam*, is seen here to be god the creator, and god of life. The beginnings of life are wrapped in mystery, and European Science is no better off in knowledge of this matter than the Hindus, who from the most ancient times have worshipped *Siva* the supreme god, in the form of the *Liṅgam*. The worship of the phallus is the union of the mysteries of generation with those of divinity.

The shape of the *Liṅgam* being subject to many variations, it is not possible to give the history of it. We may however note that in *Pallava* temples the *Liṅgam* is not cylindrical, but prismatic (2). Such for example is the *Liṅgam* at *Kailāsanātha* (the sanctuary of *Mahēndravāram*) (8th century) at *Kaṅchi-puram* (see Pl. I.), which is a prism with twelve facets. In the *Chōla* period, gigantic *liṅgams* were carved, such as those which are placed in the great *vimānas* of Tanjore and of Gangai-kondapuram.

**Rishabhā.**

In front of the *Liṅgam* a seated bull is nearly always to be seen. This is called *Rishabhā*, but more usually *Nandi*.

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(1) The legend of *Siva* issuing from the *Liṅgam* is represented in the cave of the *Avaṭārs* at *Ellora*. The *Liṅgam* is sculptured in low-relief in No. 1 cave at *Bādāmi* in a place where it forms part of the decoration, and so no one can maintain that it could have been added subsequently. The cave of the *Avaṭārs* and No. 1 cave at *Bādāmi* certainly belong to the 6th century.

(2) It is strange enough that the phallus should be represented by a prism.
It is often confused with Nandikēśvara, the door keeper at Kailāsa with a bull’s head on a human body, of whom mention will be made later. Śiva’s riding animal is also called Nandi (see Plate XVIII), otherwise called Dharmadēva, god of virtue.

Rishabha is always seated, never standing before the Liṅgam. It belongs to the kind of oxen which have humps on their backs, and is always a young bull with budding horns. Its presence in front of the Liṅgam is explained as the symbol of generic force. Rishabha’s head is turned towards the Liṅgam, and its feet except one of its fore feet, are gathered under the body. It always has a collar ornamented with bells, round its neck. (See Plate IL)

Historical. — In the Museum of the Louvre in Paris, in the collection brought back from Chaldea by the Sarzec mission (Excavations at Tello, A. O. 2354) there is a small low-relief showing a bull absolutely identical with Nandi. In Southern India it is incontestable that from the 6th century Nandi has been placed in front of the Liṅgam, and considered to be an emblem of Śiva. Time does not seem to have made much change in its shape.

We have said (1) that the 8 monoliths (7th century) at Mavalipuram (2) consist of 5 rathas, an elephant, a lion, and a bull. The last, placed towards the East between the Bhima- and Draupadi-rathas, is a classic Nandi. In the cave near the light-house at Mavalipuram, at the end of the sanctuary there is a low-relief which represents Śimaskanda and Nandi seated at the feet of Śiva and Pārvatī. It is often found in the shore temple at the same place and in the Kailāsanātha temple (both 8th century) at Kañchipuram. The colossal Nandi at Tanjore is universally known (3).

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(1) See Vol. I, Archaeology of Southern India. (Tr.)
(2) The correct name of this place is Mahabalipuram. We adhere to the corrupt form Mavalipuram, because it is so called by the dwellers in the neighbouring villages. The English name The Seven Pagodas is too cumbersome. (Tr.)
(3) In front of the temple of Virāpāksha (8th century) at Pattadakal near Bādāmi, under an isolated pavilion there is a very large and beautiful Nandi, which recalls the one at Tanjore.
The Worship of the Liṅgam.

The office Śiva-pūjā is performed three times daily — morning, noon and evening — in the sanctuary (garbhagriham) of the temple, by Brahmins called Saivas, who have been initiated (dikshā). Śiva-pūjā comprises three portions:

1. Abhishēka (sacred anointing), which consists of anointing the Liṅgam with milk, butter and sesamum oil (1).

2. Dhūpa (incense burning), which comprises burning perfumes (sāmbirāṇi).

3. Naivēdyā (oblation), offering of food which must not contain the principle of animal life.

Besides this, prayers are recited, lamps lit and the Liṅgam decked with garlands of flowers, especially of the sort of jasmine called in Tamil zambac or mugri (Sanskrit: mudgara).

Śivā is very propitious to those who adorn the Liṅgam with flowers. The origin of the festival Śiva-rātri (Śiva’s night) is a proof of this. The bhōja (hunter) Sivagossariar killed such a number of birds in the forests that he was unable to carry so heavy a burden to the town of Varanachy before night fall. In order to escape from being devoured by ferocious beasts, he climbed with his bag into a vepu (margosa) tree. Sivagossariar slept badly, for it was new moon in the month of Phalguna (March), and the night was cold. In shaking the tree, flowers, leaves and drops of dew, fell on a liṅgam which was at its foot. This lucky chance caused supernatural favours to be accorded to him (2).

Tiruvanaikaval. — In the temple of Jambukēśvara the image of the adoration of the Liṅgam by an elephant is worshipped (Pl. III). At the foot of the tree, an elephant pours water with his trunk on a liṅgam which Pārvatī adorns with flowers.

Rāma-Liṅgam.

When Rāma, Sītā, Lakhsmāna and Hanumān were crossing

1) officiating Brahmins never use coconut oil for this purpose.
2) The Guimet Museum possesses a panel from a car, which shows this scene.
Rāmēśvaram island after the defeat of Rāvana, they worshiped and adorned with garlands of flowers the well known Liṅgam called Rāmanātha-svāmi (God of Rāma) which Hanumān had brought from the Ganges (Plate IV) (1).

Historical. — We have never seen Rāma-Liṅgam depicted on any ancient temple. It is probably a local legend.

Śiva issuing from the Liṅgam.

The real presence of Śiva in the Liṅgam is proved by many legends, the two most famous being those of Kaṇṇappa and Mārkaṇḍa.

Kaṇṇappanāyanandr-purāṇam. — The hunter Tinnen, while chasing a wild boar one day, reached the banks of the river Ponnamogaliar. A small Śiva temple had been built near the spot. Tinnen, with another hunter Kadden, visited this shrine. Living always in the forests, he knew nothing of religious matters, but his friend Kadden explained to him that the god-head was incarnate in the Liṅgam. Tinnen felt within himself a burning devotion. Daily thereafter he offered the god water, flowers and even meat, since he knew not the rules of the cult. One day he saw drops of blood flowing from the eye of the god (2). Young Tinnen thinking that wicked persons had broken it, tore out one of his own eyes to replace the one which Śiva had lost. Next day Tinnen saw drops of blood flowing from the other eye, so he wanted to cut out his only remaining one, with a knife. Both his hands were required for this operation, for, after losing his eye sight he would not be able to find the eye-socket on the Liṅgam in order to put his eye into it. He therefore put his sandalled foot on the spot and was just going to insert the knife into his own eye (see Fig. 2) when Śiva coming out of the Liṅgam, stayed his arm.

So Tinnen was loaded with blessings and was given the name

(1) The shrine at Rāmēśvaram is a very celebrated place of pilgrimage. Certain pandārams called Kāṭhi-kaoris go there in order to carry to it with particular devotion, a little water from the Ganges.
(2) Śiva's face is sometimes drawn on the liṅgam.
of Kannappa (in Tamil kannu means eye), that is: He who gave his eye to the god.

Fig. 2. — Kannappa (Tinnen offering his eye to the god).

The image of Kannappa cutting out his eye to offer it to the Lingam is very often reproduced in Southern India (1). It

(1) A sculpture in high relief (copied as a drawing by Regamey in the Tour du monde, XLIX, 1266th book, page 237) is found in the Madura temple. The story of Kannappa is very celebrated, but the greater number of Hindus do not know their religion and it is not surprising that no one was able to inform Mr. Guimet when he asked for an explanation of the scene.

« But here we have before us a sculpture of quite archaic character, of the type which reminds us of Etruscan or Pelasgian art. A sort of king with a satyr's head and pointed beard, stands like a dancer while he cuts out his eyes with a knife. In front of him on a little hillock a small recess is surmounted by a five headed serpent.

« Although there is agreement in what is told us about what this god is doing with his knife, our guides do not give us always the same name. Some say Puruchambreyan, others Chikan. Regamey who also sought enlightenment, tells us the name is Vaden. Probably, as usual, every one is right, meanwhile there is a character to identify. » (Eight days in India, by Emile Guimet: Tour du monde, XLIX, book 1266, p. 236.)

« What a number of details, allegories and scenes are to be seen... What then are the archaeologists of India doing? To the task, gentlemen,
is particularly worshipped at Kāḷahasti. We have never found it in monuments prior to the 16th century.

Mārkaṇḍa-mōkṣham. — The deliverance (Sanskrit: mōkṣha) of Mārkaṇḍa (after the Skanda Purāṇa).

The youthful Mārkaṇḍa, 16 years of age, was about to die. Yama the god of Death had already passed a cord round his neck, in order to drag him off to his kingdom. In a supreme effort to retain his life, the pious Mārkaṇḍa clasped in his arms one of the 108 liṅgams which is called Amurda-Gadeśvara. This opened and Śiva god of life appeared in all his power, overthrew the king of the lower world and transfixed him with his trident śāla (see Pl. V). Śiva here appears as the god of life and its surnamed Mrityunjaya (vanquisher of death) and Kāla-Kāla (conqueror of Yama) who triumphs over death personified by Yama.

Historical. — We cannot be sure that this subject which is often repeated in the caves of Ellora (6th, 7th, and 8th centuries) (1), was known in Southern India in the 7th century. In the Kailāsanātha temple at Kāncipuram there is a relief (A. REA, Pallava Architecture, Pl. XXXV, fig. 2) which seems to represent this scene. The sculpture has deteriorated so much, we cannot be certain on this point.

The Distinctive Characteristics of Śiva.

In South Indian iconography, Śiva is represented in human form sometimes with five faces; hence the names Pañcha-mukha (one who has five faces) and Pañčhānana (one who has five heads). He had three heads (the other two being Brahmā and Viṣṇu) after Sarasvatī and Lakṣmī found him in the forest of Taruka. All the same, he generally has only one head. The dressing of

there is work to be done. s (Eight days in India, by Emile GIMLET: Tour du monde, XLIX, book 1267, page 24.)

(1) At the back of the cave of the Avatāras the first low-relief shows this scene. It is usually admitted that the cave dates from the 6th century. This low-relief proves clearly that at that time, the real presence of Śiva in the Liṅgam was admitted. The same subject is also twice represented in the Kailāsa at Ellora (8th century).
his hair is a sort of tiara formed of plaited hair (in Tamil sadai, from the Sanskrit jāta), so the god is also called Jāta-dhara, Kapardī and Piṅgara (1).

In the middle of the knot of hair of the god, a head is found. It used to be a deaths-head. At the present day it is said to be the fifth head of Brahmā, cut off by Bhairava (Śiva).

Śiva’s head dress is ornamented with a crescent moon (whence his names Chandra-śekhara and Piraśūdi) and the goddess Gaṅgā who is delineated with clasped hands (2) and the body of a siren. So the god who carries Gaṅgā in his head of hair, is called Gaṅgāviṇīan and Gaṅgādhara.

Śiva’s skin is white — doubtless because his body is covered with cow-dung ashes (vibhūti, tirunīru) in the manner of Sivaite holy men. His forehead is marked with the three white horizontal stripes worn by Śivabhaktas (worshippers of Śiva). They are made on the forehead by the three fingers (index, middle and ring) of the right hand after covering them with ashes. These three stripes are called Vibhūtipundram.

In the middle of the forehead a third eye is placed vertically, hence Śiva’s names: Mukkanan, Virūpāksha, Tryambaka (3). This eye of Śiva must not be confused with the small white or red circle (in Tamil pottu, in Sanskrit tilaka) which ornaments the foreheads of Hindus and takes the same place as the Buddhist ārṇa.

Śiva’s ears are always dissimilar. The right ear is long and hanging, and a small ring in the form of a snake is attached to its extremity (nāgakunḍala). The left ear on the other hand is ornamented with a big round buckle. This lack of symmetry is found in most ancient sculptures.

The snake is a very characteristic emblem of Śiva. Viṣṇu is certainly shown lying and seated on Adiśeṣha, Krīṣṇa dances on Kāliya, but Śiva alone is adorned with snakes, which serve him as bracelets (vaṅgi), scarves (vastram) or belts.

(1) All Sivaite gods have the same head-dress of plaited hair. On the other hand Viṣṇu and the Vishnuite gods have a cylindrical tiara.
(2) In the fashion called in Tamil kumudu-girathu and in Sanskrit aṇjali.
(3) In the oldest images of Śiva, at Bādāmī and at Ellora, this is designed in a very neat fashion.
areynāmam), so he is called Pōṅgaravanindu (1). In the low-reliefs at Bāḍāmi and Mavalipuram the snake is often the sole emblem of the god.

Śiva is frequently decked with the skulls and bones of the foes of the gods and of men. For this he bears the names Kapāli, or Kapāla-mālin (adorned with skulls) and Kaṅkāla (adorned with bones).

The neck of Śiva is blue. We shall see that this is because at the time of the churning of the sea of milk, the god swallowed a poison which turned his throat blue, hence his names Niḷakantha and Naṅchurāikanda. Usually Śiva has four arms, rarely more, and never only two.

Each of the arms carries a weapon or emblem which goes towards the characterization of the god. Śiva's most particular weapon is perhaps the trident, śūla or triśūla whence the name Śulapāṇiyan (he who holds the śūla in his hand).

The shape of the śūla (see Fig. 3) was quite different in the Pallava period. It has not really three points, because the centre

(1) Gaṇēśa and Garuḍa are also ornamented with snakes.
one is straight while the other two are joined together to form a circle.

The śūla recalls the Buddhist tri-ratna: in fact in many cases it may be said that the śūla takes the place of the tri-ratna. The latter often ornamented the upper part of the horse shoe of the Buddhist period. In the Gaṇiśa temple at Māvalsūram, the śūla occupies exactly the same position in the building (see Vol. I, Architecture, Fig. 33). Besides the śūla, the principal emblems of Śiva are four in number, which we will divide into two series:

1. The emblems of the right hand: the hatchet and the drum;
2. The emblems of the left hand: the antelope and the cord.

This division is of some importance, as except for some out of the way instances in which the artist is at fault, these emblems are never invested although Śiva carries only two of them, as follows:

the hatchet (in the right hand), the antelope (in the left);
the hatchet (in the right hand), the cord (in the left);
the drum (in the right hand), the antelope (in the left);
the drum (in the right hand), the cord (in the left).

The hatchet (mazhu) and the antelope (mān) are emblems of Śiva in accordance with the following legend:

When Śiva lived in the forest of Taruka in the guise of a beggar, the wives of the Rishis fell in love with him, and almost lost their virtue. The angry Rishi dug a hole from which a tiger made by their magic arts sprang and attacked the god. He however seized the tiger, flayed it and dressed himself in its skin.

The Rishi sent an antelope against him, but Śiva caught it and held it in his left hand. They then threw at the god a hatchet made red hot in the fire, which the god kept as an emblem in his right hand.

In Sanskrit the hatchet is called paraśu, whence the god gets the name Paraśupāni. In our time the hatchet takes the form of a club (gadd) and it looks like the emblem called aṅkuṣa of which we will speak later.

The drum which Śiva holds in his right hand is the udakkai (Sanskrit: ḍamara) used by religious mendicants. By its shape (which is that of a hyperboloid of an arc) it recalls an hour-glass, or the toy known in Europe as the diabolo.
Lastly the cord (pāśa) is a universal emblem of sovereignty. In olden temples it is a small kind of ring which the god holds by putting his index finger into it. In modern iconography it is a big buckle ornamented with three flames (sudar).

These are the principal insignia of Śiva, but the following may also be noted: 1. A small sort of śūla called pāsupata, which name is derived from the Sanskrit word pāsupati (the master of living creatures, and epithet of Śiva); 2. The vessel which holds fire (tū); 3. The cloud forming a flag whence the name Jimūtakētu (Śiva); 4. The beggars bowl (Tamil: kabalam, from the Sanskrit kapāla).

Finally, for which we have already given the reason, Śiva is clothed in the skin of a tiger.

Munmūrti or Trimūrti.

As we have said, Śiva is said to be the supreme god in Southern India. Plate VI represents a subject which shows well, that for Sivaites, Brahmā and Vishṇu are divinities consubstantial with, but inferior to Śiva. Śiva is in the middle, and has but one leg, from his left side Vishṇu issues, and has only a left leg, while Brahmā issues from his right side, with only a right leg. Vishṇu and Brahmā seem to emanate from the same substance as Śiva.

Historical. — This subject was observed by Langlies (Monuments of Hindustan) in the Puthu-mandapam at Madura. We have never seen it in more ancient monuments. In those of the 6th and 7th centuries the image of Śiva is often seen with Brahmā on his right and Vishṇu on his left, but they look like acolytes or subordinates. It is to be noted that in the oldest Sivaites temples (of the Avatārs and Kailāsa at Ellora, and Kailāsanātha at Kaṇchi puram) the left side of the temple is given over to Vishnuvite iconography.

It is not impossible that the trinity had been thought of in the 6th and 7th centuries. The Hindus may have been inspired by Buddhistic, Egyptian and Christian trinities. All the same, it is only in modern iconography that the doctrine of the trinity
is found expressed in the clear fashion that we have just seen (1).

In Hindu iconography Śiva is sometimes shown with three faces (Trimūkha) as he was in the forest of Taruka near Mayaveraam. More often the god has five faces (Pañchamukha).

Very probably it is a mistake to give the name Trimūrti cave to the three small cells to the North of the group at Mavali-puram. We have said before (2), that the Northern cave does not hold (as is thought) the image of Brahmā. We think that the sculpture rather represents Subrahmanya. In fact we think that we can affirm that Brahmā is always shown with three faces. The image in question has only one head, which is something like the one in the cave in Trichinopoly, which we think we are able to identify with Subrahmanya.

Brahmā.

The following legend proves the superiority of Śiva: Brahmā and Vishnu each asserted that he was the greatest of the gods. To prove it, each tried to throw down a huge column. Brahmā raised himself in the air and tried to reach the top of the column, while Vishnu took the form of a boar, and dug up the ground to undermine the base. Their efforts were useless. Suddenly the column opened and Śiva appeared in all his glory. Vishnu and Brahmā recognised his divinity, and worshipped him.

The famous event which is the subject of this legend is commemorated every year on the nakshatram (star) day of the month of Kartigai (October-November) by the festival of Paurnima. It

(1) A single god with three heads representing Śiva, Vishnu and Brahmā is never found in ancient temples. In the cave at Elephanta there is a colossal image of a god with three heads, which is known as Trimūrti. Some authors (Langles for example) have doubted that this interpretation is well founded, but as the image is a little dilapidated, it is difficult to be sure.

The doubt would be cleared up, if instead of confining oneself to the cave of Elephanta, the iconography of the Ellora caves was studied. The same image will be found there in many places, notably in the sanctuary of that part of the Kailāsa called Lankēvāra. By examining the best preserved sculptures it would be clear that this subject represents Śiva with three faces.

It is possible that the god may here be considered as Creator, Preserver, and Destroyer. In any case it does not carry any of the insignia of Vishnu or Brahmā, but only those of Śiva. Probably this image was fashionable in the Bombay country in the 9th century.

(2) Vol. I, Architecture. (Tr.)
takes place at Tiruvannamalai, where Śiva's image, appearing in a flaming column is a special object of worship (Fig. 4).

Every year at the time of this festival, a great fire is lit at the top of the mountain in honour of him who is called Annāma-

![Image of Brahmā (Śiva at Tiruvannamalai)](image)

lainātha and Aruṇāchalēśa. The pilgrims pour mantegu (oil) into a large copper bowl. A huge roll of cloth is used as a wick for this enormous lamp.

**Historical.** — This subject is depicted twice in the Kailāsānātha temple at Kaṇčhipuram (8th century) (Pl. VII) (1). The same image occupies a niche on the North side of the great

(1) In the cave of the Āvatāras at Ellora (6th century) there is a large
vimána at Tanjore. Brahmá is there shown flying with wings. The column is one of fire, for in all the images the sculptor has never forgotten to adorn it with flames. The same subject is found on the Sundara-Pândya-gópuram (16th century) of Jambukēśvara (Vol. I, Pl. XXXVIII, B).

Bhairava (the Redoubtable).

According to another legend Brahmá and Vishṇu were disputing about their relative superiority. Śiva appeared in the

Fig. 5. — Bhairava, alias Vayiravan.

low-relief representing Śiva appearing in the midst of the column. Some authors (such as Lane, Monuments of Hindustan) have confused this with Narasimha leaving the column. The scene is depicted in a practically identical way as in modern iconography. The same subject is carved in the Kailása at Ellora (8th century).
shape of Bhairava; of the five heads of Brahmā he cut off one, and struck Vishnu on the forehead with his trident. Drops of blood issued, and Bhairava made Brahmā's head which he had just struck off, drink them (1).

Bhairava is accompanied by his dog, which was an incarnation of Kundodaren (he who carries Śiva's umbrella). He lapped up the blood which fell on the ground (Fig. 5).

Bhairava is digambara (clothed in air), that is to say naked. He does not even wear the strip of cloth called laṅguti. In one hand he holds a vessel made of Brahmā's skull, and called kabalām (from the Sanskrit kapāla), in the other the śūla. The other hands hold the drum (udukkai) and the cord (pāśa). His scarf (vastram) is a necklace of skulls. He is different from Bhikshātana-mārti (of whom we will take notice later) in that he does not wear sandals (pādaradhchāi) (from the Sanskrit pādaraksha).

Historical. — Bhairava is delineated on the Dharmarāja-ratha at Mavalipuram (7th century). In the Kailāsanātha temple at Kaṇchipuram (8th century) a low-relief shows Śiva cutting off the fifth head of Brahmā (A. Rea, Pallava Architecture, Pl. XXXIV, figure on the left). This image is to be seen also at Chidambaram (13th century) (see Pl. VIII). Lastly, it is very often represented in our days.

Hari-Hara.

Śiva and Vishnu are sometimes shown united in one person. The right side (to the left of the observer) is white and represents Śiva (Hara) while the left represents Vishnu (Hari), and is painted blue.

Historical (2). — One of the sculptures in the Dharmarājaraatha at Mavalipuram (7th century) probably represents Hari-Hara. A statue of Hari-Hara is in the most Southerly niche of

(1) It is added that he then placed Brahmā's head in his hair.
(2) This form of the divinity was known in the 6th century. An image of Hari-Hara is found at Bāddāni in No. 1 cave (Pl. IX) and in No. 3 cave which bears an inscription dated 578.
the Western face of the base of the great vimâna at Tanjore. Hari-Hara is still worshipped in our times but is very rarely depicted.

_Siva_ (master of the dance), _Nadarâja_ (king of the dance) (1).

_Siva_ is often shown dancing the Tândava. The reason is given in the following legend:

_Siva_ and _Kâlî_ (his wife) quarrelled one day about their respective talent in dancing, each claiming to dance better than the other. They got _Vishnu_ to arbitrate. _Kâlî_ imitated the gestures of her husband so perfectly that _Vishnu_ did not see any difference, and found it impossible to decide. But _Siva_ had recourse to a ruse. He lifted his leg much higher than the modesty of a female would allow. _Kâlî_ did not dare to imitate him and so _Siva_ was declared victor.

In our times _Siva_ dancing the Tândava (2) is represented in many ways. Sometimes the god is seen in disorderly movement lifting his leg to the height of his head, but the image almost

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(1) Called also _Nadēśvara_, god of the dance. _Nadēsa_ comes from the Sanskrit _Nâḍēśa_; _Nadarâja_ from the Sanskrit _Nâḍârâja_.

(2) The following letter appeared in the _Madras Mail_ of the 29th December 1925: "Sir, — _Siva_, in his incarnation of _Nâtesa_, the special deity worshipped in the holy shrine of Chidambaram, which has, from time immemorial, been a visible symbol of a philosophic phase of the Hindu religion, is considered by the Saivites to have been born on the full-moon day of the month of _Mârgasira_ and in the constellation of _Ardra_ — the sixth lunar mansion, which falls on the 30th instant. On the night previous, the bathing of the image of the God _Nâtesa_ takes place on a grand scale, with pots full of milk, honey, lemon-juice, ghee, oil, etc. When the bathing is over, the image being profusely decorated, is taken round in a grand procession. Subsequently, the _Anandatandavam_ — the dance in ecstatic joy — follows the most impressive scene of the _Ardra_ festival. Chidambaram is the place where, according to Hindu beliefs, persons, even of the lowest caste, have attained oneness with God, by sincere devotion and faith. _Nanda_, a _Parâsîya_ saint, attained eternal felicity by his intense devotions at Chidambaram. It is the only place in the whole of India, where no attempt has been made to import conventional ideas of Godhead, into the purely philosophic basis of the Hindu religion. The prominent idea, underlying the _Sthala Purâna_ of Chidambaram, is that the great God, having perceived his own self in Himself, is illuminated with wisdom, and dances with very joy on account thereof, and that the devotee who visits this temple, and witnesses this dance, is said to become himself absorbed in God.

Negapatam, Dec. 25. 1925. 

_S. Subramania Iyer._
universal in Southern India is that which is worshipped at Chidambaram (Pl. X). The peculiarity of this image is the position of the left leg (kāl) and the left arm, which are thrown almost horizontally to the other side. The god in our days dances in the middle of an almost circular tiruvachchi which (like all tiruvachchis) is ornamented with designs like flames.

The god had dishevelled hair with an ornament of the crescent moon. The figure of Gaṅgā appears in the knot of plaits (jatā) which rise above his head. Of the four hands, the back one on the right holds down the drum (udukkai) adorned with snakes. The second right hand is lifted, the ends of the fingers pointing upwards in the position called abhaya-hastam. One of the left hands holds a vessel containing the sacred fire (ti) and the other left arm is carried to the front. The god is clothed in a tiger’s skin.

His scarves (urumalai, vastram) are made of snakes and human heads (munḍa-mālā). The left foot is raised and the right one is placed on a giant (asura) called Asamaṇḍa or Vyadhi (the king of maladies) who lies prostrate, thrown down by the god, holding a snake in his hand. The antelope (mān) leaps about beside him.

Gandruvars (Gandharvas) fly in the air, musicians (Kinnaras) form a complete orchestra for the god’s dance. Some beat drums (dole) beaten with the hand, or tambourines (nagar) beaten with sticks. The other musicians play the pipes (lurti), cymbals (talam) and all sorts of instruments, like the clarionet (nagassaram, otu) or the horn (bouri, combu, tuturai, karna, pilanikojel).

Bhadraṅgaṅga, Śiva’s wife, is on the left of the god, while on the right Vishnu declares the superiority of Śiva over Kāla in the dance, and beats a drum.

Round Śiva are his worshippers, of whom we will speak later: Pataṅjaṅga, the god with the body of a snake; Vyāghrapāda, the tiger-footed; Nandikeśvara, with the head of a bull; Bhṛṅgī with three legs; the great Sivaite sages: Appar, Mānikkavāchakar, Sambandar, Sundarar; Lastly the Brahmins of the very high and illustrious caste of Dikshitars, specially consecrated to the worship of Chidambaramūrti (Nadēṣa).

There is not in all Southern India a sanctuary more reverenc-
ed than Chidambaram, where innumerable pilgrims bring their offerings. At Madura and Srirangam the Brahmins prohibit access to the central enclosure, but it is not so at Chidambaram. The observer is allowed to penetrate as far as the famous sabha, the kanaka, the golden temple, and to see at a few yards from himself the effigy of Sabhapathi (Nadaraja), god of Tillai.

The festival of Chidambaram takes places in the month of Mārgali (December-January), whence its name Mārgali-Tirumaṅjana (procession of Mārgali).

Historical. — Statues of Śiva dancing in the same style as at Chidambaram are found in the niches of the vimānas at Tanjore and GangaiKondapuram. In these two temples they occupy the most Westerly niche of the Southern aspect of the vimāna. This special pose was therefore known since the beginning of the 11th century on the banks of the Cauvery and the Coleroon. In these old images the gestures are much more elegant than in modern art.

We have nowhere found the image of Śiva dancing in the Chidambaram style in the temples of Ellora, Bādāmi, Mavali-puram or Kañchipuram. In all these monuments Śiva's dance is in any and every style, except that of Chidambaram. At Mavali-puram, Nadesa is seen on the first story of the Dharmarāja-ratha.

At Kañchipuram, Śiva dancing, but not in the Chidambaram style, is found so often that we cannot mention all the places in which it may be seen (for example A. Rea, Pallava Architecture: in the Kailāsanaṭha temple, Pl. XXVIII, XXXVIII, XL, fig. 2, LI, fig. 1, CXXIII, fig. 3, etc., and the Tripuraṇkēśvara temple, Pl. CIX, fig. 1) (1).

Gajāsura-saṅhara-mūrti (Yānaiuritōne)
(Paramasivam flaying the Elephant).

Śiva is often seen in modern art in the middle of an elephant's skin with his foot placed on the head of the pachyderm. A giant

(1) At Bādāmi, Nadesa is found on the right of the façade of cave No. 1; at Ellora, in all the Brahminical caves. Pl. XI shows Śiva dancing in the Rāmēśvara cave. Nadesa is also represented in the Brahminical cave of Atwolt near Pattadakal.
taking the form of an elephant (Sanskrit: gaja) pursued the devotees of Śiva, who ripped it open, transfixed the giant with his sūla, and made himself a garment of the elephant’s skin.

**Fig. 6. — Gajásura-samhara-mūrti** (Śiva robing himself in the skin of the elephant).

**Historical.** — This subject is represented in the Kailāsanātha and Muktēśvara at Kaṇcipuram (A. R. E. A, Pallava Architecture, Pl. CXIII, fig. 1, and CV on the right) (1).

*Bhikshātanamūrti* (Pichandi).

This is the name of Śiva begging, when under the form of

(1) At Ellora this is found everywhere. Pl. XII shows a large low-relief on the left of the entrance to the cave Dhumar-Lāna: Śiva transfixing the giant while he rips open the elephant.
Bhairava, having cut off Brahmā’s head, he was smitten with madness and set out to beg throughout the world in the form of an andi. It was under this form that he went to the forest of Taruka, and that he seduced the wives of the Rishis, who sent against him the tiger, the antelope, and the incandescent axe.

Pichandi is always accompanied by the antelope (mān) which frolics near his right hand, in his left hand he holds a śūlā which rests on his shoulder. In the other hands he holds the drum (udukkai) and the beggars bowl (kabalam). He is naked (digambara, clothed in air) and he has on his feet wooden sandals called pādaruksha, such as devotees wear. They are fastened to the feet by a peg called kamil which passes between the toes.

Historical.— Śiva the beggar is represented in the Dharmarājaratha at Mavalipuram (7th century). On the Kailāsanātha temple at Kaṇchipuram, he is often seen surrounded by the wives of the Rishis of the forest of Taruka (see for example: A. Rea, Pallava Architecture, Pl. LXI, and XLVI, fig. 1). Plate XIII shows him on the Eastern gopuram at Chidambaram.

Śiva in his chariot (Tripurasyahāra).

Śiva is sometimes depicted standing in a chariot driven by Brahmā. The god carries the weapon Pinaṅka (1) and shoots arrows against the town of Tripuram where three giants had taken refuge.

History. — This subject is twice repeated in the Kailāsanātha temple at Kaṇchipuram (A. Rea, Pallava Architecture, Pl. XXXIII, fig. 6, and XXXIX, fig. 1). It is rare in our times (2). Several authors have confounded Śiva with Rāma or Arjuna.

(1) Pinaṅka is the name of Śiva’s bow. The god is also called Pinaṅkapāṇi (he who carries Pinaṅka).

(2) This subject is found three times at Ellora, twice in the Kailāsa, and once in the cave of the Avatāra where it constitutes a large low-relief, the last on the right at the back of the cave (Pl. XIV).
Dakshiṇāmūrti.

Plate XV shows Śiva in the form of Dakshiṇāmūrti. He is called Mahā Yōgi (the Great Ascetic) and is seated on a tiger’s skin in the position called Yōgāsana, that is to say in the manner of Yōgis, under an ālamaram tree, which grows at the top of a hillock. A sort of belt (aṅgostram or bahu-paddai) holds up his knee. His plentiful hair falls over his shoulders. As a guru he teaches his doctrine to his disciples who are collected round him (1).

Historical. — In our opinion this image is very interesting because of its incontestable resemblance to the first sermon of Buddha before his first five disciples. In the ancient images of the Kailāsanātha temple (8th century) at Kaṅchīpuram (Pl. XVI) and of the Koranganātha at Srinivasanātur (10th century) (Vol. I, Architecture, Pl. XXX. A.) hinds are always seen at the feet of the god. The presence of these hinds can only be explained in one way. The first sermon of Buddha took place in the deer park. These animals represented by Buddhists have survived

(1) In the Bhāgavata Purāṇa (Burnouf’s translation), book IV, chap. vi, is the following passage:

* 31. The gods saw a fig tree...
* 32. It was a hundred yōjanas high and its branches had a spread of seventy five. It threw around it an immovable shade. It harboured no nest, and never was penetrated by heat.
* 33. Under this tree, born of the great contemplation of the Yōga, who is the refuge of those who desire salvation, the Sūras saw Śiva seated, looking like the god of death, who had put away his wrath.
* 34. He showed himself in peaceful guise, served by Nandana, and by other great Siddhas, calm like himself, his friend (Kuṭṭa) the chief of Guhyakas and Yakshas, seated by his side.
* 35. The supreme Lord walking in the way of knowledge, in the austerities of Yōga, accomplished in his affection for the universe which he loved, the salvation of the worlds.
* 36. He carried the Līṅga sought by the penitents, a club, ashes, a thick tuft of hair, an antelope skin, and the disk of the moon; his body was the colour of red chalk.
* 37. He was seated on the seat of ascetics, made of the Darbha plant; to Nārada who questioned him he explained the Veda eternal, while harkened the sage.
* 38. He had placed on his right thigh, his lotus-like left foot; on his left knee his left arm, on the upper part of his right arm, his rosary. (The gesture called) the seal of reasoning, his right hand did make.
in the old images representing *Dakshiṇāmūrti*. But there was no reason to show hinds at the feet of *Śiva*, and so in our days they have entirely disappeared (1).

**Gaṅgādaram.**

In *Pallava* temples low-reliefs of *Śiva* drawing the Ganges out of his hair are often found. The god holds a tress of hair in his hand. The goddess *Gaṅgā*, whose body is like a siren’s, appears with clasped hands. This subject is that of the unique low-relief (Pl. XVII) found in one of the two *Trichinopoly* caves (that which has inscriptions) (7th century).

It is seen very often in the *Kailāśanātha* temple at *Kaṇchipuram* (8th century). (See A. Rea, *Pallava Architecture: Kailāśa-nātha*, Pl. LIX, LVII, XLIV, fig. 2, and CXXIII, fig. 2; *Muktēśvara* temple, Pl. CIV and XCVII, fig. 2) (2). But the interest of this image lies in the fact that although it is very wide spread in ancient sculpture, it is quite unknown to modern artists.

**Śiva and Pārvatī riding on the bull.**

On the other hand, *Śiva* and *Pārvatī* riding on a bull are never seen in ancient South Indian temples (3), although in our days it is one of the images most often repeated. This white bull, the riding animal or *vāhana* of *Śiva*, according to the legend is *Dharmadēva*, god of virtue. But it is usually called *Nandi*. Plate XVIII represents this subject. On each side of the divine group, Brahmins offer fruits and perfumes, and carry banners of a special sort called *alavatomes*.

**Śomakanda.**

In our days (Pl. XIX) *Śiva* with *Pārvatī* (*Umā*) and a small child *Subrahmaṇya* (*Skanda*) are still represented.

(1) In the *Kailāsa* at *Ellora* there is a large low-relief (the one opposite to that of *Śiva* clothing himself in the elephant’s hide) of *Dakshiṇāmūrti*, the likeness of which to Buddha’s image is striking.
(2) It is also found in the *Kailāsa* at *Ellora*, and once on the *vimāna* at *Tanjore* (10th century).
(3) Très fréquent au contraire à *Ellora* et dans le Nord.
Historical. — Sômaskanda is never seen any where in the caves of Ellora and Bâdâmi, but on the other hand this image is the great master design of Pallava iconography. It is so often repeated in the Kailâsandha temple at Kânchipuram, that it is useless to count them. It is enough to say that the reproductions of this design are innumerable there.

It seems that it represents the essential part of Pallava Sivaism about 700 A. D., for the image is usually found in front of the liṅgam, on the wall which forms the back of the sanctuary (see Pl. I). Śiva, and Pârvatī who carries Subrahmanya on her knees, are seated on a bench. The attitudes of the divine family are full of calmness and nobility. Śiva's left arm is in the same position as that of Buddha begging. The other arms carry no emblems except snakes. Viśhnu and Brahmā stand, one on the right, the other on the left, a little behind Śiva (Pl. XX).

Râvana below Kailâsa.

Śiva's heaven is a white mountain (whence the name Raja-tâdri, mountain of silver), where Kailâiyâli (the god of Kailâsa) lives with his wife, his children, his worshippers and the company of Gaṇas (Kailâsa is called Gaṇapârvata, the mountain of Gaṇas). At the entrance of the Pudumantapam at Mâdura is a very fine statue showing the giant Râvana under Kailâsa. The following is the explanation which modern sculptors in this country give of this subject:

The pious Râvana with the object of getting near Śiva, wanted to make Kailâsa come to him, to this end he prayed long, but uselessly. As the mountain would not come to him, he resolved to go to it, and take it home with him. When he began to lift Kailâsa, Pârvatî noticed that the mountain was shaking, and drew her husband's attention to it. Śiva, placing his foot on Kailâsa, put it straight again. Râvana was underneath and remained a prisoner. Fearing that he had angered the god he stayed quiet and began to pray. Then Śiva released him and gave him a sword (aṇudam) and heaped blessings on him (1).

(1) Outside Southern India the legend is quite different. We borrow the following passage from Mr. Caédès: « One day while traversing Garâvana
Historical. — The subject is not to be seen in the rathas or caves at Mavalipuram and Trichinopoly, but it exists in low-relief in the small temple (not as old as the rathas) on the top of the rocks near the light-house at Mavalipuram, above the cave of Durgā. It is found at Kāñchipuram in the Kailāsanātha temple (A. Rea, Pallava Architecture, Pl. CXXIII, fig. 5), and in that of Tripurānkēśvara (Pl. CIX, fig. 2) (1). The giant who is under Kailāsa is always depicted with ten heads and twenty arms. In ancient low-reliefs he is seen from the back.

§ 2. — Pārvatt.

Pārvatt-kalyāṇa.

The marriage of Śiva and Pārvati is often represented in our days. Pl. XXII shows the marriage of Pārvati under the form of Minākṣī (the goddess with eyes of a fish) (2) guardian protectress of Madura.

The marriage of Śiva and Pārvati is commemorated by the Tirukalyāṇa (divine marriage) festival.

Historical. — This subject is found in the Kailāsanātha temple at Kāñchipuram (8th century). (A. Rea, Pallava Architecture, Pl. XLII, fig. 2) (3).

in his marvellous chariot, Rāvana suddenly saw the Pushpaka stop, for it had arrived at the foot of the mountain on which Śiva was playing. The Rākṣasas got angry and taking the mountain in his arms, shook the rock. At this quaking the Ganas trembled and Pārvati clung to Mahēśvara. Then Mahādeva, the first of the gods, crushed the mountain with his toe as if in sport, at the same time he broke the arms of Rāvana.  

1) At Ellora this is one of the most often repeated subjects. It is found in all the Brahminical caves: Ashes of Rāvana, Kailāsa, Rāmēśvaram and Dhumar-Lēna. A low-relief in this last cave (Pl. XXI), situated on the right of the entrance, is one of the largest and most beautiful at Ellora.  

2) There is a pretty story told and known to but few, to explain the meaning of the name Minākṣī: As the mother fish swims in the river with her little ones who follow behind crying in their distress, she is not able to do anything for them. She turns her head and looks at them and they are comforted. So Minākṣī's glance is sufficient to comfort her followers.  

3) It is often represented at Ellora: one finds it carved in large high-relief in all the Brahminical caves. The god and goddess hold hands, and Viṣṇu pours lustral water for consecration, in the presence of all the other divinities.
Ardhanārī or Parāngada.

Śiva and Pārvatī are sometimes united in the form of a single androgynous deity. The right hand side of the divinity (which is to the left of the observer) represents Śiva and the left side Pārvatī. It is Śiva, Ardha (half) Nāri (woman). It is easy to recognize this deity. On the male side, the axe, the drum (udukkai) and snakes are seen. On the female side the breast is prominent,

![Ardhanārī at Mavalipuram (7th century)](image)

the waist pinched in, the hip enlarged and covered with a cotton cloth (podavē). A flower is carried in the hand, bracelets and anklets deck the arm and leg.
SIVAITE ICONOGRAPHY

Historical. — Ardhanārī is found at Mavalipuram on the Dharmarājā-ratha on the ground floor at the right of the Eastern facade (Fig. 7 and Pl. XXIII), and at Tanjore (last niche on the right of the West facade). Somewhat rare in our times (1).

Pārvatī (2).

This is the wife of Śiva, the latter bearing the name of Pārvatī—

![Fig. 8. — Pārvatī.](image)

(1) This image is perhaps the oldest known, if one agrees with the story of the Hindu ambassador to Bardisastron (about 220 years A.D.) who describes a cave in the North of India containing an image of a god, half man half woman (Stobaeus, *Physics*, published by Gaisford, p. 54, and Priaulx, *L'Inde et Rome*, p. 153). It constitutes a large low-relief in cave No. 1 at Bāddami (Pl. XXIV).

(2) The mountaineer, called also Umei (Sanskrit: Umā), Tōd (Sanskrit: Tōd goddess), Ammi (mother), Sakti (energy), Gauri (the daughter), Kāmākshī (one whose looks are amorous), Mīnākshī (the fish-eyed).
kojunan (the husband of Pârvattî), and the daughter of Takshen (Daksha) (1).

She is represented sometimes with two arms, holding in her right hand the flower called Sengaruntr̥ppû, sometimes with four arms, carrying the Sivaite insignia pâsa and mazhu (Fig. 8).

Several festivals are sacred to Pârvattî; those of Quêdaravurdan, Paṅguniuttiram, and Adî Puran are celebrated in Śiva temples at the nakṣatram called Puran, in the month of Adî (July).

Pârvattî is identified with a large number of deities, particularly with Kâlî, Ellammal, Châmundî, etc... (2).

Kâlî (the Black) or Châmundî.

This goddess called Durgâ in the North of India, is known in her character of Mahisha-mardînî (conqueror of the giant Mahisha). She is identical with Pârvattî.

According to the legend, Viṣṇu lent her his weapons, the śaṅkha shell, and the chakrā disk, to fight against Mahishásura. She is therefore shown with his insignia, and is the only goddess who carries the śaṅkha and chakrā. (Lakṣmî, wife of Viṣṇu, never carries the symbols of the god.) These emblems are therefore distinctive of Châmundî (3).

   * 47 Daksha, son of Ajâ, wedded Prasûti, daughter of Manu (Śvâyambhûva); sixteen beautiful eyed daughters, Daksha had by her.
   * 48 Thirteen of them to Dharma, one to Agni, one to the Pitris jointly, and the last to Bhava, were bestowed by Daksha.
   * 64 Sati, wife of Bhava, the devoted to her spouse divine, to bring forth a son his equal in virtue, was unable.
   * 68 For Daksha her father, angry with Bhava (Śiva), unmerited insult in wrath put upon him. Sati, the bride of a short time, abandoned her body, and merged herself in the Yâga. ±
(2) In the Brahminical caves situated North of the Pênmar, there is often found a series of « mothers » placed between Śiva and Pulliar or Bhringî. These goddesses carry a small child in their arms, and hold the emblems of the principal Brahminical deities. The mothers are Mahîśâvari, Brahmâni, Indrâni, Kumâri, Varâhî, etc. The vehicles (vâhanas) of the respective gods are found at their feet. The statues exist in the Brahminical caves at Alwâli (near to Pattadakal), at Ellora in the caves Ashes of Râvana and Ramâväram at the entrance and at the left of cave No. 22.
In the Buddhist caves at Ellora, a series of goddesses each corresponding to a Buddha is found. The Brahminical craftsmen have probably imitated the Buddhists in this matter.
Nothing of the sort is found in Southern India.
(3) The following passages are found in Mr. Burness' work The Cave
Chāmundī rode a lion in her fight with Mahisha, who had a buffalo’s head. So Chāmundī is represented sitting on a lion (śīrḥa) transfixing with her śāla the buffalo-headed giant. Flames appear behind her head and two pointed teeth issue from the corners of her mouth. She has a dozen arms, which brandish an axe (paraṣū), a club (gadā), a sword (khaḍga), a bow, a shield, a little bell (ghanḍā) and lastly the shell śaṅkha and the disk chakra (Pl. XXV). She is also seen standing on the buffalo head of Mahisha.

Historical. — The image of Kālti is one of those most often found in Pallava temples. In the rathas of the Seven Pagodas, the most Northerly of the group, which was been wrongly called Draupadi’s, is sacred to Chāmundī who is represented all over it: in the sanctuary, on the facades, notably on the Eastern one where Kālti is standing on the buffalo’s head. This image is identical with that carved on the facade of the Trimūrtī cave (Pl. XXVI).

A low-relief showing Kālti is also found in the Vishnuites Varāha cave. Lastly, in the cave near the light-house, wrongly called Yamapuri (because Mahishāsura was confused with Yama) there is the justly famed low-relief which represents Kālti’s fight (Pl. XXVII) (1).

The goddess has not the same air of ferocity which is given to her in modern iconography. On the contrary, her face is calm, and her figure gracious. There are many representations of Kālti in the Kailāsānātha temple at Kaṅchipuram (A. Rea, Pallava Architecture, Pl. LVI and XXXIX). In all ancient images Chāmundī bears the Vishnuites emblems śaṅkha and chakra.

*temples of India*, p. 117:

* At the back (of the Draupādi-ratha) is a statue of Lakṣmī the consort of Vishnu, standing on a lotus, four armed and bearing the chakra with other emblems in her hand. *

Page 151, about an image sculptured in the Varāha cave:

* It may rather be considered as a representation of Durgā, though the śaṅkha and discus rather belong to Lakṣmī. *

The author of these lines seems to be ignorant of the fact that it is Durgā (Chāmundī), and not Lakṣmī who carries the emblems śaṅkha and chakra.

(1) At Ellora the combat of Kālti is also seen in the Kailāsa court on the left of the entrance.
The figure A, pl. XXXVIII of Vol. I, shows an image of Kàlt of the Pànḍya period.

Now-a-days she is considered to be a gráma-dévata (village divinity) and is specially worshipped by the sureurs sellers of kallu (palm juice), who ornament the front of their shops with Kàlt's image.

§ 3. — Pulliar.

(Ganéśa.)

The most renowned sons of Śiva and Pàrvatí are Ganéśa (Pulliar), the elder, and Subrahmaníyar, the younger, who are often depicted at their father's side: Pulliar on the right and Subrahmaníyar on the left of the god. The third son of Śiva is Vtrabhadrá. The name Pulliar is a corruption of the Tamil word pilleyar (the son). It designates the god more usually known in India by the names Ganéśa (from gaṇa, company, and iṣa, chief) and Gaṇapati, with reference to his attribute of leader of the company of Gaṇas (little spirits of Kailása).

God of prudence and wisdom, he has great power to triumph over difficulties. Thus he is fervently worshipped under the names Vighnëśvara and Vináyaka, that is to say, « conqueror over difficulties ». The distinctive character of Pulliar is that he has the head of an elephant on a human body. So he is surnamed Anaimukkavar (from the Tamil word anai, meaning elephant), Gajamukha, Gajánana (from the Sanskrit word gaja, elephant), and Tumbikkayan, one who has a trunk (from the Tamil word tumbikkai, trunk). This peculiarity is explained in several ways.

Pàrvatí while bathing longed for a son; a sweat covered her body, and when she was wiping it off, she found a child in the hollow of her hand. Śiva in astonishment asked her: « Who is this child? — Pillai ár? » The Devás came to pay hommage at his birth. Śani, the genius of the planet Saturn, whose look reduced to ashes whatever he gazed at, stayed behind with head cast down. Pàrvatí taking his reserved manner to be an insult, abused him roundly. Driven to desperation at last, he looked at Pulliar, whose head was reduced to ashes. To console Pàrvatí,
Śiva ordered Śani to cut off the head of the first living being found lying down towards the North.

The animal was an elephant; so its head was fitted on to the body of the child.

According to another story, Śiva and Pārvatī saw the elephants disporting themselves in a forest. They felt constrained to follow their example, and the son conceived under these circumstances was born with the head of an elephant.

The anniversary of his birth is celebrated by the Pillaiyār-Charturiti festival (the fourth day after the new moon of each month, but specially in the month of Avani (August-September).

Pulliar’s exploit was fighting the giant Gujainudgsura (Gajamukhdsura), the elephant-headed demon. The latter had
obtained the privilege of not being killed either by a beast, a man, a god or a demon. Pulliar not being one of these, as he was half god, half elephant, was the only one who could deal with him victoriously. The giant broke the god's right tusk, but Pulliar, using it as a javelin transfixed Gajamukha, who transformed himself into a rat (yēli) and became the vehicle (vāhana) of the god.

The god is usually represented seated (Fig. 9), but sometimes standing or dancing (Fig. 10) and then he has the name Kuttādam-Pulliyār. When he is riding the rat he is called Ākhuratha or Ākhuvāhana. His body is obese; it is white, doubtless because of cowdung ashes. His belt is a snake. Bells are fastened
to his trunk and ears. He has four arms; one right hand bears the symbol āṅgusam (aṅkuśa) which is not exclusive to the god with the elephant head. It is a Sivaite emblem, and is sometimes carried by Śiva, and nearly always by Pārvati. One of his left hands carries the cord pacham (pāśa). So Pulliar is called Āṅgusapachamēndi (he who carries the āṅgusam and pacham).

The second right hand holds his tusk (Tamil: tanda, Sanskrit: danta) broken off by Gajamukha. Lastly, the second left hand holds a cake made of rice flour (mōdaka), for the god is very partial to rice (orizionde) whence his name Mōdakapiriyān. The end of the trunk of Pulliar is always placed on this rice cake.

*Historical.* — Images of Pulliar are not very numerous in Pallava temples. There is not one at Māvalipuram. At Trichinopoly and Vallam there are low-reliefs which represent this god carved on monolithic temples dating from the 7th century. At Trichinopoly there is a large image of Pulliar in the cave without inscriptions, where he is seen standing, surrounded by Gaṇas. His emblems are hardly visible, for the stone is worn, and one of the arms is broken off. It is beside Subrahmaṇiār, near Śiva’s shrine.

At Vallam (Pl. XXVIII) he is seated. His trunk is directed to the right, and not to the left as in our times; he does not bear the modern emblems pacham and āṅgusam, but holds something vague, which may be his tusk.

In these two images he is not accompanied by his rat (1). In temples of the Tamil country anterior to the 12th century, the vehicles (vāhana) of the gods are never seen, neither Subrahmaṇiār’s peacock, nor Brahmā’s swan (haṁsa), nor the parrot of Kāma. Vedic gods are never seen mounted on their respective animals. Śiva never rides his bull. Kāli is the only one who rides, mounted on her lion (simha).

On the other hand the vāhanas are always seen at Ellora. It is therefore a Northern Indian custom which was introduced in the South, about the 12th century.

(1) At Ellora he is often represented. He has as emblems an axe, a flower, and a vessel full of cakes. His rat is not seen there either. In fact these ancient images are very different from modern ones, and in our days no one would consent to worship them.
§ 4. — Subrahmaniar.

(Subrahmanya or Skanda.)

Śiva's second son is Subrahmaniar (1) who is also called Supraya-kumāra (the young child), Murugan (the younger son), Kandasami (Skanda-svāmī), etc...

He was begotten by Śiva for the purpose of destroying the giant Surapatma, who had obtained from Śiva the power to rule the universe. With the aid of his brothers Singamugāsuran and Tāragāsuran and of his sister Assomuguy, he maltreated the Rishis. These complained to Śiva, who opened the eye which is in the middle of his forehead, thence came a spark called Porri which fell on to the lake Saravanapoyigai. This spark changed into six children who were nursed by six of the Rishis' wives (who were subsequently changed into stars, the Pleiades).

Śiva sent Pārvati to see the children and as she wished to embrace them all at the same time, they were immediately combined into a single body with six heads. Śiva commanded the giant thus made to fight against Surapatma who entrenched himself in the fortress of Viramāyendrapuri. Subrahmaniar first conquered Tāragāsuran (Tāraka). When he attacked the giant Sura, the latter changed himself into a tree, but Subrahmaniar drove his lance called Vēḷ into the heart of the tree which split into two pieces, one of which was changed into a peacock, and the other into a cock. Ever since Subrahmaniar has the peacock to ride upon, and the cock ornaments his standards. The birth and feats of Subrahmaniar earned him the following epithets: Śaravana (born in the lake of that name), Kārttikeya (nursed by the six Kṛitiikās, the Pleiades), Gaṅgeyan (born in the arms of Gaṅgā or Pārvati), Arumukha or Shanmukha (who has six faces), Dvādaśakara (who has 12 arms), Dvādaśāksha (who has 12 eyes), Tārakajit (the conqueror of Tāraka), Vēlayuda (he who is armed with the vēḷ: the lancer), Surasamāhāra-mūrti (the

(1) Two different derivations are given for this name: 1. Subhra-mānya, (diamond like); 2. Su-brahmanya, protector of the Brahmin caste.
conqueror of Sura), Mailērivēlan (the lancer who is mounted on the peacock).

Subrahmaniar is shown as a beardless young man (Fig. 11), his forehead is marked with viṇūdi-pundram. The lance (vēl) rests on his right shoulder. He has four arms. The two front hands (kayi) are respectively in the positions called abhayā-hastam (the right one and) varada-hastam. The two back arms both carry insignia representing thunder-bolts (vajra) whence the name Vachirayudam.

![Subrahmaniar Fig. 11](image)

The emblem on the right is a sort of blade made by three lozenges called āṇkayudam. That on the left, named triśāla, is a double trident. The peacock (Tamil: mayil) stands behind the god. Sometimes goats are near Subrahmaniar (1) which were given to him when he went to visit Dēvalōgam.

(1) For example in the Râmēvaram at Ellora.
Subrahman iar is often riding on a peacock (Pl. XXIX). The bird’s tail spread fan-wise forms a multi-coloured aureole round the god. Subrahman iar’s two wives are represented one on each side of the god. Valli-ammai is on the right, she is brown and sometimes rides a lion. The other Devayānai is of a bright colour, and her riding animal is an elephant.

When Subrahman iar is shown with six faces (Pl. XXX) he is called Arumugam (Arumukha).

The anniversary of the victory of Subrahman iar over the giant Sura is celebrated by the Skandashashṭi festival, which takes place in the month of Kartigai (October-November).

*Historical (1).—* In Southern India a deity accompanied by a peacock or carrying the emblems which distinguish Subrahman iar in modern art, is never found in Pallava or Chola temples. We have seen that the image Sōmaskanda (see Pl. XX) is very frequently found in Pallava temples. Subrahman iar (Skanda) figures in them as a small child placed on the knees of Pārvatī (Umā). It may be questioned whether Subrahman iar in adult form was ever represented in the Pallava period.

At Mavalipuram (low-relief on the left of the Eastern facade of the ground floor of the Dharmarāja, and image at the back of the most Northerly sanctuary of the Trimūrti cave) and at Trichinopoly, there is found a god whom we cannot identify with any modern deity. A large number of reasons induce the belief that this image is Subrahman iar, but in a very different style from the present. It has four arms and holds insignia difficult to distinguish (Pl. XXXI).

On the Eastern gopuram at Chidambaram which dates from the 12th century, a statue of Indra riding his elephant is found in a niche. (See Pl. LXVIII.) The god carries the same emblems as characterize Subrahman iar in modern iconography. This is logical since these emblems, the double trident and the three

(1) Subrahman iar is represented three times at Ellora: 1. at the back of the cave of the Aqadrā; 2. in the Ramāvaram cave; 3. on the facade of the small gopuram which forms the entrance of the Kailāsa, when he is seen riding the peacock in a series of low-reliefs consecrated to the Vedic gods. It seems that at Ellora he was considered a secondary deity, and he never carries any of the emblems of which we have spoken.
sparkling squares, are emblematic of thunder-bolts (vajra) and Indra was considered in olden days to be the god of the sky, who hurled thunder-bolts.

It would appear therefore the Indra’s emblems were affected after the 13th century by Subrahmanyiar. Besides, the two wives of Subrahmanyiar ride respectively on an elephant and a lion. The elephant is the mount of Indra and the lion that of Indrāṇi, his wife. Lastly, the image of Arumugam (Subrahmanyiar with six faces) seems very modern, as it is not found in ancient temples.

Palani-Andavar.

Subrahmanyiar is worshipped at Palani (to the West of Madura) in the guise of an andi (beggar), whence his names Palani-andi Palani-velan (the lancer of Palani). Palani-Andavar (1). (Pl. XXXII) is represented almost naked, his only clothing being a strip of cloth called laṅgutī made of a napkin (kaupinam) upheld by a cord (annākavur). His breast is decked with chaplets (rudrākṣa) and with the Brahminical thread (punul).

His feet are shod with pādaračchaiti (from the Sanskrit pādaraṇkṣa). The lance rests against his right shoulder, and his right hand holds a club (daṇḍa).

Historical. — We have never seen an image of Palani-Andavar in an ancient temple.

§ 5. — Vtrabhadra.

According to a Tamil legend Śiva’s father-in-law Daksha entered an assemblage one day, where his son-in-law who was present, did not rise to salute him. Daksha was furious, and gave himself up to evil deeds to cause harm to Śiva. He made use of a certain process in black magic called yāgam, which consists of burning wood and pronouncing certain mantiras before the flames, designed to cast spells.

(1) Andavar means * the lord *. (Tr.)
Śiva was immediately seized with violent pains, and sent his eldest son Pulliar against Daksha, who successfully bribed Pulliar by an offering of cakes. Śiva then sent his second son Subrahmaniar, who knew this god's character and won his friendship by giving him dancing girls. Meanwhile the effect of the yāgam caused Śiva such suffering that a profuse sweat covered his body.

![Illustration of Virabhadra demolishing the sacrifice of Daksha.](image)

From the drops of sweat which ran down from Śiva's brow, came the giant Virabhadra, who making Daksha stop his sacrifice (Fig. 12), cut off his head and threw it into the fire. Pārvattī prayed her husband to give back his life to her father. Śiva acquiesced, but as Daksha's head had been burnt up, it was replaced by that of a ram (1).

(1) The version of the Bhāgavata Purāṇa is appreciably different. Bhāgavata Purāṇa, book IV (translation of Burnouf):

* 1. Chap. 11. 2. When Daksha was raised by Brahmā the Most High, to be the chief of all chiefs of creation, he was filled with pride overweening.
* 3. After performing the ceremony of Vājapēya, and overcoming those who knew the better Brahmā, he began the sacrifice called Vṛiharapattisava.
Virabhadra's appearance is terrifying (Fig. 13). He is decked with collars of skulls (munda-mālā). Flames spring from his hair,

5. Sati the divine, daughter of Daksha, who had learnt in heaven from the conversation of the dwellers in the air, of the great sacrificial ceremony her father was performing,

7. ... spoke thus being full of desire, to the chief of the Bhūtas, her husband:

8. «Thy father-in-law the Prajāpati, a great sacrifice now is performing. Let us then go together, o Vāma (Śiva), if such is thy wish.»

15. Thus pressed by his wife Giritra, the friend of those who follow him, remembered the painful words like sharp arrows, with which the Prajāpati had wounded him in the presence of the Creators of the Universe, and smilingly replied:

20. ... «His daughter though thou be, thou must not have regard for thy father Daksha, who hates me, nor for those devoted to him. He it was, at the time of the sacrifice made by the Creators of the Universe at which I attended, who harmed me with words outrageous, which I did not deserve.»

Chap. iv. 3. ... Her heart with vexation and anger was torn, sighing as if her heart would break, Sati proceeded to the household of her father, by her woman's passion her mind led astray, abandoning him beloved by virtuous men, who out of his own love, had given her half of his body.

6. The precinct of the sacrifice she entered, that place loved by those of the Brahmins the Rishis, by all the immortals, where the victim is killed after consecration, by the recital of Vēdas, where the instruments of the ceremony, of clay and of wood, of brass and of gold, of the herb called the Dharba, and also of skins, are carefully kept.

7. No one present when she entered, dared to receive with respect the goddess disdained by her father, fearing to offend the celebrant of the sacrifice.

9. Seeing the sacrifice in which Rudra took no share, and the lack of respect shown by her father Daksha to Vibhu (Śiva) the divine, the scorned sovereign goddess, in the midst of the assembly, gave way to her wrath, as if she willed to destroy the worlds in her anger.

24. Heaping insults on Daksha, in the midst of the sacrifice, she sat on the ground without sound, and turned to the North; to her lips she put water; wrapped in yellow silk robes and shutting her eyes, she entered the way of the Yōga.

Chap. v. 1. On learning from Nārada of the death of Bhavāni, which the contempt of the Prajāpati had caused, and defeat of his company of servants, Bhava felt a boundless rage.

2. Furious and biting his lips, he who bears the burden of the worlds, the redoubtable god, suddenly rose, drolly laughing the while, he tore off the tuft of his hair, the terrible illumination of which was like claps of thunder and fire, and hurled it to the ground.

3. From this knot sprang a giant whose body touched the sky, accoutred with a thousand arms, darkly tinted, like three suns shone his head, whose teeth were huge, whose hair was like a flaming fire, carrying a necklace of skulls and weapons of various kinds, ready to strike.

4. With folded hands he cried: «What must I do?» The chief of Bhūtas made happy, replied: «Redoutable warrior! Daksha and his sacrifice destroy, you are the chief of my braves, a part of myself.»

5. On receiving the order from the angry god, the giant marched
formidable fangs protrude from his lips above which are heavy moustaches. He carries Śiva’s emblems, but he is distinguishable from him and from the other gods, because his principal arms carry weapons, namely a sword and a shield (kēdayam or parisai). By his side Daksha with a ram’s head, stands with folded hands.

round the sovereign lord, god of gods, in token of respect, and then felt himself unequalled in courage, and able to sustain the attacks of those most mighty.

« 6. Followed by the servants of Rudra, who made violent noises, he gave vent to a terrible yell, and wielding a spear able to demolish the Destroyer of worlds, he rushed forward; the anklets which adorned his feet clashing as he went.

« 22. Trampling the breast of Daksha under foot, the three-eyed giant cut at his head with treantch blade, but failed to sever it completely.

« 23. On seeing the body, the skin of which could be pierced neither by arrows nor swords, Hara, the master of creatures, vastly astonished, meditated long.

« 24. But the god who is the master of all creatures, noted the way in which the victim of the sacrifice was slain, by the same means he took the head of Daksha off from his body. The sacrificer now became the victim.

« 25. Seeing this action, the Bhūtas, Prētas, and Piśāchas praised the god saying: «Good! Good!» but the others exclaimed otherwise.

« 26. In his wrath he threw the head into the Southern fire, after thus destroying the sacrifice of the gods, he went away to the home of the Gūhyakas.

« Chap. vi. 1. ... Then all the companies of the Dēvas put to flight by the armies of Rudra, worshipped Svayambhū and told him all that has happened.

« 4. When the sovereign creator heard the tale of the gods, he spoke thus:

« 6. « If you wish to revive the sacrifice, be sure to placate the god who has been deprived of his wife. »

« 8. After giving this counsel to the Suras, Aja, accompanied by the gods, the Prētas and the chiefs of creation, left his dwelling to go to that of the enemy of Pura, on the most beautiful of mountains, on Kailāsa loved by the lord supreme.

« 42. Brahmā said:

« 50. ... « O intelligent god, revive the sacrifice of Prajāpati which thou hast destroyed before it was finished, that sacrifice, I mean, in which the wicked priests the celebrators refused thee thy share, and bring it to its conclusion thyself.

« 51. Let him who caused its celebration, live again! »

« Chap. viii. 1. Satisfied by the words which the uncreated god used to supplicate him, Bhava smiling said:

« 3. « Let the chief of the creatures whose head was burnt up, now take the head of a ram. »

« 7. ... The warriors of Indra’s army and the Rishis went once again to the sacrifice of the Dēvas, and with them went the god and the Vēdas.

« 8. Everything was done according at the order fo the ever happy Bhava, to the body of Daksha he adapted the head of the ram destined for the sacrifice. »
Historical. — Virabhadra is represented in the temple of Kailasanaatha at Kanchipuram (A. Rea, Pallava Architecture).

Fig. 13. — Virabhadra.

Pl. XXXVI, fig. 1: panel 16th from East and on South side of court).

§ 6. — The Sivaite Saints.

Patañjali or Padañjali.

In modern art Siva is often surrounded by a following of acolyte deities. Patañjali is a little god, the lower part of whose body ends as the tail of a snake. He was a Yogī, and not wishing
to crush insects with his feet, he obtained from *Nadarâja* the *varam* to be changed into a reptile (1).

*Padañjeli*’s hair is plaited and piled on his head, his hands are clasped before *Śiva*, and he wears a pointed beard (Fig. 14).

![Image](image-url)

**Fig. 14. — Nandikāśvara, Padañjeli, Viagrapadar, Bhrīṅgi.**

Hindu gods usually have their faces clean shaved like Brahmins. On the other hand the giants (*Asuras*) have big thick moustaches, and the *Ṛishis* all have beards.

**Historical.** — We have never found in ancient low-reliefs any personage which can be clearly identified with *Padañjeli*.

**Viagrapadar or Vyāghrapāda.**

This is a small god with the feet (*pāda*) of a tiger (*vyāghra*) (Fig. 14). The upper part of his body is identical with that of *Padañjeli*. His business was to go and gather flowers for *Nadarâja* in order to protect him from the pricks of thorns, the stings of insects or the bites of snakes etc. *Nadarâja* gave him tiger’s feet.

(1) *Padañjeli* may be the same as *Patañjali*, the author of *Mahā-Bhāṣyā*, the commentator of *Pāṇini’s* grammar, who according to the legend, fell from heaven into the hollow of *Pāṇini’s* hand in the form of a small snake, whence his name (*pât, to fall; aṅjali, hollow of the hand*)?
SIVAITE ICONOGRAPHY

Historical. — It may be Viagrapadar who is seen on the right of the 16th low-relief at the Eastern end of the Southern face of the Kailasanātha temple court at Kañchipuram. (See A. Rea, Pallava Architecture, pl. XXXVI, fig. 1.)

Bhrīṅgi or Maharuchi.

As to the upper part of his body this Ṛishi is like Padaṇjēli and Viagrapadar, but he is much taller; his hair is plafted and piled up in a knot. His forehead is marked with the three white stripes of Śiva, he has a pointed beard, and is decked with necklaces of rudrāksha beads (Fig. 14); frequently his hands are clasped in the position called kummadugirathu (Sanskrit: aṇjali), but often he carries a stick. Bhrīṅgi’s distinctive characteristic is his thinness. He has three legs, the reason for which is as follows:

Bhrīṅgi wished to worship Śiva, but not Pārvatī. She was furious and took away all his flesh (1). Śiva seeing that he had nothing but bones, and so no longer could stand, gave him a third leg to support him.

Historical. — We have never seen a personage with three legs on any ancient sculpture (2).

Kārikal-Ammei.

One sometimes sees in the company round Śiva, a woman in a very emaciated condition. This is not Bhrīṅgi’s wife as might be supposed. She is called Kārikal-Ammei, the goddess worshipped at Kārikal, and bears the name Punnidavadiar (Punittavati), the wife of a Brahmin merchant called Paramadattan.

One day she gave to a beggar a mango which was intended for

(1) It is supposed that the human body is composed of two substances: flesh which is the feminine part, and bones which form the masculine part.

(2) At Ellora (notably in the cave Ramēśvaram) and at Bāddāmi (cave No. 1, low-relief representing Ardhanāri: see pl. XXIV), a personage who is completely deprived of his flesh is to be found, sometimes with his family. This skeleton, for the skin only remains on the bones, is none other than Bhrīṅgi.
her husband. When he asked for the fruit, she gave him several, which she obtained miraculously. Her husband, in face of this prodigy, saw in her a goddess and ceased to treat her as his wife. In despair she prayed heaven to take away her flesh. The mango feast at Kārikat commemorates this legend in the month of June.

_Nandikēśvara._

We have already said that Rishabha and Dharmadeva, the bull which sits in front of the lingam, and the bull which Śiva rides, must not be confused with Nandikēśvara. He has a bull's head on a human body with four arms. The back arms carry the drum (udukkai) and the antelope (mān) emblems of Śiva. The front arms are usually occupied in beating a long sort of drum called matalam (Fig. 14).

_Historical._ — The second panel on the Western face of the vimāna of the temple of Kailāsanātha at Kañchipuram represents Śiva dancing. On the left of the god, Nandikēśvara is seen dancing too (1). (See A. Rea, Pallava Architecture, Pl. LVIII.)

_Appar._

Plate XXXIII represents the four great Sivaite sages who are often shown beside Śiva. They are Appar, Sundaran, Sambandar and Māṇikkavāchakar. All four composed religious hymns. The first three were apostles of Sivaism and opponents of Buddhism and are the authors of the book called Dēvāram, a collection of prayers which are chanted after the office of Pūjā in Śiva temples. The fourth, Māṇikkavāchakar, is the author of a collection of religious hymns called Tiruvōdāchakam, and of the erotic poem Tirukōvei.

Appar, also called Tiru-Navukarassu, born in the South of India in the end of the 6th century, was first Buddhist, then a Jain, and finally Sivaite. He is depicted with shaven head, leaving

(1) In the cave No. 1 at Bādāmi, low-relief of Hari-Hara (Pl. IX), a little godling with a bull’s head stands by Śiva’s side.
only the knot of hair behind called kuḍumi-muḍi; his head and arms are decked with chaplets (rudrākṣa); his hands are joined in the position called in Tamil kummuḍugirathu (Sanskrit: aṇjali). On his right shoulder rests a trowel called ojavaram, with which he used to dig up herbs in the pagoda in which he lived.

Sundarar.

Sundaramūrti-Svāmi, born about 800 A. D. (1) at Tirunakalur in the Karnatic, was brought up in a royal family, but took to an ascetic life on attaining his majority. One day by means of his religious hymns he stopped a flood of the Kaveri river. He died at the age of 18 years at Tiruvanaiyakkal.

He is represented with a tiara on his head, as a sign of his noble birth. In his right hand he holds a flower of nenuphar (tamarapushpa), and his left hand rests on a stick of special form carried by ascetics, which is called yogatandu.

Sambandar.

Tiru-Jñāna-Sambandar-Svāmi lived about 600 A. D. From the age of 5 years he took to a mendicant life. He is therefore represented as a young child. Peacock’s feathers adorn his head. In his hands he carries cymbals made of metal disks tied together by a cord. This musical instrument is called talam.

Māṇikkavāchakar.

Māṇikkavāchakar was born about 800 A. D. at Vadavur, on the banks of the Vaigai near Madura, and was minister to Arimardhaha-Pāṇḍya, king of Madura. He was ordered by the king to buy horses, but used the money for the glory of Śiva. The king’s stables however were miraculously filled with horses, which subsequently turned into jackals.

Māṇikkavāchakar combatted the Buddhists who came from Ceylon, and Jainism. He wrote a book in favour of Sivaism called Tiruvāchakam. This work contains moral precepts.

(1) The dates of these saint’s births are not accurately known.
Māṇikkavāchakar died at Chidambaram at the age of 32 years. He is represented carrying a chaplet and a book of olai leaves (1). His festival called Avani-Mulu takes place during the nakshatra-tram of Mulu (August).

Arupathumuvar.

Among the other personages in Śiva’s following, Kundodaran (Kundodara) who carries Śiva’s sunshade must be mentioned. Also the Arupathumuvar, the 63 Sivaite saints of whom Tandeswara is the principal.

(1) Hindu books are written on palm leaves called olai.
CHAPTER II

VISHNUVITE ICONOGRAPHY

§ 1. — Vishṇu.

Vishṇu (the penetrating), also called Perumāl (the lord), Gōvinda (he who brings heaven within reach), Hari, etc., is usually represented in human form. His head is encircled with the tiara (whence Vishṇu's epithet: Kīrtin) which is also worn by deities attached to Vishṇu. The shape of this tiara has undergone considerable change in the course of centuries (Fig. 15).

![Tiaras of Vishṇu](image)

In the Pallava period it was a simple cylinder. In the middle ages it was something like a truncated cone. Now-a-days it is like a kind of sugar-loaf ornamented with jewels, and is called kridam (1).

The god's ears are long and pendulous. The colour of his skin

(1) This shape is not unlike that of the tiara which Indra wears in the Greco-Buddhist sculptures (Visite d'Indra, photo, 1058, 1.M. list).
is always blue except in the incarnation of Rāma, whose skin is always green, and of Kṛishṇa whose colour is black or blue, and sometimes white and rosy.

In our days, Vishṇu’s forehead is always marked with the sign called Tīrundādam, or simply Nādam, from the name of a kind of chalk (which comes from Tīrupati), with which the Vaishnavas trace the sign on their foreheads. It consists of three vertical stripes; the middle one is red, and is called Tīruchurnam (holy chalk), because it is made of a mixture of lime and saffron. The other two stripes on each side of the first are much broader and are joined below. They are white and are called Gōpichandana.

There are two kinds of Nādam according to the way in which

![Image](U.png)

Fig. 16. — Tēṅgalai and Vadagalai.

they are joined at the base. The Vadagalai gives the Nādam the shape of a U, and the Tēṅgalai prolongs the white mark just on to the nose and takes the form of a Y, worn by the disciples of Manavala (Fig. 16).

The Nādam is fairly important in iconographical history as a chronological character. In Pallava temples Vishṇu’s forehead is always absolutely unmarked (1).

It is always so until the 15th century. It appears that the Nādam appeared in the Bijayanagar period. It is the rule today. The sign is therefore comparatively recent. In any case we think

(1) It is the same in all the ancient temples at Ellora, Bāḍāmi, etc.
we can assert that when the Nāmam is seen on an image, it is later than the 15th century (unless the mark was added afterwards on to the image).

Vishnū’s face is always beardless. His eyes are like lotus flowers, whence the epithets Puṇḍarikākṣa and Jalajalōchana (the god with lotus eyes). Vishnū always has four arms, whence his name Chatur-bhujā. He is often fashioned making the gestures abhaya-hastam and varada-hastam, of which we shall speak later.

Sometimes he holds in his hand a lotus flower padumāṇi (from the Sanskrit padma), tamarasi or kamala. He has five weapons (pañchāyudha): the bow, the sword, the club, the conch and the disk:

1. The bow (in Sanskrit śārṅga, whence Vishnū’s name Śārṅgapāṇi) called Kōḍanḍa (Rāma too his called Kōḍanḍarāma).
2. The sword (Sanskrit: khaḍga) called Vidyādhara.
3. The club (gaddi) called Kaumndaki.
4. The conch called Pāñchajanyā, known by the Tamil name Saṅgū (from the Sanskrit saṅkha), the shell of the sea-mollusc Murex Tritonis, which can be used as a trumpet.
5. The disk (Sudarśana or Vajra-nābha), known by the Tamil name Chakram (from the Sanskrit chakra), which is a weapon. (Vishnū is also called Nēmiyon, he who carries the disk.)

The last two weapons, the conch and the disk are characteristic of the god; besides they have valuable chronological importance, and deserve special study.

It is easy to ascertain the age of a sculpture by examining these emblems, which form one of the means of fixing the dates not only of the statues of Vishnū, but also those of Kālī, since we have seen, in both ancient and modern sculpture, Kālī always carries the Saṅgū and the Chakram.

Figure 17 shows the evolutionary law of the Chakram. In all the low-reliefs at Mavalipuram (7th century) and in the Kailāsanātha temple at Kaṅchipuram, the disk Chakram is a disk absolutely devoid of flames, which the god holds between his thumb and index finger (1).

(1) In the Kailāsanātha temple at Kaṅchipuram, Vishnū is often seen holding a Chakram ornamented with flames, but they are never carved on the stone. They have been added in cement when the temple was repaired at a more recent period.
Some centuries later, this wheel was ornamented with flames called sudar, some placed on the edges of the disk, and others proceeding from both ends of the axle. Besides, it is no longer held between the thumb and first finger, but is balanced on the ends of the first and middle fingers. Again, the wheel is usually seen end on.

On the side which represents Vishnu in the statue of Harihara in the most Southern niche of the Western facade of the Tanjore temple, a Chakram of this kind is to be seen.

Plate XXXIV represents a statue of Vishnu in a niche of the Eastern gopuram at Chidambaram (13th century). The Chakram is of the sort we have just described. The Madras Museum has several statues of Vishnu showing flames issuing from the axle of the Chakram, which is seen broad-side on.

In the Bijayanagar period the flames issuing from the axle disappear. Lastly, in the Madura period, a scarf (vastram) is added round the wheel the two ends of which hang down below the flames which issue from each side of it (Fig. 17, 18th century).
In our days the **Chakram** is a circle with four (1) flames (**sudar**) 

![Diagram of Chakram, Nāmam, and Saṅgu](image)

**Fig. 18.** Vishnuite emblems: Chakram, Nāmam and Saṅgu.

![Diagrams of hands with different gestures](image)

**Fig. 19.** Evolution of Vishnu's emblem the Saṅgu.

(1) Only three flames appear on the **Chakram** up to the 15th century. But the **Saṅgu** has four in the 10th century, reverting later to three only until the 15th. [Tr.]
issuing from its edges, and round the circle is the scarf (Fig. 18). It is a cutting weapon. We shall see that the god used it to deliver the king of the Elephants (Gajendra-moksha).

What we have said about the evolution of the Chakram applies also to the Sañgu. In the 7th century it is held between the thumb and first finger and has no flames; from the 10th century it is adorned with small flames; finally in the 17th century the scarf as added (Fig. 19).

![Image of Vishnu, Sridevi, and Bhumi Devi](image)

**Fig. 20. — Vishnu between Sridevi and Bhumi Devi.**

The chest of the god is often ornamented with the famous jewel called Kaustubha. Below his right breast a triangular mark is often seen (1). On his wrist the jewel Syamantaka is displayed.

(1) According to writings Vishnu ought to wear on his chest a knot of curled hair called Srvatsa.
VISHNUVITE ICONOGRAPHY

Vishnu and the Vishnubhaktas (worshippers of Vishnu) are adorned with chaplets of beads of tulasi, called tulasimanittavadam (1).

The lord is often represented as in Fig. 20. He stands between two goddesses, Śrīdēvi (Lakshmi) and Bhūmīdēvi. They are distinguished one from the other by the fact that Śrīdēvi, goddess of the sky, is always on the right of the god, she holds lotus flowers (tamarapu) in her left hand. Bhūmīdēvi, goddess of the earth, stands on the left, and carries on her right hand a jasmine blossom (mulligai).

In modern images the upper part of the body of both these goddesses is covered with a sort of corslet called ravukai, over which is a cloth (poduwai). Their ears are also profusely decked with ear-rings. This is not the case in the 14th and 15th century images, when both goddesses have bare breasts. Śrīdēvi alone has a horizontal ribbon called kachu or kañjagam over her breasts. Bhūmīdēvi (the goddess on the left of the god) has her breasts quite naked. Besides, Śrīdēvi has round ear-rings, while Bhūmīdēvi has pendulant ears without any ornaments, in those periods.

In this image Vishnu seems to be bigamous, a very ancient particular. In the Kailasandantha temple at Kañchipuram, a low-relief represents Vishnu seated between his two wives (A. Rea, Pallava Architecture, Pl. XL1, fig. 1). It is customary to place for the lord's use, a pair of sandals (sada) called Sadagopam, in front of Vishnu.

Around the god are frequently represented the bird Garuḍa, the monkey god Hanumān, Tumburuvar (Tumburu) with the head of a horse, Nārada playing a musical instrument like a vīṇā, the Pannirendu-ājvār (2), his twelve apostles: 1. Poisonājvār, 2. Pāṭattājvār, 3. Pēyājvār, 4. Tirumahisai-ājvār, 5. Nammatājvār, poured away sitting under a tree in the guise of a guru, with a book in his hand; 6. Kulasēkharajājvār, 7. Periyaājvār, 8. Thondaradippodi-ājvār, 9. Tirupān-ājvār, holding in his hand a vīṇā (a sort of guitar); 10. Tirumaṅgai-ājvār, who

(1) We have seen that Sivaite chaplets are made of rudrāksha seeds.  
(2) The Tamil letter transliterated j by the author, in the word ājvār, is often ś or rl or simply l in other books. (Tr.)
holds a sword and shield; 11. Andālammanī, a woman who vowed herself to the god at Śrīraṅgam; 12. Madhurakavi-ḻāvar who has a talam (a kind of cymbal) in her hand.

Besides these are the Vishnuvite sages: Srimanthamuni, Śriśālavandar, Mudaliandar, Suratāṉvar, Puleilogaṉavar, Tirukkachinthambi, Srimanavāla-mamuni and lastly Śribacchiakkāvara (the Commentator) who is none other than the illustrious Rāmānuja. This last is also Odeyavar (Pl. XXXV). He is represented seated with legs crossed and hands folded, on his right arm rests a flag which bears the Vishnuvite insignia (Saṅgu, Nāmam, Chakram). The Nāmam is the Teṅgalai one. Odeyavar is the greatest Vishnuvite apostle. The ceremony called Tirumanjanam is celebrated in his honour.

Śrī-Raṅganātha.

The highly renowned temple of Śrīraṅgam on the island of that name near the confluence of the Cauvery and Coleroon river opposite Trichinopoly, is dedicated to an image of Vishnu much venerated in the South of India. The god (Pl. XXXVI) sleeps lying on a serpent with five heads, which serves as a canopy. This serpent is called Śēsha (durable), Adiśēsha or Ananta (the eternal); so the god who sleeps on Ananta has the name Ananta-Śayaṇa. The two wives of Vishnu, Śrīdevi and Bhūmi-devi, sit at his feet.

The right hand of the god is always placed between his head and its pillow. He has often only two arms; when he has four, the extra two carry the Saṅgu and Chakram. Often too (but this is not the rule) the stalk of a lotus issues from Vishnu's navel, and on its flower Brahmā is seated.

At Chidambaram a statue of Raṅganātha is found a few yards from the sanctuary of Natarāja.

Historical. — It is impossible to pass over in silence the fact that in Buddhist caves, the iconography of which is inspired by the doctrines of Mahāyāna, notably at Ajanta the Nirvāṇa of Buddha is represented in a manner which recalls the sleeps of Vishnu. The head of the sleeper is always to the right of the observer, and the feet to the left.
At Mavalipuram (7th century) an image of Vishńu lying on a serpent (Pl. XXXVII) (1) is found opposite to the large low-relief depicting the combat of Kálli and Mahishásura. An image of Raṅganátha is also found in the Vaikuntha-Perumal temple (A. REA, Pallava Architecture, Pl. LXXXII, fig. 2) (2).

Náráyaṇa.

Raṅganátha must not be confused, as is sometimes (3) done with Náráyaṇa. The latter is a young child who sucks the toe of his left foot. He lies in the middle of a banian tree leaf, Tamil vata (Ficus indica, bengalensis); in this form Vishńu is called Vaṭapatraśayi (he who sleeps on a vata leaf) (Pl. XXXVIII). It is under the form of Náráyaṇa that Vishńu created the world (4). We have never seen the image of Náráyaṇa on ancient monuments.

Vaikuntha-Nátha (Vishńu, god of Vaikuntha).

Vaikuntha is the paradise of Vishńu, who bears the title of Vaikuntha-Perumal. He is seated on the serpent Ananta or Adiśēṣha, and the hood of the cobra (nāga) spreads out to form a canopy over Vishńu’s head, who in this form is worshipped as lord of the supreme beatitude (Paramapadanáthan).

Historical. — This image is found in the Vaikuntha-Perumal temple at Kańchípuram (A. REA, Pl. LXXXI, fig. 4) (5).

(1) At Ellora in the cave of the Avatáras, Vishńu is seen lying on a snake which however has a human head and bust.
(2) In the Kailása of Ellora (end of 8th century) there is a low-relief of Raṅganátha. Brahmá is seated on the lotus flower which issues not from the navel but from the half-open stomach of Vishńu. It is only later that the god’s feet are held by two women.
(3) On the left or South wall is a large bas-relief of Náráyaṇa or Vishńu reclining upon the snake Šēsha (BURGESS, Cave temples of India, p. 146).
(4) This name is however used in a more general sense. The epithet is used for the invocation of Vishńu in the famous prayer called Ashť-kshara (the 8 Sanskrit letters): Om! Nāmā Náráyaṇāya! Om! adoration to Náráyaṇa! (in Sanskrit spelt in 8 letters.) (Tr.)
(5) There is a very large low-relief which deals with this subject in No. 3 cave at Bāddāmi (6th century, Plate XXXIX). Dr Gustave Le Bon points out (Les Monuments de l'Inde) that Buddha is seated in the same identical position on a serpent as represented among the carvings of the Amarāvāti tope (2nd century).
Varadarāja (Vishṇu riding on Garuḍa).

The vehicle (vāhana) of Vishṇu is a minor deity, half man, half eagle (of the Falco pondicerianus species) called Garudan (Sanskrit: Garuḍa) or Suparna, the son of Kaśyapa and Vinatā. Its

![Illustration of Varadarāja]

Fig. 21. — Varadarāja at Conjevaram.

...nose is curved in like a beak and it has large wings. Today there is worshipped notably at Conjevaram (Kaṅchipuram) under the name of Varadarājāsvāmi (he who grants favours) (Fig. 21).

The image is ancient, as it is found at Kaṅchipuram in the
Pallava temple of Vaikuntha-Perumal (8th century) (A. Rea, Pallava Architecture, Pl. LXXXII, fig. 1, and LXXXII, fig. 2). It also is to be seen at Chidambaram on the Eastern gopuram (13th century) (Pl. XXXIV). It is noteworthy that in this sculpture Vishnu's Chakram is seen along its edge, and that the flames issue from the axle of the wheel.

Garuda is also represented holding in his hand the amurdakalasam which he got as his share after the churning of the sea of milk.

Gajendra-moksham.

Modern artists often represent the deliverance (moksham) of the king of the Elephants (Gajendra) (Fig. 22).

There lived in a pool a very wicked crocodile. The king of the Elephants, the friend of Vishnu, passing by the pool was held prisoner by the crocodile which seized his foot in its teeth. But the lord came down from Vaikuntha on the shoulders of the bird
Garuḍa, and smiting the crocodile with his disk Chakram he delivered the king of the Elephants (1).

Historical. — It is possible that this is the subject represented

* 1. ...There is a famous mountain, which goes by the name Trikūṭa...
* 2. ... its triple summit of silver, of brass and the third of gold lit up the sea to the limits of the far distant horizon.
* 5. In its vales abode the Siddhas, Chāraṇas and Gandharvas, Vidyādhāras, Mahāragas, the Kinnaras and Apsaras, who took their pleasure therein.
* 7. Numerous herds of untamed beasts, its valleys filled; birds of voice harmonious peopled the gardens of gods, formed of every sort of tree.
* 19. The Elephant lord one day, who lived in those mountainy vales, walked there with this numerous wives.
* 22. In the company of other Elephants, their females and their babes, he suffered much from the heat...
* 23. To the beautiful lake he rapidly ran, followed by the herd suffering from the heat...
* 24. Plunging in he drank with joy, by means of his trunk, the liquid pure. Ambrosia it resembled; by powder of nymphæas and with lotuses of gold, it was sweetly scented. By bathing his body therein, he was much refreshed.
* 26. Sent by evil Destiny a potent crocodile seized with rage his foot; into grave danger by chance, falling so grievously thus, the Elephant king so strong, stoutly defended himself.
* 29. At last the long struggle was over, a deplorable blow to the king of the herd, whose courage and strength and vigour were sapped, dragged by his foe, into the lake where the strength of the crocodile only increased.
* 30. When the king of the Elephants saw himself fallen, without being able to help himself there, in so great a pass, and losing all hope to deliver himself...

* Chap. iii. 2. The king of the Elephants said: « Let us offer our prayers unto the mighty Bhagavat god. »
* 31. From the universe where he always abides, the distress having seen, his praise having heard, hastened the god to deliver his friend, riding on eagle-formed Garuḍa, whose body is fashioned by hymns from the Vēdās, followed by gods who extolled him.
* 32. The unfortunate beast dragged into the mere by the mighty monster of power, seeing great Hari afar in the sky riding on swift winged Garuḍa, lifting aloft the hand which bears the lotus flower, and holding forth the Chakra, cried in his danger: « Nārāyan! of the universe god and preceptor! o Bhagavat! worship to thee! »
* 33. Hari the uncreated, seeing his plight descended at once, and pitying pulled him out of the lake, along with the horrible monster. The crocodile’s throat having cut with the Chakra, the Elephant king he restored to the gods (a).

(a) The sharp edged quoit, still used by the Sikh regiments of the Indian army, is probably the modern representative of the chakra. The whole object of the Burnouf foot note is to prove that the chakra is a cutting weapon. (Tr.)
in a low-relief in the *Vaikuntha-Perumal* (A. Rea, Pallava Architecture, Pl. LXXXIV, fig. 1) (1).

The Avatāras.

The descents (avatāra means descent) or incarnations of Vishnu on the earth are so named. Ten principal ones are enumerated: Matsya, Kūrma, Varāha, Narasiṃha, Vāmana, Paraśurāma, Rāmachandra, Balarāma, Krishna and Kalki.

It was probably only in the 12th century that a certain number of legendary exploits were grouped together, catalogued and assigned to Vishnu. This methodical classification of legends was very favourable to the development of Vishnuism. There are about five of these incarnations which would have remained almost unknown to artists, if they did not form part of the classical series, such are the avatāras: Matsya, Kūrma, Paraśurāma, Balarāma and Kalki.

The other five may be divided into two groups; Varāha, Narasiṃha and Vāmana occupy the first place in the iconography of ancient temples. Modern temples are covered with sculptures referring to the legend of Krishna and Rāmachandra.

Whatever the reason may be, it is incontestable that the series of the avatāras is never represented on temples older than the 12th century (2).

According to the legend, the incarnations Matsya, Kūrma and Varāha, took place in the age Kṛitayuga; Narasiṃha, Vāmana, Paraśurāma and Rāmachandra, in the age Trītayuga; Balarāma and Krishna, in the age Dvāparayuga; finally Kalki will come to pass in the age Kaliyuga (3).

(1) It is found on the North side of the Deogarh temple in Lalitpur (United Provinces) (Bunce, Ancient Monuments of India, Vol. II, Fig. 252). In this sculpture it is a serpent (nāga) and not a crocodile which holds the elephant prisoner. Lastly it is to be noticed that there is a distinct resemblance to the worship of Buddha by the elephant Nalagiri.

(2) At Ellora in the cave of the Avatāra and in the Kailāsa, a series of low-reliefs exclusively devoted to Vishnu is found. But only four of the incarnations are to be seen: Varāha, Narasiṃha, Vāmana and Krishna.

(3) The present age. (Tr.)
Tamil legend: The warriors Nadhukaïtabha inhabiting the region called Pâddalolâgam, situated under the waters, stole the four Vêdas from Brahmad who was unable to go to the bottom of the water to look for them. So Vishnu, incarnated himself as a fish, conquered the Madugadâivar, and brought back the Vêdas (1).

(1) Bhâgavata Purâna, BURNOUT'S translation, book VIII, chap. xxiv:
  * 8. While the Creator desired repose, and gave way to the sleep which time led to him, the powerful Hayagriva stole away the Vêdas which had issued from the mouth of the god, and which lay by his side.
  * 9. The beneficent Hari, who is the lord, hearing what the chief of the Dânava, Hayagriva had achieved, arrayed himself as a fish called Šaphari.
  * 10. At that time a certain Rishi among the kings called Satyavrata, a great man and devoted to Nârâyana, was undergoing a penance which consisted on nothing but water.
  * 11. This same was he who, when born in the present Mahâkalpa, in the character of the son of Vivasvat, and under the name Śrâddhadéva, was raised by Hari to the rank of Manu.
  * 12. One day when plunged in the river Krîtamâlî, he made his libations, it happened that a little fish called Šaphari, was found in the water held in his hands.
  * 13. Satyavrata, who was king of Dravida, released into the river as he poured the water from his hands, the fish which had thrown itself into them.
  * 14. The fish said with mournful voice to the king who was moved to much pity: « How o King! is it that you who take pity on the unfortunate, thus abandon me, poor, and timid, in the waters of the river to the large fish which prey on my kind? »
  * 15. Not knowing that it was a god who, in order to show him favour, had assumed the form of a fish, the king thought only of saving the little animal.
  * 16. No sooner had he heard its plaintive prayer than, touched with compassion, he took it in his bowl and carried it off to his hermitage.
  * 17. The animal there grew so fast in a single night, that it found no room in the bowl, and spoke thus to the king of the earth:
  * 18. «I can no longer stay thus miserably shut up in this bowl, prepare for me therefore a bigger dwelling where I may live in comfort.»
  * 19. The king took it out and put it in the water contained in a jar; as soon as the fish was placed therein, it grew three cubits in one hour.
  * 20. «This jar, o king, is not big enough for me to live comfortably in it. Get me a vaster place, since I have sought refuge with you.»
  * 21. After this, the king took it successively to inexhaustible lakes, and when the fish had filled them completely, Satyavrata threw it into the ocean.
  * 22. At the moment it was thrown, the fish said to the king: «Here monsters stronger than I will come and devour me, o hero, you must not abandon me here.»
  * 23. Thus deceived by the fine speeches of this animal, the king said
VISHNUVITE ICONOGRAPHY

Representations of Matsya are very rarely found (Fig. 23).

Fig. 23. — Matsya and Kurma.

The upper part of the god’s body keeps its usual form, while only the lower part takes the form of a fish.

We have never seen this image in ancient temples.

to it: * Who art thou who so deludest me, in the shape of a fish?
* 27. Without doubt thou art the ever happy Hari, Narayana.
* 32. Bhagavat said: * In seven days from today, a king, the three worlds, the earth, the air and the sky will be submerged by the ocean of destruction.
* 33. At the moment when the three worlds shall be covered by the ocean of annihilation, a great vessel sent by me will present itself to receive you.
* 34. Then surrounded by the seven Rishis, and bringing together the collection of all beings, and taking with you plants and seeds, great and small.
* 35. You will enter the great ship and voyage fearless over the immense dark ocean, guided only by the splendour of the Rishis.
* 36. When the violent wind shakes your vessel, I shall be near, and you will tie your ship to my horn with the aid of the great serpents (Vasuki).
* 39. After giving these instructions to the king, Hari disappeared. But Satyaarata waited the period which had been indicated by Hrishikseha.
* 41. Then the ocean burst its bounds, and coming forward covered the whole of the earth.
* 42. Totally occupied with remembering the orders of Bhagavat, Satyaarata saw a vessel approaching him, he entered it with the chiefs of the Brahmins after gathering herbs and plants.
* 44. Vishnu appeared in the midst of the great ocean in the form of a golden fish having a single horn (on his head) and being ten thousand yojanas long.
* 45. The king tied his vessel to this horn, using the snake as Hari had previously told him, and being satisfied celebrated Madhusudana.
* 57. When the end of the cataclysm came, Hari killed the Asura Hayagriva and brought back the Vedas to Brahma who had woken up.
2. Kûrma.

The churning of the sea of milk is represented fairly often in modern iconography. The legend is as follows: Vishnû took the form of a tortoise (kûrma) in order to support the hill Mahêndragiri in the middle of the sea of milk. The snake Vâsuki was rolled round the mountain, and the demons (Râkshasas) caught his head, while the gods (Devarûg) held his tail. Then the gods and the demons each pulling their side alternatively, churned the sea of milk (Fig. 24).

Fig. 24. — Amurdam kadaigirathu (Churning of the sea of milk).

The churning of the sea of milk is called in Tamil Amurdam kadaigirathu. The snake (Vâsuki) spat forth so great a quantity of poison that the frightened demons fled, and only came back on condition that the gods pulled on the side of his head. Vishnû ordered the serpent to retain his poison.

From the sea of milk came the desirable cow Kâmadhenu which is represented with the head of a woman, wings, three peacock’s tails, and suckling a little calf; the horse Sabara, the goddess Lakshmi, the elephant Airapadam and the tree Kalpavriksha (Sanskrit: Kalpavriksha).

But Vâsuki vomited new poison (Hâlahala). Śiva drank it up and held it in his throat which became blue, he thus earned the name Nilakaṇṭha (he who has a blue neck). Lastly appeared
the sage Danuvandri holding a vase full of Samudramadam (1).

(1) Bhāgavata Purāṇa, Burnouf’s translation, book VIII, chap. v:
* 15. When stricken in the fight by the sharp weapons of the Āsuras, the gods bereft of life had fallen and were unable to rise.
* 17. Mahēndra, Varuṇa and the other gods who witnessed this spectacle held counsel together, but were unable to come to a decision.
* 18. So they betook themselves to the assembly of Brāhmaṇa.
* 19. On seeing Indra, Varuṇa and the other gods deprived of their strength and splendour, beholding the world full of misery, and the Āsuras enjoying an undeserved happiness.
* 20. The ever happy and powerful Sovereign spoke thus to the gods:
* 21. « Let us take refuge with Imperishable Being... »
* 26. Brāhmaṇa said: « We bow down before the best and most desirable of the gods... »
* 49. As when watering the roots of a tree the boughs and branches are also watered, so in worshipping Viṣṇu worship is given to others and to one’s self.

* Chap. vi. 1. Thus praised by the company of the Āsuras, the ever happy Hari, who is the lord, appeared before their eyes.
* 18. Bhāgavat said:
* 19. « Go and make peace with the sons of Danu and Diti.
* 21. « Delay not: but make every effort to obtain ambrosia.
* 22. «... take the mountain Mandara for churning stick and the snake VĀsuki for cord.
* 23. « Then with my aid stir the sea without ceasing.
* 32. « Then the Dēcas and the Daityas made friends the one with the other, concluded a treaty, and set about with supreme efforts to get ambrosia for themselves.
* 33. In the pride of their strength they uprooted the mountain Mandara; and with their mighty arms which were like clubs, they bore it with singing, towards the ocean.

* Chap. vii. 1. They invited VĀsuki, the king of the serpents, promising him a share of the ambrosia; the gods full of joy used him as a cord to encircle the mountain.
* 2. Beginning to churn the ocean... Hari took first place towards the head, and the Dēvas arranged themselves behind him.
* 3. The chiefs of the Daityas did not approve of this plan of Mahāpuruṣa. « We will not take » cried they « the tail of the snake, that part of the body is dishonourable. »
* 4. The Daityas kept silence, and the best of men looking on them with smiles, abandoned the head of the serpent and seized the tail followed by the Immortals.
* 5. Thus partitioning their places, the sons of Kaśyapa began to churn the ocean to obtain ambrosia therefrom.
* 6. But while the sea was thus stirred, the mountain which rested on nothing, sank by its own weight to the bottom of the waters, however much the powerful gods sought to keep it up.
* 8. The Lord assuming the form of a tortoise, marvellous and gigantic, plunged into the sea and upheld the mountain.
* 18. By the movement of the sea was engendered a fearful and irresistible poison called Hālahala.
* 19. Spreading with terrific speed, and intolerable strength, it percolated through all points of space both above and below the world. The frightened and unprotected creatures ran together with their leaders to find a refuge near the beneficent god.
* 42. Then holding the redoubtable and all pervading poison in the
Historical (1). — The churning of the sea of milk is represented at Kanichtpuram (Rea, Pallava Architecture, Pl. XXXIII, fig. 3, and LXXIV, fig. 2), but the sculptures in the Kailāsanātha hollow of his hand, Mahādēva, out of pity returning life to all creatures, proceeded to swallow it.

  43. The poison produced by the water showed its strength on the god himself by blackening his throat, but the beneficent god made an ornament of this stain.

  4. Chap. viii. 1. When Vṛishānaka (Śiva) had drunk the poison, the immortals and the Dānavas full of joy, hastened to beat up the ocean. The cow which gave clarified butter, issued from it.

  2. The Rishis exercised in the Vēda took possession of the cow of Agnihōtra, to get the clarified butter which is offered in sacrifice, which is the route to the gods.

  3. Then appeared the horse Uchchaitāravas, whose colour was pale as the moon.

  4. The chief of the elephants Airāvata next issued from out of the sea, the glory of his four tusks eclipsed the splendour of the mountain where dwells the happy Śiva.

  5. The jewel called Kauṣṭubha, this ruby of the vasty deep, next appeared. Hari desired to possess it for an ornament for his breast.

  6. Then came the Pārijāta..., the tree which always showers blessings.

  7. Next was seen the birth of the Apsaras, all dressed alike with the Nīshka hanging on their necks, the nymphs who charm those dwelling in heaven.

  8. Then was seen the ever happy Rāmdēva, devoted spouse of Bhagavatī.

  30. Then followed the young goddess Varūṇī with the lotus eyes, the Aśuras took possession of her with the consent of Hari.

  31. While the sons of Kaśyapa churned the ocean for ambrosia, there appeared a marvellous human form.

  32. A man with long and rounded arms, he was black, young...

  34. His arms ornated with bracelets, held up a vase full of ambrosia. This was Dhanvantari, the author of the Ayuvēda.

  35. At the sight of the god and the vase full of ambrosia, the Aśuras greedy to get all blessings, hastily took possession of the cup.

  36. When the Aśuras carried off the vase with the ambrosia, the disappointed Dēvas sought solace with Hari.

  37. Seeing their distress, Bhagavatī who grants the desires of his servants said: "Be not distressed, I assure you of success by sowing discord among them with the aid of illusion, which I possess."

  41. At that moment Viṣṇu, the powerful god to whom no resource is unknown, assumed the form of a marvellous indescibable woman.

  38. Chap. ix. 11. ... The Aśuras encouraged by the allurements of this woman, lost their self-control, and gave her the vase which held the ambrosia.

  20. Disposing the two companies in distinct rank, the sovereign of the Universe caused the gods and the Aśuras to be placed in the rank to which they belonged.

  21. With vase in hand he misled the Aśuras with deceitful advances and gave the far off gods to drink the nectar which does away with old age and death.

(1) This subject is the theme of two little friezes : one in the cave No. 2 at Bāḍāmi (6th century) and the other on the pillars of the sanctuary of the Kailāsa (8th century).
and 

and Vaikuntha-Perumal being covered over with lime and deteriorated, are barely visible.

Perhaps the legend was different in olden times to what it is now, but in any case it is not so important in the iconography of the temples of India as it is in Khmer temples (1).

3. Varaha.

The demon Hiranyāksha (the golden eyed) held the earth prisoner at the bottom of the waters. Vishnu took the form of a boar in order to lift up the earth represented by the goddess Bhūmidēvi, and bring it back to the surface (2). In our

(1) It is noteworthy that this churning has a singular resemblance to the method of producing fire for sacrifices. The areni (Sanskrit: arapi) is formed of two pieces of wood of the attimaram (Ficus racemosa, Linné: morê), one of the frames of wood is fixed to the ground and a hole drilled in it, in which the sharpened end of the other beam is placed. A cord wound round the latter allows of a very rapid rotary movement which sets the wood on fire. This way of producing fire is described in the Védas (Atharva-védā, 111, 29, 1), and is still employed at the present day by Brahmins who offer sacrifices.

(2) Bhāgavata Purāṇa, Burnouf's translation, book III, chap. XIII:

« 6. ... When the Manu Śeśāyanabhava was created with his wife, he thus addressed the god who is the fountain of the Védas, with his hands folded in token of respect, and bowing before him.

« 14. The Manu said: « May I, o thou who destroyest sin, never depart from the commandments of Bhāgavat! Be pleased, however, o lord, to give me a place in this world, wherein I may dwell with all creatures.

« 15. The earth which is the dwelling place of all beings, is submerged beneath the mighty ocean, exert thy strength, o god, that this blessed earth may be liberated from the abyss. »

« 16. ... Paramēshthin having seen that the earth was really lying in the midst of the waters, meditated long with his spirit saying: « How shall I get it up?»

« 17. At the moment when I wish to create, the earth, submerged by the waters lies in the bottom of the abyss, what then am I to do now that I am charged with creation? »

« 18. While he thus reflected... suddenly a small boar no longer than an inch, issued from his nostril.

« 19. As Brahmā looked at it, the animal held himself suspended in the air, and instantly became as large as an elephant.

« 27. With tail raised, body stiff, shaking its mane, every pointed bristle standing out, trampling the clouds underfoot, showing his white tusks, with blazing eyes he crossed the heaven. Thus appeared Bhāgavat to raise up the earth.

« 28. This Being, who is himself the body of the sacrifice, in the disguise of a boar, armed with terrible tusks, tracing out the earth by its scent, and turning loving eyes on the singing Brahmins, plunged into the waters...»

« 31. There, at the moment when the first of the Daityas advanced against him with raised club to obstruct his way, the god... while dispersing
days the god with a boar’s head (Adivaragai-Perumal) holds Bhûmidévi seated on his knee (Pl. XL).

Historical. — One of the most beautiful and most famous low-reliefs of Mavalipuram (7th century) represents Varâha (Pl. XLII). It is noticeable that in all the ancient low-reliefs the god wears a small conical head-dress, and not the large Vishnuvite tiara which is later given to him (see Pl. XL) (1).

Varâha is represented on the Vaikuntha-Perumal temple (A. Rea, Pallava Architecture, Pl. XXII). One sees him also on the Körangânâtha temples at Srinivasallallur (10th century), at Tanjore and at Gangaikondapuram (11th century).


King Hiranyakaśipu (he who is clothed in gold) wished to have himself worshipped. His son Prahlâda refused to render him the homage which was due only to Vishnu. The young Prahlâda affirmed that Vishnu was present everywhere, even in one of the pillars of the palace, and the angry king struck the pillar. The column suddenly opened and Vishnu appeared in the shape of a terrible giant with a lion’s head (siñha). Hiranyakaśipu was conquered and the god devoured his entrails (2).

herself in the bosom of the waters, slew the giant endued with strength indomitable as the chief of animals slays an elephant. His cheeks and snout were fouled with the blood of Daitya, as when the king of elephants, tearing up the ground, is fouled with (reddish) clay.

* 32. Recognizing this animal, blue as the tamâla, who sporting as does an elephant, lifted up the earth on the end of his white tusks, the sages with Virûchiki at their head, with joined hands celebrated the sovereign lord with sacred hymns.

(1) It is probable that this is the legend portrayed by the boar of Eran (Bouroess, Ancient Monuments of India, Vol. I, Fig. 216), which is perhaps the oldest Hindu sculpture that is known. However, the boar of Eran has only two arms, and it is not certain that at that period (probably the Gupta period, 5th century) Vishnu was the hero of the story. From the 6th century onwards, no doubts can be admitted, because Varâha with four arms carrying the Śeṅkha and the Chakram as carved in No. 3 cave at Bâdami, the date of which is quite certain (578 A. D). Pl. XLII represents the image of Varâha in cave No. 2 at Bâdami. At the feet of the god is found a giant whose body, half man, half snake, represents Adiśeṣthu. The goddess lifted in the hand of the divine boar, lightly balances herself by putting her arm on his snout. The same subject is treated, almost in the same way, in the caves at Ellora.

(2) Bhágavata Purâña, Buxoux’s translation, book VII, chap. vii:

* 2. Hiranyakaśipu said (to Prahlâda):

* 13. * And he whom you call sovereign of the world, o miserable one,
In our days the different episodes of this history are represented
(Pl. XLIII) :
1. Narasimha coming forth from the column.
2. The fight of Narasimha and Hiranyakāśipu.
3. Narasimha devouring the entrails of the giant (see
Pl. XLIV).
4. Narasimha holding the goddess Lakshmī, is worshipped.
The Narasimha festival, called Jayanti, falls on the eve of the
new moon in the month of Vayasi (May).

Historical. — Narasimha is often represented on ancient
temples (1), but he is never seen in them issuing from the pillar.
The fight of Narasimha and Hiranyakāśipu is found in the
Pallava temples at Kañcītpuram, in the Kailāsanaṇtha temple

as if there was any other sovereign than I — where is he? And if he is
everywhere why doth he not appear in this column? 

* 15. After thus insulting again and again with hard words his son
the great servant of Bhagavat, the raging Asura, drawing his dagger, rushed
down from his high seat, and with all his force, struck the column with
his fist.

* 16. On the instant was heard from therein a terrible roaring.

* 18. Then to justify what his servant had said, and to prove that he
really did dwell in the breast of all beings, the god appeared in the assembly
from out of the midst of the column, in a miraculous shape which was
neither that of a man nor an animal.

* 20. The god in the man-lion's shape bounded forth, terrible with
red eyes like gold burned in the fire, with a face on which the thick
and bristling hair increased its size.

* 22. The Asura said: "Without doubt it is Hari. It is the great magician
who thinks that thus he will slay me, but his efforts will be in vain."

* 24. And immediately uttering a yell, the hero of the Daityas armed
with his club, rushed against Nṛsiṁha.

* 29. Like a reptile which seizes a rat, Hari pounced on his foe, and turning
him over on his thigh, he tore with his talons the skin, which thunderbolts
could not penetrate...

* 30. Rolling his eyes of which the wrath which inspired him made the
sight unbearable, licking the corners of his wide mouth with his tongue,
Hari, his head surrounded with a ruddy halo caused by the blood which
dropped therefrom, made himself a garland with the entrails.

* 34. The conqueror then entered the assembly, and moderating his
splendour as he saw no further enemy, he seated himself on the royal
throne.

* 37. Brahmā, Indra, Vidarbha and the other immortals...

* 38. carrying to their foreheads their folded hands in token of respect,
came... to worship the hero amongst men, who was seated in the splendour
of his glory. 

(1) Narasimha is figured in cave No. 3 at Bāḍāmi (6th century); see
Pl. XLV.
In all the ancient reliefs the god with the lion’s head has no mane; it is only later that a mane like a frill or band is seen round the face of Simha.

5. Vāmana.

In our days this incarnation of Vishnu is worshipped in certain temples at Tirukkoilur. The commemorative festival takes place on the full moon day in the month of Kartigai. The legend is well known: Vishnu presents himself before the king Bali in the form of a Brahmin dwarf (Fig. 25) carrying an umbrella (kodai) and a vase (chembu) used by Brahmins for their ablutions (sāṅkalppa), and asked him as a boon the amount of land he could cover in three paces. The king agreed and as is the custom, poured some water on the palm of the right hand of the Brahmin. The latter, as soon as the compact was made, transformed himself suddenly into a giant, and with one stride, the god Padiyalandan (he who traversed the universe in three strides) bestrode the space from the earth to the sky (3).

[1] There is a great likeness between this low-relief and one seen at Ellora (Pl. XLVII) in the cave of the Avatāras.
[2] And also in the Kālidos at Ellora (8th century).

° 12. The god whose way is supernatural changed himself... into a Brahmin dwarf...
° 20. When he heard that Bali owed his greatness to the Āsvamēdha whom he worshipped under the orders of the Bhṛigu, he approached this prince...
° 22. ... he entered the enclosure where the horse sacrifice was held, with his staff, his umbrella, and his pot full of water.
° 24. On seeing the Brahmin dwarf, who was none other than Hari in disguise, entering with a belt made of the muñja herbe, the cord, the skin of an antelope over his shoulders, and his hair falling in locks,
° 26. ... the sacrifice offering king joyfully offered him a seat.
° 29. Bali said: Be welcome, worship to thee, o Brahmin, what can I do for thee?
° 32. Receive from me, young Brahmin, all that thou desirest,
° Chap. xix. 1. Hearing this kind speech, true and conforming with the justice of the son of Viśruchana, Bhāgavat was pleased and approvingly replied:
° 16. I ask then of thee, chief among generous men, a little ground, only three paces, o prince of the Daityas, measured with my own strides.
° 28. At these words, Bali laughingly replied: Receive what thou
This giant is called Tri-vikrama (three strides).
Plate XLVIII represents the scene: in it is seen the little Brahmin carrying a sunshade (Tamil: kodai; Sanskrit: kuḍai); the king Bali, his head adorned with a tiara and holding a copper cruze for pouring water, the giant Trivikrama whose foot touches the clouds, and in the heavens, Brahma, pouring a little lustral water on the divine foot.

Historical. — The subject is frequently represented in ancient sculptures, and with little difference from the modern manner (1). Plate L shows the celebrated low-relief at Mavalipuram (7th century). Near the god’s head, at his left, is Jamavat, the bear king, beating a drum. The same subject is seen on the Kailasanatha and Vaikuntha-Puram temples at Kanchipuram.

desirest &; and to grant this portion of ground to the dwarf, he took a pot full of water.
  * Chap. xx. 16. He gave to the dwarf the ground he asked for, after honouring him, and accomplishing the ceremony of the water.
  * 21. Immediately the dwarf grew in a miraculous way...
  * 30. The chakra Sudarshana, of which the splendour is irresistible and the bow Śārnga, the noise of which is like thunder.
  * 31. The conch Pachajanyam, the sound of which is like a cloud, Kaumodaki, the swift club of Vishnu, Vidhyadhar, the sword bedecked with a hundred moons, the two fine quivers with inexhaustible arrows and the troop of servitors of whom Sunanda is the chief, also the guardians of the worlds gathered respectively round the lord.
  * 32. Adorned with an agnigre, with bracelets and earrings made like shining fishes, bearing the Sṛivata (breast ornament) and precious jewels, a belt and rich clothing encircled with flowers from trees frequented by bees, Bhagavat was seen in his glory, the god of great strides.
  * 33. With one pace he cleared the earth which Bali possessed, filling the atmosphere with his body and touching the limits of the horizon with his arm; with the second step he overran the sky, at the third step there did not remain an atom for him to occupy; still raising himself upwards, the feet of the great striding god touched the spaces beyond Mahas, Janas and Tapas.
  * Chap. xxi. 1. ... the god born of the lotus came before him.
  * 3. Brahmā presented the water of hospitality to the foot of Vishnu, which was raised up so high, and having honoured him with worship, the god whose glory is pure, sang of him whose navel had produced the lotus whence he himself was born.
  * 8. Jamavat, the king of the bears, as swift as thought, proclaimed a great festival to the sound of his drum, in honour of Vishnu who had always conquered all the points of space. *

(1) Plate XLIX depicts a low-relief in cave No. 2 at Badami (6th century). The god Brahma holds a sunshade in his hand, which proves that Brahmins used sunshades at that period.
6. Paraśurāma (Rāma with the axe).

A Brahmin, the Rishi Jamadagni, one day was visited by the king Kārtavīrya, who wished to get hold of the cow Kāmadhenu which Indra had entrusted to Jamadagni, as she was an inexhaustible source of riches. Paraśurāma, son of Jamadagni and Renukā, cut off king Kārtavīrya’s head and destroyed the caste of warrior (Sanskrit: Kshatriya).

Paraśurāma defiled by all these murders, retired to mount Gokarna.

Varūṇa the god of the ocean conceded to him the amount of land which he could cover with the flight of an arrow. The ascetic Narada then told Varūṇa that Paraśurāma being no other than Vishnu, could cover an immense distance with his arrow.

Varūṇa was frightened and implored Yama for help, who transformed himself into a termite (white-ant) and gnawed through the bowstring, so that it only had enough strength to hold the bow taught. The territory covered forms Malayalam (the coast of Malabar).

The chief of the Brīghides, Rāma of the axe (Paraśu), carrying also a fan of palm leaves called visiri (Fig. 25), is rarely seen in modern and never in ancient temples.
The story of Rāma-chandra (Rāma, like the moon) (1), the Rāghavide (Rāghava, grandson of Rāghu), is well known. Daśaratha, who reigned at Ayodhyā, had three sons by his first wife Kauśalyā: Rāma, Lakshmana and Śatrughna (2). The second wife, named Kaikēyi, had only one son Bharata. She obtained from Daśaratha who had become old and blind, a decree that this last child should take the place of Rāma the eldest, as heir to the throne. Further she exacted that Rāma should be banished and exiled to the forests. This exile lasted twelve years. Rāma begged his wife Śitā not to accompany him, but she declined to leave him. Lakshmana the king’s second son went with them, and all three took refuge in a cave.

The demons (Rākshasas) infested this forest of Dandaka; Rāma slew fourteen thousand of them. Rāvana, king of Lanka the country of demons, furious at the massacre, resolved on vengeance by carrying off Śitā. He employed a ruse to get Rāma out of the way. One of his companions, Mārīchya took the form of flame-coloured gazelle which excited Śitā’s desire. Rāma, urged on by his wife, bounded after the animal and pierced it with an arrow. Mārīchya wounded to death, regained his human form and called aloud for Lakshmana who, believing his brother was in danger, instantly went to his help. Śitā was therefore alone in the cave. Rāvana disguised as an ascetic came to her and vainly tried to seduce her. Then in a rage he assumed a demon’s form, and carried her off in his aerial chariot.

A vulture called Jātāyu, a friend of Rāma, swooped down on the ravisher to stop him, but Rāvana mortally wounded it. Meanwhile Lakshmana and Rāma not finding Śitā, became anxious, and started out to search for her in the forest. They found the dying vulture who told them of Rāvana’s crime, and the direction he had taken. The two brothers hurried way in chase of their enemy. They soon made the acquaintance of Hanumān, the general of

(1) Rāmachandra was of solar race and not of lunar race as might be expected from his name.
(2) This is a mistake. King Daśaratha had a third wife, Sūmitrā by name. Lakshmana and Śatrughna were her sons. Rāma was Kauśalyā’s only son. (Tr.)
the monkey armies of Sugrīva, the monkey prince who had
been dethroned by his brother Vāli. Rāma wishing to take them
to fight against Rāvana, first helped them against Vāli, who was
killed by an arrow, shot by Rāma.

Sugrīva in gratitude joined in the campaign against Rāvana,
with all his monkey army. First Hanumān was ordered to make
sure that the king of Laṅkā had really taken his captive to his
palace. With one jump the son of the wind cleared the arm of
the sea which separated India from the island of Laṅkā. He met
Sītā by night in the gardens, and giving her a ring from Rāma,
told her that they were coming to deliver her.

He then bounded through the streets of the capital with a
burning torch tied to his tail, and set fire to all the houses. With
a single spring to India he returned, appeared before Rāma and
said : « I have seen Sītā. » — Rāma, Lakshmana, Sugrīva and
Hanumān then prepared to attack Laṅkā. With blocks of rock
the monkey army made a bridge over the straits. Several battles
were fought between the monkeys and the Rākshasas. In the end
Rāma in single combat vanquished Rāvana, the ten headed giant.

Rāma's birthday is commemorated by the festival Śrī-Rāma-
Navami, and he is represented (Pl. LI) as a warrior. He holds
a bow (Tamil : vīlū), called Sāraṅga (Sanskrit : Śāṅga) or
Kōdaṅga (thus the god is called Śāṅgapāti and Kōdaṅgarāma)
in his left hand, while his right hand holds an arrow (ambu) ;
a quiver (amuratoni) crosses over his right shoulder ; a tiara
(kriḍam) is on his head, and his feet are shod with sandals
of wood. His colour is always green. At his side his wife Sītā is
found, holding a lotus flower in her hand, Lakshmana his brother,
carrying a bow and arrow, and the monkey Hanumān.

Hanumān also is green in colour. This son of Pavaña (the wind)
is represented sometimes with joined hands (kummuḍugirathu,
aṅjali), sometimes seated on his tail which is rolled in a spiral
(kodikamban), sometimes carrying Saṅjīvi to cure Rāma and
Lakshmana. The legend is as follows :

The plant mulligai has the property of curing illness and raising
the dead to life. It grows on the mountain Imayagiri. Hanumān
not being able to identify this plant among all the others, carried
away the whole mountain (Pl. LII).
Many incidents of the *Rāmāyana* are treated in modern iconography. The principal ones are:

*Sītā-kalyāṇa*: the marriage of *Sītā* and *Rāma* (1).

*Rāma-sēṭhubandha*: *Hanumān* and the army of monkeys constructing the bridge of *Rāma* (Adam’s bridge between India and Ceylon).

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**Fig. 26. — Fight of Rāma and Rāvana.**

*Rāvana-yuddham*: the combat of *Rāma* and *Rāvana* (Fig. 26). *Daśagrīva*, surnamed *Rāvana*, king of the *Rākhasas* of *Laṅkā*, is represented with ten heads and twenty arms carrying formidable weapons. His colour is red, and on his ten foreheads the three white horizontal stripes of Sivaites are marked.

*Rāma-Līṅgam*: of which we have already spoken.

*Rāma-pattābhishēkam*: coronation of *Rāma* at *Ayōthī* (*Ayōdhya*) (Pl. LIII). *Rāma* is seated and making the gesture *abhaya-hastam*. *Sītā* seated at his left, holds a lotus flower. *Hanumān* supports *Rāma*’s foot. To the side of the god stands *Śatrughna*, holding a sun-shade (*kodai*) over the head of the god, while *Laksh-

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(1) Every time a marriage is represented, plantain trees bearing fruit are seen on the image. This is indeed the usual custom in Southern India where plantain trees in fruit are cut to decorate the *pandal* (canopy made of sticks, twigs, leaves etc.), under which the marriage ceremony takes place. (See Pl. XXII.)
mana and Bharata fan Rāma with fly-whisks (chowry). At the feet of the god is seen Vībhishana (recognizable from his moustache) who had just been crowned king of Laṅkā in place of his brother Rāvana (1).

Historical. — The iconographical history of the legend of Rāma is a question as interesting as it is important. We know how the episodes of the Rāmāyaṇa are often represented on the monuments of the Bijayanagar and the Madura periods.

There is a complete change when one examines the sculptures on ancient temples. In our days there are nowhere images as popular as those of Sītā, Lakshmana, Hanumān, Rāvana, etc. In spite of our searches we have not found in Pallava temples any image which can be identified with Rāma. That is to say, this personage was not known in Southern India before the 7th and 8th centuries. It is probable that he was taken for a hero, but he certainly was not considered to be an incarnation of Vishnu. The book called Śaṅkara-Vijaya (triumph of Śaṅkara), by Ananda Giri, which is anterior to the 10th century, gives a list of deities worshipped in his time. Neither Rāma, Sītā nor Hanumān are mentioned in it (2).

It seems that the cult of Rāma spread in Southern India in the

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(1) The description in the Rāmāyaṇa is slightly different. Śatrughna himself carried the splendid white sun-shade. Sugrīva, king of the apes, held the white fly-switch and the white fan. The sovereign of the Rākshasas, Vībhishana joyfully took another beautiful fly-switch, with an incomparable fan, like the star of the nights, to fan Rāma. (Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa, translated by Fauche, Vol. IX, p. 414.)

(2) In the Kailāsa at Ellora (second half of the 8th century) there is a long gallery entirely given up to Vishnuite low-reliefs. It is indubitable that the sculptures would have shown Rāma among the incarnations of Vishnu if it had been in conformity with religion at that time.

It is proved however that the Rāmāyaṇa was known at that period. On the Southern face of the Kailāsa, are seen two low-reliefs the meaning of which is clear. One represents the flight of the monkeys in which the struggle of the two brothers Vālī and Sugrīva can be seen. Below is the death of Vālī, and two figures which can be identified with Rāma and Lakshmana. Rāma does not seem here to be only a simple hero. The other has for its subject the rape of Sītā: Rāvana carries a wagon in space, with Sītā in it. The vulture (Jāṭhāyu) is starting in pursuit and the giant turns round to deal a mortal blow to the bird (Pl. L.IV).

This low-relief is very remarkable owing to the following particularity: the giant who takes away Sītā in an air-car has only one head. Can it be said then, that this is the same personage who, when under Kailāsa (Pl. XXI), is always shown with ten heads and twenty arms?
Bijayanagar period, perhaps under the influence of the princes of that realm. The monkey god to this day is still the protecting deity of the city of Bijayanagar.

8. **Balarāma (or Balabhadra).**

Vishṇu incarnated himself simultaneously in both sons of Vasudēva and Dēvaki. Balarāma was the senior and Krishṇa the junior. Balarāma is therefore only a part (aṁśa) of the deity. His principal exploit was the vanquishing of the giant Vṛitrāsura.

We have never met with this image in ancient temples.

The distinctive emblem of this god is the plough (Tamil: kalapai) (Fig. 27). Consequently Balarāma has the titles Rāma-

![Fig. 27. — Balarāma and Kālki.](image)

lāṅgali (he who holds the plough), Haladhara (he who carries the plough share), Halāyudha (he who makes a weapon of the plough share), Saṅkarshana (he who ploughs through armies).

In place of Balabhadra the 8th incarnation of Vishṇu is sometimes said to be Bapuda (none other than Gautama).

9. **Krishṇa.**

The heroes of the Mahābhārata are not less known than those of the Rāmāyana. Krishṇa (the Black) of the Yādava race (descendant of Yadu) was the son of Vasudēva and his wife Dēvaki. His uncle Kaṁśa wished to make away with him, but he was
miraculously saved, and his foster-mother Yasodā (1) was

(1) Bhāgavata Purāṇa [Burnouf's translation], book X, chap. 1:

s 27. Once upon a time there was a chief of the Yādavas at Mathurā called Śūrasena, who lived in that town and ruled over the Mathurā and Śūrasena countries.

s 29. Now it came to pass that Vasudeva, son of Śūra, came there to get a wife. He had mounted his chariot and was about to start with his new wife Dēvakī.

s 30. When Kamśa, son of Ugrasena, wishing to be polite to his sister took the reins in hand in the midst of an escort of several hundred chariots of gold.

s 34. On the way while Kamśa held the reins, he heard a mysterious voice which said to him: s The eighth child of her whom you drive, will put you to death, o fool! s

s 35. Thus spake the voice, and the wicked perverse Kamśa, he who brought shame to the family of Bhājjas, brandishing his sword in one hand while he grasped her hair with the other, sprang upon his sister to slay her.

s 36. In order to appease the pitiless and shameless prince who was ready to commit so abominable a crime, Vasudeva the fortunate addressed him thus:

s 54. Vasudeva said: s Friend, it is not her from whom thou hast to fear what that mysterious voice has told thee, but her sons. I shall give them up to thee, since it is with them that danger lies for thee. s

s 55. Kamśa, convinced by these words, gave up the design of killing his sister, and Vasudeva after effusively thanking him, proceeded to his dwelling.

s 56. Then Dēvakī, for whom he alone was everything, in fact was god, brought into the world year by year in due season, eight sons and one daughter.

s Chap. 11. 4. The son of Ugrasena had already had the first six children of Dēvakī slain.

s 5. When a seventh called Ananta (Rāma) in whom Vishnū resides, was born to Dēvakì, as a new object of pleasure and pain.

s 6. Bhagavat, the soul of the universe, knowing the danger to the Yādavas his faithful servants, of which Kamśa was the cause, said to the Māyā of the Yōga:

s 7. s Blissful goddess! go to the park where live the herdsmen and their cattle. There, in the cow-shed of Nanda dwells the wife of Vasudeva (named) Rōhinī, others living in caves for dread of Kamśā.

s 8. Dēvakī carries at her bosom a fruit called Sēsha (Rāma), in which I reside, take it away and put it at the breast of Rōhinī. s

s 14. Thus adjoined by Bhagavat, the goddess accepting his order exclaimed: s Yes, I salute thee! s and having walked round him, went to the earth and did as she had been instructed.

s Chap. 11. 1. Then came the time when all the propitious conditions brilliant with supreme beauty, were united: the constellation of Ajana's son (the constellation of Rōhinī) eclipsed all constellations, planets and stars.

s 8. And for the birth of Janārddana, the midnight hour enveloped in darkness, when in the bosom of Dēvakī of beauty divine, was born Vishnū who lives in all hearts, as in the East rises the glorious star of the night.

s 47. At the moment when Śūra's son inspired by Bhagavat, made ready to take his son and leave the room of the youthful mother, the Māyā
exchanged in his place. Yaśodā was the wife of the shepherd Nanda. (See Pl. I.V.)

The exploits of Krishṇa in his infancy are numerous:
1. He killed Pūtanā, the murderess of small infants, who came to suckle him and make him drink milk that was poisoned.
2. He overturned a chariot with his foot.
3. He strangled Triñāvarta, who wanted to carry him off in the air.
4. Tied to a mortar, he stole some butter and uprooted the arjuna trees.
5. He killed a demon (in Tamil: Richabasuram) who had changed himself into a calf, by hurling him against a tree.
6. He slew the bird Baka.
7. He overcame the python Agha.
8. He threw the ass Dhenuka on to the top of a tree.
9. He overcame the serpent Kāliya.
10. He killed the demon Prālamba, who wished to carry him off on his shoulders, in pretence of play.
11. He ate fire from the burning.
12. He took away the clothing of the maiden cowherds.
13. He held up the mountain Gōvardhana.
14. He gave himself up to the games of Rāsa.
15. He vanquished the serpent Śanākhacchūḍā.
16. He killed successively: the buffalo Arishṭa,
17. The winged-horse Kēśin,
18. The magician Vyōma,

of the Yōga, Aja (the Uncreated) was born in the bosom of Nanda’s spouse.

48. When she had taken from the wardens of the doors all feeling of perception and plunged all dwellers of the town in sleep profound, all doors which were shut with huge bolts, iron bars and with chains,

49. opened of themselves for the passing of Vasudēva, holding Krishṇa in his arms: just as darkness (melting away at the approach) of sleep. The clouds poured forth their water with a dull roar, while Śeśha (a) coming behind them, protected them under his hoods.

51. On coming to the park of Nanda, the son of Śūra found the herdsmen unconscious under the influence of Nidrā (goddess of mystic slumber); he put his son on the couch of Yaśodā and taking her daughter he returned to his home.

52. On Devasūkī’s bed he placed the baby girl, and himself putting back the shackles on his feet, became a prisoner as before."

(a) Commonly called Ain-talai-pambu, the five-headed cobra. (Tr.)
19. The elephant *Kuvalayāpīḍa*,
20. *Kamśa*, king of *Mathurā*.

It is necessary to study particularly some of the episodes more often represented.

*Kattunda-kaṇṇan (Krishṇa tied)* (Fig. 28, A). — We borrow from Burnouf's translation of the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, the following legend:

« Chap. ix. 1. One day while the servants were occupied with household work, Nanda's wife Yasōdā churned the butter herself;

« 5. She took him on her knees, and exposing her breasts, which flowed with milk under the influence of motherly tenderness, she looked upon his smiling face, but suddenly put him away before he was satisfied, and ran to the milk which was boiling over on the fire.

« 6. The child bit his ruddy quivering lips with rage, broke the churn with a stone pestle while pretending to cry, and stole away to eat the fresh butter, hiding himself in the house.

« 7. Once the milk had boiled and was taken off the fire, the lady came back, and guessing by the sight of the broken churn, that it was the work of her son, as she still did not see him there, she burst out laughing.

« 8. Perched on the base of a mortar, he gorged himself like a monkey with the fresh butter which hung like a thread, all the while betraying by his look the fear of being surprised. As soon as she saw her son, she came up quietly behind him.

« 9. *Krishṇa* saw her coming with a switch in her hand, got down in haste and ran away as if he was frightened; the shepherdess set herself to run after him whom the Yogīs do not catch, even when by penitence their hearts have become capable of uniting with him.

« 10. His mother ran after him, and although hampered by the weight of her supple hips, whose breadth enhanced the slimness of her waist, and (by her anxiety) while still running she picked up the flowers which fell from her hair, she at last put her hand on him.

« 11. The culprit, crying and rubbing his eyes, smearing his
hand with the black eye-salve, cast timid glances at his mother while she, holding him by the arm, scolded him in threatening tones.

« 12. She left her switch there; when she saw her son was frightened, the tender mother wanted at least to tie him up with cord, not knowing the power which he had.

« 15. The cord with which the lady had tied the little culprit her son, being short by two fingers she added a second bit.

« 16. The new string was also too short, and she tied on yet another, but each bit she took to tie him up, was always too short by two fingers.

« 18. The sweat ran down her limbs; the tresses of her hair and her garland flowed outspread. *Krishñā* seeing his mother at the end of her strength, took pity on her, and tied himself up.

« 22. While his mother was busy with the affairs of her household, the vigorous *Krishñā* saw two *arjuna* trees, two old *Guhyakas*, sons of the god of wealth,

« 23. Whom *Narada* had a foretime cursed and changed into trees, as a punishment for their drunkeness; they were called *Nalakūbara* and *Manigrīva*, both dazzling in their beauty.

« Chap. x. 26. *Krishñā* advanced between the twin *arjunas*, and *He* who is the universal soul had hardly passed between them, when the mortar turned obliquely.

« 27. By the efforts of the child who dragged it, the mortar followed straight. The two trees suddenly struck by *Dāmodara* (*Krishñā*) from the trammels in which their feet were tied, fell with violent shaking from the contact with the power of the Most High, — trunks, branches and twigs with a fearful sound. »

Fig. 28. A. shows *Dāmodara* tied by a cord to the mortar and delivering the *arjuna* trees.

*Krishñā* stealing the butter (*Navanīda-kappan*) is very often represented (Pl. LVI). The god as a little child is naked, with his head decorated with peacock plumes; in one hand he holds a pot (vase) full of butter while the other hand carries butter to his mouth (1).

(1) Mr. Guimet has noticed a great resemblance between the Hindu image
Vñpu-gópála (the shepherd with the bamboo) (Pl. L.VII). —
Krishña is often represented in the attitude of a herdsman
(gópála) playing the flute under a tree in the midst of his herds.

Bagachuren-vadei (the slaying of Baka) (Fig. 28. B). —
Bhágavata Puráña (Burnouf’s translation):
« Chap. xi. 35. One day all the young herdsmen wanting
to water their herds went to the banks of a pond. There they
made their calves drink, and then drank themselves.
« 36. Then seeing in front of them a gigantic animal which
did not move, like the peak of a mountain detached by a thun-
derbolt, the children took fright and fled.

Fig. 28. — Exploits of Krishña.

« 37. It was the great Asura called Baka (crane) appearing
in the shape of the bird of the same name. It suddenly swooped
upon Krishña and gulped him violently into his sharp beak.
« 38. On seeing Krishña devoured by this monstrous crane,
Ráma and the other boys were struck with stupor, as are the
senses when life leaves them.
« 39. Baka feeling that the son of the shepherd, the father
of the guru of the worlds (Brahmá) was burning his palate at
its root like a devouring fire, threw him up suddenly with fury,
of Krishña eating butter and the Egyptian statues of Chons with the buds.
Mr. Flinders Petrie has also pointed out the resemblance between the
images of Horus and of Krishña.
without having hurt him and came at him anew to peck at him with his beak.

« 40. At the moment when Baka, the friend of Kaṁṣa, flung himself at him, he who makes happy those who are good, caught him by the two mandibles, and rent him in two, as if in play, like a plant with a knot-less stem, before the eyes of his young companions, and filled the inhabitants of heaven with joy. »

Kāliyāki-mardaka (the crushing of Kāliya) (Fig. 29). — This scene recalls the legend of Hercules and the Lernean Hydra.

**Fig. 29. — Kāliya-mardaka.**

*Bhāgavata Purāṇa* (Burnouf's translation):

« Chap. xvi. 4. Kāliya lived in the Kālindi (the Yamunā), in a lake, the water of which boiled with fire of his poison, wherein fell the birds which ventured over it.

« 6. Krishna who went down below to punish the wicked, seeing the force, and the irresistible thunderbolt effects, of the poison with which the serpent fouled the stream, mounted
a very high kadamba tree, and therefrom defying the monster and girding his loins, he plunged into the poisoned water.

« 9. While the young and handsome hero, as gracious as the clouds, like some Śrīvatsa, garbed in yellow robe, whose face beamed with a smile, played with indifference, shaking his lotuslike feet, the serpent in a rage bit him at the sources of life, and covered him with his coils.

« 24. Krishna’s body as it swelled caused horrible agony to the serpent which held him in his coils, so it let go and raising its hoods with fury, began to hiss and directed on Hari the poisoned fluid from its nostrils, from its glassy eyes like the holes in a grid and from his mouth where a blazing fire-brand burned.

« 25. It licked the corners of its mouth with its forked tongue, still keeping its eyes wide open whence glittered a poisonous fire, while Krishna harassed it, frolicking like the king of the birds. The serpent twisting on every side, sought to suprise him.

« 26. When Káliya had exhausted all his strength in turning thus, the primeval (Purusha), pressing on the swelling necks of the monster, stood on his broad hoods, and colouring a burning red the lotus of his divine feet, as he touched the innumerable precious stones on the serpents heads, he began to dance like a master of all the arts.

« 28. Each time that one of the heads of the hundred-headed monster refused to bend down, the hero, armed for the punishment of the wicked, crushed it under his leaps, o king, while the serpent writhing in all directions, and pouring forth floods of blood from its jaws and from its nostrils, fell into misery profound.

« 29. Each head which it raised up while darting poison from its eyes, and wrathfully hissing sharply, Krishna made to bend, mastered it and crushed it under the rhythmic movement of its feet. Such is the age-long Purusha, whom men here below honour with a rain of flowers.

« 30. While under the fantastic bounds of his marvellous dance, he had broken in pieces the crests of the serpent, which were like a sunshade, and shattered its limbs, the latter, o king, remembered the preceptor of the movable and immovable worlds, the age-long Purusha, Náráyaná, and came back to him in thought.
« 66. After thus honouring the master of the worlds, and becoming reconciled with the god whose symbolic name is Garuđa, he turned around him, and joyfully saluted him.
« 67. And, followed by his wives and his children, he went with permission to the isle of Ramaņaka. On the instant the waters of the Yamunā ceased to be poisonous, and acquired ambrosial sweetness. » (See Pl. LVIII.)

Gōpiś-vastrāpaharanā (the rape of the milkmaids' clothes) (1).
— The episode is also called jala-krīḍā (the water games) (Pl. LIX).

Bhāgavata Purāṇa (Burnouf's translation):
« Chap. xxii. 1. Śuka said: During the first month of winter, the young women of the park of Nanda celebrate pious observances in honour of Kātyāyanti (Durgā) during which time they live on nothing but wild grain.
« 2. They bathe in the water of Kālinī (the Yamunā), and at the first rays of the sun, make an image of the goddess with river sand, and worship it, o king.
« 8. The ever happy Kṛiśṇa, the Master of the masters of the Yāga, approved of their thoughts, and wishing to assure to them the fruit of their sacrifice, he repaired to the place with his companions.
« 9. He took away the clothes of the young women, hastily climbed a nipa tree, and exchanging smiles with his comrades, jokingly said:
« 10. « Ladies, come hither, and each one take as she wishes, the clothes which are hers. Seriously I speak, and not in jest, for you are reduced by your fast. »
« 12. At these mockeries of Kṛiśṇa, the shepherdesses with hearts overflowing with love, felt shy, and glanced at each other, without coming out of the water.
« 13. When Gōvinda thus spake, the young women, whose hearts were ravished by his pleasantry, immersed in cold water to their necks while shivering said:
« 14. « Come now, no nonsense! o child, we know whom thou

(1) Commonly called: Kṛiśṇa and the gōpikās. (Tr.)
art, dear son of Nanda the shepherd, thy praises all sing in the park, our clothes give to us, here we freeze.

"15. O thou, whose rich colour enhances thy beauty, thy slaves we all are, and as thou hast said, so wish we to do. Give us our clothing, or else we must take our plaint to the king."

"16. Bhagavat said: "If you are my slaves, and will do all I say, come take your clothing, o beauties with smile so pure."

"17. Then all the young women, shivering with cold, came out of the water covering their nudeness with both hands, and crouching together because of the cold.

"18. The Ever-happy seeing that their feelings were hurt, was won by the purity of their thoughts, and putting their cloths on a branch, said with affectionate smile:

"19. "You have offended the gods bathing quite naked in the water during the time of your pious observances, to wipe out your sins; put your hands on your head, and bowing low, take all your clothes."

"21. Then seeing them bowed down before him, the ever-happy son of Dévaki, touched by this mark of submission, graciously returned their garments."

"22. He had grievously teased them, and despoiled them of all modesty, had toyed with them, making them move like puppets, and taken away their cloths. But they bore him no grudge, so great was their joy to be so near their loved one.

"23. They put on their cloths, ready to unite with the object of their love, with hearts filled by him alone, they moved not, and modestly fixed their eyes on him."

Gówardhana-dhara (Krishna supporting mount Gówardhana).
— Bhágavata Puráña (Burnouf’s translation):

"Chap. xxiv. 1. While Bhágavat lived in the park with Bala-déva, he saw the herdsmen busy one day preparing a sacrifice in honour of Indra.

"2. Bhágavat, who knew well what they were doing, since he is the Universal Soul, and He who sees everything, respectfully bowing before Nanda and the other elders, asked them the following question:

"3. « Tell me, father, why the turmoil which reigns among
you? What result do you expect? What orders do you obey? With what do you celebrate this sacrifice?

« 8. Nanda said: « The ever-happy Indra is god of the storms, with clouds for his visible signs, these are they which spread over creation the water which makes it live and breathe. »

« 12. So spake Nanda and the other dwellers in the park. On hearing them Keśava who wished to drive Indra to the extreme, said to his father:

« 15. « What has Indra to do with earthly beings, since each of them is subject to the influence of what he himself does, and Indra cannot change at all the fate which nature assigns to men.

« 17. If a being unites with the body of a superior or inferior order or if it leaves them, it is by virtue of action. Acts are its enemy; abstension is its friend, it is the guru, it is Iśvara!

« 18. So it is acts which ought to be honoured by the being which makes its own destiny in obedience to Nature. The true deity of the Sacrifice for him is that which makes him live.

« 25. Therefore one should offer sacrifices to cows, to Brahmins and to the mountain, and for this, the preparation for Indra’s sacrifice should be used.»

« 38. He spoke, and the herdsmen made sacrifice in honour of the mountain, the cows and the Brahmins as the son of Vasudeva advised, and returned to the park with Keśiha.»

« Chap. xxv. 1. Then Indra seeing his honours abolished, turned his anger against Nanda and the herdsmen who had taken Keśiha as protector.

« 2. The clouds ordained to put an end to the world, formed battalions to the order of him who is called the Destroyer. Wounded in his pride as sovereign master, furious Indra encouraging their zeal, spoke to the clouds in these words:

« 5. « By putting their trust in a babbling, foolish, ignorant and presumptuous child, in Keśiha, a mortal, the herdsmen have cut me to the quick.

« 6. Since prosperity has made them so proud and the support of Keśiha so confident in themselves, strike down the blind drunkenness with which prosperity fills them, and destroy their herds.
"7. I myself riding my elephant Airâvata shall proceed against the park; with the powerful legion of the winds, shall I overthrow the byres of Nanda."

"8. At this order of Maghavân, the clouds released, beat with torrential rain upon Nanda's park, and bore down violently upon it.

"9. Flashing with the fire of lightenings, roaring with the claps of thunder, and driven on by the frenzied hands of Maruts (the winds), they poured upon it avalanches of water and gravel.

"11. The domestic animals shuddering under the beating rain and blasts of wind, with the shepherds and shepherdesses shivering with cold, all ran to the protection of Gôvinda.

"14. Seeing the rain of gravel which drove violently down on the dwellers of the park, and drove them wild, the beneficent Hari recognized the work of the wrath of Indra.

"15. "This unseasonable and violent storm (said he to himself), these blasts of wind, this rain of sand, are sent by Indra to destroy us, since we have abolished his cult."

"19. Thus said Krishña, and with one hand only he lifted up the Gôvardhana mountain from its base, and supported it in the air as easily as a child holds up a mushroom.

"20. Bhagavat said to the herdsmen: "Mother, Father, and you dwellers in the park, enter as you will under the mountain you and your herds."

"22. Reassured by the encouraging words of Krishña, they went under the mountain and settled themselves as well as they could, with all they had, their herds and their servants.

"23. Without feeling the pangs of hunger and thirst, caring not for his own well being, he held up the mountain for seven days under the eyes of the dwellers of the park, without moving from his place.

"24. Indra witnessed the mysterious power of Krishña, and was astonished; at the end of his resources and giving up his plans, he called away his servants the clouds."

Rukmini-kalyâna. — This is the marriage of Krishña and Rukmini, daughter of the king of Vidarbha (Dvârakâ).
Krishna is also represented (Pl. LX) with his wife Rukmini and his favourite mistress Radha, in his palace at Dwarka.

Historical. — One fact can be established in the history of the iconography of Krishna. Two legends are often found in ancient temples:

1. The hero crushing the serpent Kaliya;
2. Holding up the Govardhana mountain.

None of the other legends of Krishna’s life seem to have been known to the sculptors of the 7th and 8th centuries.

Krishna conquering the snake Kaliya is represented in the Dharmaraja at Mavalipuram (1st story, South side) (it is noticeable that the upper part of the snake’s body is human) and on the Vaikuntha-Perumal at Kanchipuram (A. Rea, Pallava Architecture, Pl. LXXXIII, fig. 3) (1).

Fig. 30. — Relief at Mavalipuram (7th century) representing Krishna supporting mount Govardhana (Babington’s drawing).

A large low-relief at Mavalipuram represents Krishna holding up the mountain Govardhana above the herdsmen, their families and their herds (Fig. 30) (2).

(1) It is in this way too, that the subject is treated in the Kailasa at Ellora (see Pl. LVIII); but in this place the hero has four arms, one carrying the Sankha, which proves that at that period (8th century) he was identified with Vishnu.

(2) Krishna is ordinarily represented playing the flute, and charming
The same subject is found in the Vaikuntha-Perumal temple, at Kañchipuram (A. Rea, Pallava Architecture, Pl. LXXVIII, fig. 3) (1).

We are tempted to believe that in the 7th century the two exploits about the snake Kāliya and the mountain Gōvardhana were not yet attributed to the hero of the Mahābhārata (2).

One fact is clear, which is, that the poetical and pretty stories of the young Krīṣṇa (Krīṣṇa stealing the butter, Krīṣṇa and the Gōpikās, Krīṣṇa the flutist, Krīṣṇa and his wives) are altogether absent from Hindu iconography before the 12th century.

Draupadī and the Pāṇḍavas. — The five Pāṇḍava brothers (pañcha Pāṇḍava): 1. Dharma-rāja or Yudhishṭhira; 2. Bhima (the terrible); 3. Arjuna (the white); 4. Nakula; 5. Sahadāva, all five husbands of the beautiful Krīṣṇā or Draupadī (daughter of Drāupada), fought against the Kurus (whose chief was Duryōdhana). They are worshipped in Southern India. Arjuna is the most famous; he is shown holding his bow Gāṇḍiva in his hand.

In the months of Sittirai, Vayasi and Ani, the Neruppu-tirunṭai (festival of fire) is celebrated in honour of Draupadī, who purified herself by walking on fire, each time she changed a husband.

On the evening of the festival, Hindus who have made a vow to walk on the fire, in order to obtain boons, cover their bodies with saffron, deck themselves with flowers, and to the sound of music, walk barefoot in a rectangular space, covered with glowing charcoal.

Historical. — The episode of Śiva in the form of a hunter following a wild boar in order to prove the courage of Arjuna all creation with his divine music. As one of the personages is figured with this instrument at his lips, it would be necessary to suppose that the god is represented twice in the same tableau. It is easier to think that the player of the flute whom we see is some herdsman or other. (Le Tour du monde, Eight days in India, by Emile Guimet, 1889, Vol. LVI, 1440th part, p. 96.)

(1) And also in the Kailāśa at Ellora.
(2) Krīṣṇa the Yādavide is identified with Gōvinda, the pastoral god; Rāma the Rāghavide is identified with a popular god, the conqueror of the demons, Rāma (Chante pie de la Saussaye, Histoire des religions, p. 404).
(Mahābhārata: Vana-Parva, 1616-1713) is shown on the Kailāsanātha temple at Kaṇchipuram (A. Rea, Pallava Architecture, Pl. XXXIV, image on the right).


The incarnation of Vishṇu as a giant with a white horse’s head, bearing a sword and shield has not yet taken place. It will occur at the end of the world. It is rarely represented and then only in modern temples. This avatār, the tenth and last, bears the name of Kalki (Fig. 27) (1).

Mōhenī or Mōhīnt.

When quoting the translation of the Bhāgavata Purāṇa about the churning of the sea of milk, it was stated that Vishṇu took the form of a beautiful woman in order to seduce the giants and take the amurdam (Sanskrit: amṛita) (Pl. LXI) away from them. This image is only seen in modern temples.

Vēṅkaṭēśa-Perumal.

Certain Vishnuvite sages are thought to be incarnations of Vishṇu, the most famous being Vēṅkaṭēśa (Vēṅkaṭāchala-mūrti or Vēṅkaṭēśvara-Perumal), god of Vēṅkaḍa (Tirupati). He is generally represented as in Fig. 20, between Śrīdēvi and Bhūmi-dēvi.

§ 2. — Lakṣmī.

The wife of Vishṇu (who is called Lakṣmī-pati, husband of Lakṣmī) was born out of the sea of milk (whence her name Jālakṣjadi). She is also called Śrīdēvi, and considered to be the goddess of the sky and of fortune. She stands at Vishṇu’s right hand and carries in her left hand a lotus flower (padma, kamala or tāmarasa).

(1) According to Lassen, the idea of an incarnation of Vishṇu in the form of a horse, only appeared in India after Mahmound of Gazni had overcome the Hindus with the aid of his cavalry.
When *Vishṇu* incarnated himself in *Rāma*, *Lakshmi* was incarnated in *Sītā*, and when *Vishṇu* was incarnated in *Krīṣṇa*, *Lakshmi* was incarnated in *Rukmīṇī*.

*Gaja-Lakshmi.*

In modern iconography the goddess *Lakshmi* is often represented (Pl. LXII) seated with legs crossed, on a lotus throne. She has four arms. Two of her hands are in the attitude *abhaya-hastam*. The two hands behind these, each carry a lotus. On each side of *Lakshmi* an elephant holds up a vessel with his trunk, and with it waters the flower which the goddess holds.

*Historical.* — This subject is extremely ancient. Two hundred years before our era, the Buddhists represented a goddess between two elephants.

At *Mavalipuram* (7th century) in the *Varāha* cave, a low-relief (Pl. LXIII) shows how this scene was treated by the *Pallavas* (1). It is to be found in the *Kailāsanātha* temple at *Kaṅchipuram* (A. REA, *Pallava Architecture*, Pl. XXX).

If the old designs are compared with those of modern iconography it is noticeable that in olden days the subject represented the bath of the goddess. She was seated in a very simple costume in the middle of a pool, and it was on her person that the elephants poured water.

Now-a-days the goddess, magnificently arrayed and decked with jewels, does not bathe, and the elephants no longer pour water on her shoulders, but on the flowers she holds in her hands.

§ 3. — *Manmadha* (*Manmatha*).

*Manmatha* (he who stirs the heart), also called *Kāma* (desire), *Abhisrūpa* (the Pretty), son of *Vishṇu* and *Lakshmi*, is the Eros of the Hindus (2).

(1) Two similar low-reliefs exist in the *Kailāsa* at *Ellora*. One of the two is at the entrance of this temple, and it is the first thing the visitor sees on entering the monument.

(2) *Kāma* is represented in the *Kailāsa* at *Ellora*. He holds his bow of sugar cane. He is without his parrot, and he has a *makara* for his emblem.
Manmadan having struck Śiva when he was engaged in his austerities, with his arrows, the latter burnt up his body with a glance. Hence Manmadan got the name of Anaṅga: the Incorporeal. This event is commemorated by the festival Kāmadahanam which takes place during the month of Phālguna (March).

Kāma (Fig. 31) is represented riding a parrot. His arrows are flowers; his quiver contains five arrows (the number is characteristic), each of which represents a passion the magical charm of which provokes love. Each arrow is a flower, of lotus, mango, jasmine, aśoka and blue lily: Amra (the mango blossom), Nagaṭēshara (Mesua ferrea), Champaka (Michelia champaka), Kētaka (Pandanus adoratissimus) and Malura (Egle marmelos). To Kāma also are applied the epithets Pañcāsana (he of the five arrows),
Kusumāyudha (armed with flowers), Aindhuṇaikijavaṇa (master of five arrows), and Pushpa-kēṭana (adorned with flowers).

Manmatha’s bow is a stalk of sugar cane (whence Kāma’s name Karuthiyakaruppu-villī) and the bow-string is formed of bees holding each other’s feet. Kāma’s dart is called Kamabuna (from the Sanskrit Kāmabāṇa, arrow of love). On his standards Kāma carries a makara (a sort of crocodile) whence his name: Minurokoṭiyuyartan.

Manmatha’s wife is called Rati (debauchery), who is represented mounted on a swan or a goose.

Kāma is incarnated in Pradyumna, eldest son of Kṛishṇa.

Historical. — Manmadan and Rati are very probably represented on the Kailāsanātha temple at Kaṅchipuram (A. Rea, Pallava Architecture, Pl. XLIII, fig. 1); a little Gandharva who stands by them, actually carries a standard ornamented with a makara.
CHAPTER III

BRAHMĀ AND SECONDARY DIVINITIES

§ 1. — Brahmā (Tamil: Biraman).

Brahmā is the Brahmin god, and the author of the Vēdas. We have seen him celebrating the marriage of Śiva and Pārvatī, and pouring lustral water on the foot of Vishnu-Trivikrama. In his honour the Brahmins perform the Sandhyāvandana ceremony, but he has no special temples.

Brahmā occupies an important place in iconography. We have already seen him in the Trimūrti. He is who drives Śiva’s chariot (Tripurasamāhari). We have spoken of his efforts to reach the top of the flaming column at Tiruvanamallai.

He is seated on the lotus flower which issues from the stomach of Vishnu lying on the snake (Raṅganātha). With the other gods he holds the tail of the serpent at the churning of the sea of milk. He is easily recognized by his four faces (Chatur-mukha, Chatur-ānana, Nālu-mukha), of which three only are visible in pictures and reliefs, the fourth looking backwards.

According to one legend these four heads arise from the fact that there are four Vēdas, and each Vēda came from one of the four mouths. It is said that once there were five heads, but that Śiva cut off the fifth. When speaking of Bhairava, we have given the first legend, the second is as follows:

Overcome by a culpable passion Brahmā wished to seduce his own daughter Sandhyā. She vainly tried to escape him by hiding in the most secret retreats. At each attempt she made to fly, a new head with a new face grew on Brahmā, the penetrating looks of which followed and discovered his daughter. In the end Śiva was roused, and cut off one of the heads, and placed it in his head-dress as a trophy.

Brahmā does not wear the cylindrical tiara of the Vishnuvite
divinities on his head; his plaied hair is gathered into a conical knot (mukuta) (Fig. 32). He is red, or more exactly rose coloured.

He has four arms, and the back ones carry emblems. The back right hand holds an oval disk bordered with pearls called Brahmatandram. It is said that he uses this instrument to mark their fate on the brows of men, but originally it may have been a sacrificial spoon. In the second right hand he holds a chaplet (jata-

Fig. 32. — Brahmá.

malat) made with rudraksha beads. The left hand at the back carries an emblem called Kamandalam (Sanskrit: Kamanâdalu) which is a vessel used for ablutions.

His riding animal (in Sanskrit: vâhana) is a kind of swan called in Sanskrit haûsa and in Tamil annam, whence Brahmâ's epithet: Annavûrti.
Historical. — Brahmá is very often represented on the Pallava monuments, very little differently from the fashion of today. Plate LXIV is a reproduction of an image of Brahmá in the cave without inscriptions at Trichinopoly (7th century).

In the Kailásanátha at Kańchipuram, a low-relief shows Śiśa cutting off the fifth head of Brahmá (A. Réa, Pallava Architecture, Pl. XXXIV, figure on the left).

We have never seen the bird of Brahmá in Pallava temples (1). In all ancient Sivaite temples, a sanctuary consecrated to Brahmá is found on the left hand side of the building. (It has been mentioned that the right hand side is consecrated to Vishnu.)

§ 2. — Sarasvati.

She is the wife of Brahmá, and the goddess on the arts (2). She is represented sitting and playing an instrument of music called the vina (Pl. LXV). The other hands (she has four) hold a book and a style. It is a fact that Hindus write on palm leaves called ollai with a point of iron called jezhutheny.

History. — In Pallava temples, Brahmá is generally alone; however in the Kailásanátha at Kańchipuram he sits beside his wife (Réa, Pallava Architecture, Pl. XXXVI, fig. 2), but she has no vina, and there is nothing to prove that at that period Brahmá's wife was identified with Sarasvati, the divinity of rivers.

§ 3. — The Devargal.

We have mentioned that Śiva and his family lived in Kailása and that the paradise of Vishnu is Vaikuṇtha. There is another celestial abode called Sargas (Svarga), which is inhabited by the Devargal. Among the first of these due to be noted, are the eight

(1) At Ellora, in the gallery at the back of the Kailása, the bird Annam is at his feet, and in some low-reliefs Brahmá is shown riding his swan in the midst of the Vedic gods.

(2) In the Ellora caves, Sarasvati is often represented not as the wife of Brahmá but as a fluvial deity, and stands on a tortoise.
gods called Tigupālagar, from the Sanskrit Ashtādikpālaka, who rule the eight regions of the heavens.

These gods correspond to the cardinal points, and their portraits are used to illustrate Hindu compass cards (Fig. 33).

The following are the eight guardians of the sky:

1. Devandiren (in Sanskrit, Indra); he is also called Mayendra (Sanskrit: Mahendra). He is the son of Kassipar (Sanskrit: Kasyapa) and Aditi. — Indra’s wife’s name is Sachi, daughter of Pulomana (she is sometimes called Indrāṇi).

Indra annihilated Pulomana in order to carry off his daughter Sachi. So he is called Pulomāri (destroyer of Pulomana) or Sachipti (husband of Sachi). The result of their union was a son called Jayanta.

Indra’s capital is Amarāravati. He is the god of the sky and carries in his left hand a double trident (like the Trisūla of Subrahmanya), an emblem of the thunder (Vajrāvudha). In his right hand he carries a sort of flower.

Indra’s body is covered with a thousand eyes, whence his name Ayirarākkan. His vāhana is a white elephant called Airāvata (beautiful elephant) which came out of the sea of milk. From his Indra got the name Karivāhana.

2. Akkini (Sanskrit: Agni) who governs the South-East is the god of fire. In our days he is considered to be god of the kitchen, so he carries in his four hands a porringer, a spoon, a torch and a fan with which to flow the fire. He has two hands adorned with flames (Pl. LXVI).

He is sometimes represented with three legs and seven arms. He lives in the South-East into the town of Teṣhobadipatnam (Sanskrit: Tejọvati). He is the son of Aṅgiras, and married Suvaqay (Sanskrit: Svāhā) and had three sons: Pavanama (Pāvaka), Pavemanam (Pavamāna) and Sussi (Śuchi).

3. Heman or Yaman (Sanskrit: Yama), also called Dharma (the just) and Tendisaikan (because he governed the South), is god of the nether world. He lives in Pāṭāla (under the earth). His town is Emapuram. He rides on a buffalo and carries a club.

His sister Yamī is goddess of the river Yamunā (Jamna). We have already told how Yama, god of the infernal regions,
Fig. 33. — Ashtadikpālaka.
wished to take possession of the young Mårkaṇḍa, but was driven away by Śiva the god of life (Pl. V).

4. Nayuruti (Sanskrit: Nirṛiti), god of the South-West and king of the Budans, is a terrible figure; he is mounted on the shoulders of a giant and holds a club. He inhabits the town of Tadachābadipatnam. His wife is Tirgadēvi (Dirghā).

5. Varunan (Sanskrit: Varuṇa), governor of the West, holds in his hand a kind of cord called pāśa (the symbol that Pulliar carries in his left hand). He is mounted on a fabulous animal,

Makara, which used to be a crocodile, but which now-a-days has an elephant’s trunk, a bird’s body and a plumed tail (Karukku).

6. Vayu, god of the wind, who rules the North-West, is mounted on a gazelle, and carries two little flags. He lives at Tuchabadipatnam.

7. Kuberan (Sanskrit: Kuvēra), son of Viśravas, lives in the North, in the city of Alakā (Vasu-sthalī or Prabhā). His chariot’s name is Pushpaka. He is mounted on a white horse, and holds a sword and buckler (parisai).
8. Isanian (Sanskrit: Isānā) rides an ox, and is represented just like Śiva, thus he has for insignia the trident (śula) and the drum (uḍukkai). He governs the North-East.

Besides these eight Devargal there are others of whom Śūrya, god of the sun, is most famous and very frequently represented. He is known by his holding one flower in each hand, and especially because there is a large circle at the back of his head, representing the solar disk. He is often mounted in a chariot drawn by seven horses. His sons the two Aśvins (horsemen) are the physician gods (See Fig. 34.)

The chariot of Śūrya is driven by Aruṇa; his capital is Vivasvatt. The prayer (mantra) called Gāyatī, which Brahmans daily recite is addressed to him. The festival Nāyiktukizhavanavara, or simply Nāyiru (sun or Sunday) is also celebrated in his honour.

The god of the moon is Chandran whose head is ornamented with a crescent, the antelope being his emblem. Aruṇa, half man half bird and Viśvakarman, the architect god, are also to be noted.

_Historical (1)._—Indra is represented (Pl. LXVIII) on the Eastern gōpuram at Chidambaram; he is mounted on an elephant and carries the symbols (triple shining squares and double trident) representing thunderbolt (Vadja), which today are the characteristics of Subrahmaniar.

Śūrya is often shown in ancient temples, with but little difference to the modern style. He is to be seen on the last story on the North side of the Dharmarāja-ratha at Mavalipuram and in the cave without inscriptions at Trichinopoly (7th century) (Pl. LXIX).

One point is to be noted here: The gods which appear on ancient temples outside the Dravidian country, at Bādāmi, Ellora, etc., have their heads surrounded with an elliptic halo

(1) In the caves at Ellora these gods are represented in nearly all the great low-reliefs. They appear in the sky under the clouds, riding on their respective vāhanas, and respectfully worshipping, are present at the exploits of Śiva. On the exterior facade of the Kailāsa, on each side of the entrance door a row of niches are consecrated to them. For example Agni and his ram is seen (Pl. LXVII). He has only one head and two arms which do not bear emblems.
This sign of divinity is of Greco-Buddhist origin. In Southern India, at Mavalipuram and Kañchipuram, the gods have no halo. Only Śūrya has his head surrounded with a circle by which he is recognized in the low-reliefs of the Penance of Arjuna and in that of Varāha.

§ 4. — The Kurus of the Devargal.

The Kurus, sons of Kasibar (Sanskrit: Kaśyapa) and Aditai, are celestial Spirits similar to angels. They are: the Vasugal, the Charana, the Marut; the Kinarar (Sanskrit: Kinnara), musicians who have horses heads, of whom the chief is Tomburu, adept at playing the vina; the Kimburudar (Kimpurusha), singers with human heads and bodies of birds; the Chiddar (Siddha), who have wings and fly in the air; the Vitiadar (Vidyādhara), knowing in arts and science; the Gerudar (Garuḍa), a kind of eagles; the Panaga, snake charmers, the Pidurdevadegal (genii of the dead), the Gananātha or Duta, and lastly the famous Gandruvar (Gandharva) who are wedded to the Apsara. Dēvādāsis (dancing girls) also adorn the celestial abodes, of whom the principal ones are: Urvāśi, Rambhā and Tilottamā.

Historical. — Ever after the Buddhist period, secondary spirits which too often look like little demons, appear on sculptures. In cave XXIV at Ajañta (Burgess, Cave temples of India, p. 157) little musicians with animals feet are to be seen, very like those which are found in the low-reliefs of the Penance of Arjuna at Mavalipuram; especially at Baddāmi (see for example the lower part of Plate XLIX) where friezes show little Gandharvas who amuse themselves, play tricks and fight.

The same friezes are often seen in the Pallava temples at Kañchipuram. These little genii correspond to Cupids in the friezes of Western art. They wear garlands of flowers, and are chubby and naked. A characteristic of the Gandharvas of the 6th, 7th and 8th centuries is that they have plaited hair which hangs down on their shoulders like a pig-tail. At Chidambaram (Eastern gōpuram, 13th century) one sees friezes in which Cupids play
about, but the design entirely disappears in the Bijayanagar period.

The friezes then display animals (elephants, horses, etc.) and dancing girls. In Hindu paintings of our days, Kurus figure in the sky below the gods.

§ 5. — Demons (Peygal).

Giants and monsters of terrible aspect are often to be seen represented, with scattered hair, strong moustaches, pointed teeth (pallu) and pot bellies. They are armed with clubs and snakes. These are the Achurar (Asuras), Rachadar (Rākshasas) and Budan (Bhūtas).

§ 6. — Dvarabalagar (Sanskrit: Dvārapālaka).

Temple doors are protected by giant guardians of the threshold armed with clubs. They are called Dvarabalagar, and have four arms and carry the emblems of the gods whose sanctuaries they protect. Another name for them is Munadiyār.

Historical. — In monuments of the Buddhist period, Chaityas are placed at each side of entrances. Archaeologists think that these heroes represent Hindu chiefs who protected Buddhism, but it is probable that these statues (at Karli, Nasik and Kandheri, etc.) represent guardians and protective spirits, prototypes of the modern Dvarabalagar.

These last are often very artistically presented at Mavali-puram, Trichinopoly (7th century), and Kāṅchīpuram (8th century). At Tanjore and at Gaṅgaikondapuram (11th century) they have already assumed a move terrible aspect. Plates LXX and LXXI show their evolution.

§ 7. — Nāgas.

Snakes have been venerated in India from all time, and part-
icularly the cobra (Cobra Capello), called Nāga. Their worship is displayed in Buddhist sculptures (Ferguson, Tree and Serpent Worship). Now-a-days sacred trees enclosed with a paling are found everywhere, and shelter images of snakes (Nāgas).

The trees are of two species of which the Arasu is considered the male and the Margosa the female. The snakes are carved on tall stones stuck in the ground. Nearly always they are inter-

Fig. 35. — Nāgas.

twined as in Mercury's caduceus (Fig. 35). Women perform the office of Nāgapūjā before them (See Pl. LXXII.)

§ 8. — Grāma-Dēvatās.

This is the name given to village deities such as Ellammal, Ankālamman, Bhadrakāli, Pidari, etc.; Chāmundi, the goddess who conquered Mahishāsura, is also a Grāma-dēvatā. We shall
make particular mention of four other of these deities: Ayanar, Ma'riatâl, Maduraivirappan and Manaravâmi.

Ayanar. — Probably an indigenous and local deity. He is attached to Hinduism by the following legend: Śiva who was of the number of Giants and Rishis, was seduced by Mogheni (Mohânti) who accorded her favours to him. She became the mother of Ayanar who is thus the son of Śiva and of Vishnu (whence the Tamil name Hariharaputiran, Sanskrit: Hari-Haraputra, son of Vishnu and Śiva).

The two wives of Ayanar are Purânai and Pudkali. He rides on a white elephant, whence his title: Vellâyânaimurti. In his
temple one often sees seven mothers who are: Trikara-sūri, Muyakara-sūri, Rakta-chāmundi, Kāttāri, Bhagavatt, Bālasakti and Bhuvana-sakti.

Ayanar is the god of the field watchmen. He protects gardens and chastises thieves and is then called Purattavan (the watchman). His generals are the Pālaiyakarar. They ride on horses, so horses made of pottery-ware are offered to them, and are arranged in troops in front of Ayanar's shrines.

Ayanar is represented as a warrior (Fig. 36), whence his name Nallasēvaga (good soldier). He wears a special sort of crown which lops over to one side. One of his titles is Tirumudi-Śēvaga (the soldier of the holy crown). His emblems are very characteristic. In his right hand (he has only two arms) he holds a sceptre of a peculiar shape called Savuku (whip) or Koradd. His left arm rests on a stick such as ascetics use, called Yōgatandam. He wears also a sort of belt used by ascetics when they are seated, which is called Bāhupaddai.

Māri-atāl (1) or Māri-ammai (from māri, small-pox, and atāl or ammai, mother), is the goddess of small-pox (2). Only her head is worshipped and she is identified with Rēnukā, wife of Jamadagni and mother of Paraśurāma. She was given the miraculous power of drawing water without using a vessel. The liquid became solid in her hands as soon as she dipped them in the tank, and so she brought it to her husband's house. She was to keep this power only as long as her heart was pure; one day when she was taking water, she saw reflected on the surface of the tank the forms of beautiful Gandharvas (3), from which time the liquid became solid no more.

Jamadagni ordered his son Paraśurāma to cut off her wicked head, which was done. Māriatāl obtained the favour of having her head put on her body again, but by mistake it was put on to the body of a Pariah woman (Paraichi). This legend explains

(1) In Northern India, Śṭatā, cold.
(2) On the subject of Māriatāl, goddess of small-pox, consult the excellent work of Dr. Paramananda Mariadassou, Mèurs médicales de l'Inde, Pondicherry, 1906, pp. 116, 119.
(3) A variation is that she saw Chitraratra, prince of Mṛritikāvati, sporting with his wife.
why Māriatāl is a deity whose head only is worshipped (Fig. 37).

Uttukādu, Kannapuram and Periyapalayam are the places of pilgrimage for Māriatāl. In her shrines images of Mātānğī (the Pariah woman whose body she got), of the demon Kāttān, with Pāppātī and Chettipen his mistresses, are also to be seen, and other demons: Periyatambiram (the big god) Irulan (the wild),

![Fig. 37. — Māriatāl.](image)

Ranavira, Pāvādaivirei or Pāvādaivayer, Uyirtundilikarar, and the goddess Kāttēri.

Maduraivirappan. — Virappan, son of Kāśīrāja (king of Kāśī, Benares), was born under an unlucky star, so his father handed him over to the executioners, who being moved by the child’s beauty, slew an animal in his place and abandoned him in the forest. He was brought up as a leather worker in the realm of king Pomainayakan. The king’s daughter fell in love with him and he fled with her to Madura, where he became king, and after conquering the troops of Pomainayakan, he reigned as Madurai-Virappan.
As the god of wine he is held above all in veneration by sellers of kallu (palm juice which is drunk) who worship his image by the side of Kālī's. He is represented dressed as a rāja, sword in hand, and carrying a shield. He always rides a horse. His moustaches are large and thick, and on his forehead are the three white horizontal stripes of the Sivaites. He is often accompanied by his two wives and his servants. The image of this god is usually only found in the countryside close to small shrines dedicated to Ayanar or Manar.

Manarśvāmi. — This is probably a local aboriginal god who is not connected with other Hindu divinities, and is hardly worshipped except in country places. Tall pottery-ware statues are raised to him; so the surname manarśami is given to very tall men. He is worshipped especially by the Palli caste.

He is shown sitting with one leg bent, the other hanging down, and holds a sword in his hand. His appellation is god of the virgins, because twelve virgins are to be seen in his temples, which are called Kanniarkovil (temple of the virgins).
CHAPTER IV

HISTORY OF THE RELIGION
ACCORDING TO ICONOGRAPHY

There are no images known in the Tamil country which are of earlier date than the 7th century. It is therefore impossible to know what was the religion of the land before that period. (1).

(1) The Vedic gods are the only Brahminical deities found represented on the monuments of the Asoka and Kanishka periods.

Surya, the sun-god, is carved in the small vihara of Bājha (3rd century B.C.) (Fig. 34) in the peristyle of the Ananta-Gumpha cave at Khandagiri (Orissa) and on the balustrade of Bodh-Gaya (see also Burgess, Archaeological Survey of Western India, 1883, Fig. 5 on page 6).

On the ancient Buddhist monuments, the gods of Svarga are frequently represented jointly in their paradise. At Barhut and on the Northern door-post of the Eastern door at Sanchi, the thirty three gods of which Indra is the chief one, are seen, also those of the kingdoms of Brahmā and Yama, etc. Besides these, the goddess Śrīdevi sprayered by the elephants, perhaps appears in sculpture at Sanchi and Barhut.

Indra is represented very clearly in several Greco-Buddhist carvings at Gandhāra (Visit of Indra, Photo 1058, I. M. List). He wears the characteristic cylindrical tiara, and has only two arms.

It is admitted that the most ancient iconographical documents known of a purely Hindu deity are the coins of Kadphises II (Ferguson and Burgess, History of Indian Architecture, 1910, Vol. 1, p. 42); The earliest engraved representations of this god (Siva) seem to be those on the coins of Kadphises II (about 80 to 90 A. D.) where the figure with the trident and the bull certainly prefigure the principal personage in his religion; C. Wilson, Ariana Antiqua, Pl. 10 and 11; P. Gardner, Cat. Coins of Greek and Scythic Kings of Bactria and India, pp. 124-128, Pl. XXV, and Introd., p. 50; Vincent A. Smith, The early History of India, 1908, p. 285; Kadphises II, the Jusran conqueror, was himself conquered by captive India, and adopted with such zeal the worship of Siva as practised by his new subjects, that he constantly placed the image of that Indian god upon his coins, and described himself as his devotee. *

* If we examine one of the coins of the king Kadphises II, it will be noted that it bears a figure of a personage seated on a bull and holding a trident (P. Gardner, Cat. Coins of Greek and Scythic Kings of Bactria and India, Pl. XXV, 7).

The monuments of the Gupta period are rare, and are nearly all dedicated to Buddhism. It is probable however that the wild boar of Eran represents Vishnu in an archaic form of Vardha (he has only two arms and the goddess is supported by a lotus flower), and dates from this period.

The religion of the Chalukyas in the 6th century. — It is in the 6th century
The religion of the Pallavas in the 7th century. — If the Pallava carvings of the 7th century (rathas and caves at Mavallipuram and cave at Trichinopoly) are compared with those of the 8th century (Kailāśanātha and Vaikuntha-Perumal at Kañchipuram), that the history of Hindu iconography really begins: the Vishnuite cave No. 3, at Bāddami, bears an inscription which shows that the carving in that cave dates from the twelfth year of the reign of Kirtivarman I in the year 500 of the Saka era, that is 578 A.D. Besides, it is extremely probable that the two other caves Nos. 1 and 2 at Bāddami belong to the same century as cave No. 3.

The three caves give an idea of the state of religion of the Chatukyas at Bāddami in the 6th century. The principal subjects are: 1. Vāmana (incarnation of Vishnu in the giant Trivikrama) shown three times; 2. Varāha (incarnation in the wild boar) shown twice; 3. Hari-Hara (Vishnu-Siva) shown twice; 4. Vishnu seated on the serpent, represented once; 5. Narasimha (incarnation in the man-lion) once; 6. Ardhanāri (Siva-Pārvati) once, and 7. Nādēsa (Siva dancing) once. Such is the catalogue of the large low-reliefs.

There are other small friezes, of which one shows the churning of the sea of milk (cave No. 2), and carvings representing Garuda (at the entrance of cave No. 3). The Ashtadikpālaka, the guardians of the quarters of the sky, ornament the ceilings. One also sees Subrahmaniar, Pulliar and Kālt. The Liṅgam occupies the sanctuary of cave No. 1, and before it is Nandi (Rishabhha).

Hinduism of the ancient Brahminical caves at Ellora. — Cave No. 3 at Bāddami (date 578 A.D.) has a facade of very special style: the pillars are ornated with statues of men and women which form brackets and caryatids. The cave called Ramēsvaram at Ellora has a facade with much the same sort of pillars. Moreover the same cave seems to be one of the most ancient of the Brahminical caves of Ellora, so we think it must date from the 6th century. It is probable that the cave of the Avatāras and the cave of the Aṣhës of Rāvaṇa (Ravan-ka-khai) were sculptured during the same period.

The low-reliefs of Ellora permit us to know fairly accurately the state of Hinduism at that period. As a matter of fact there are some subjects which are repeated to satiety. The piety of the sculptor destroyed his desire for variety. Thus it becomes easy to find out the fundamental legends.

At Ellora Sivaism preponderates: the Liṅgam occupies nearly all the sanctuaries. The great themes at Ellora consist of the four subjects: Śiva in Kailāśa under which is Rāvaṇa; the marriage of Śiva and Pārvati; Śiva investing himself with the elephant’s skin, and Śiva dancing.

The mothers are often seen seated in a long row, also Bhṛtiṃga-Maha-ruchi with his wife, and Pulliar bearing an axe and a flower, and more rarely the following themes: Śiva coming out of the column, Śiva issuing from the Liṅgam, Śiva in his chariot, Śiva and Gaṅgā, lastly Kālt and Mahishāsura. Certain Sivaite subjects which are usual in Pallava temples are nowhere to be seen at Ellora, for instance, Sōmaskanda and Pichandī (Śiva begging). No. 27 is the only cave dedicated to Vishnu, and it is of little importance, though some Vishnuite legends are represented in Sivaite caves. These subjects are as follows: Varāha, Vāmana, Narasimha, Rāhanātha, Vishnu riding on Garuda, and Kashmir in the two legends of mount Gōvardhana and of the serpent Kāliya. These are the only subjects of Vishnu legends. It seems therefore that the other Vishnuite subjects were unknown or considered to be of secondary importance.
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an appreciable difference will be noticed. It is therefore best to study them separately.

Firstly an important fact is to be noted; iconography proves that in the 7th century in Southern India, Hinduism was a single religion. For example it may be thought that in the Pallava period the religion was exclusively Sivaite, and that Vishnuism was only later introduced.

On the other hand it must be admitted that for fourteen centuries Hindus while showing in some cases a preference for some particular deity or other, still worship all the gods. It is true that in Vishnuite temples, Sivaite images are fairly rare, and vice versa, but this refers to a matter of precedence and priestcraft, and only concerns the issue as to whether Vishnu or Siva is to be deemed the supreme god.

Iconography shows us that since the 7th century, images of

\[ \text{Siva, Vishnu, Indra, Brahmad, etc., are found not only in the same monument, but in the same low-relief. The positions of the sculptures in the "cave without inscriptions" at Trichinopoly, in our opinion gives an idea of the state of the religion in the Carnatic in the 7th century. Figure 38 gives the plan of this cave.} \]

On each side of the entrance are two sanctuaries opposite each
other and each with a small peristyle in front of it. The left hand
sanctuary is dedicated to Śiva, and the right hand one to Viṣṇu.
It seems that both were equal as deities and both objects of
worship.

On the wall which forms the back of the cave, there are deities
who are not objects of worship but are only venerated: in the
centre Brahmā; to his right, that is to say on Śiva’s of the
sanctuary, are Subrahmaṇiś and Pulliar. On Brahmā’s left are
Sūrya and Kālī.

The Śiva cult seems to have prevailed subsequently, for the
cave No. 2 at Trichinopoly, which is covered with inscriptions,
and seems to be more recent than the other, is dedicated to Śiva.
A beautiful low-relief shows Śiva drawing Gāṅgā out of his hair.
The carvings at Mavalipuram are also divided between Viṣṇu-
vism and Śivaism, the latter slightly preponderant.

It is noteworthy that Kālī is the object of a special cult. The
Draupadi-ratha is a Kālī sanctuary, and near the cave of
Trimūrti there is a cave consecrated exclusively to this goddess,
as is proved by the presence of warrior maidens who occupy the
place of dvarambalagar at the entrance of the central niche.

This goddess was at that period (as at the present time) wor-
shipped equally in Viṣṇuvite and Śivaite temples. The fight
between Kālī and Mahishāsura is opposite Viṣṇu lying on the
serpent; and in the Vārāha cave, Kālī is balanced by Lakṣmi
bathed by the elephants. In any case Kālī was much venerated
at Mavalipuram in the 7th century, for her image is found every-
where: 1. on the facade of the Trimūrti cave; 2. on the Drau-
padi-ratha; 3. in the Vārāha cave; 4. in the Yamapuri cave
where a famous low-relief is to be found.

It is important that the deities which are carved on the Dharm-
ārāja-ratha at Mavalipuram should be noticed. Narasiṁha
and Vārāha are nowhere to be seen there. Mr. Burgess is there-
fore wrong in writing: « The Ardhanārī, a favourite form of Śiva,
as half-male and half-female, occurs several times, and Viṣṇu
as Narasiṁha or the boar avatar. » (The Cave temples of India,
p. 126.) (1).

(1) This same erroneous statement has been repeated in the History of
In Fig. 39 we have given the names and respective positions of the different images.

Fig. 39. — Disposition of the sculptures in the Dharmaraja-ratha at Mavallipuram.

The Liṅgam is found in nearly all sanctuaries. In Pallava temples there are often rows of five or seven cells, each of which contains a Liṅgam. The subjects so often repeated at Ellora, are
nowhere to be seen; such as Śiva in Kailāsa under which is Rāvana, Śiva donning the elephant’s hide, and the marriage of Śiva and Pārvatī.

Subrahmaṇiar (in a very different form from the modern one) occurs twice at Mavalipuram (Pl. XXXI). Pulliar is carved in the Vallam cave. The Vishnuvite subjects are: Varāha (twice at Mavalipuram), Vamāna, Raṅganātha and Krishna overcoming the serpent Kāliya (on the Dharmarāja-ratha), and holding up mount Gōvardhana (sculptured rock) (Fig. 30).

Brahmā is often represented and so is Sūrya (notably on the second story of the Northern face of the Dharmarāja-ratha). The famous low-relief known as the Penance of Arjuna (Pl. LXXIII) may be divided into two parts. The upper part represents Śiva and many other deities amongst whom Sūrya with the solar disk round his head is discernable. The lower part of the scene is a small temple inside which is a statue of Vishṇu.

The Narthamalai Cave. — Near the village of Narthamalai is a Brahminical cave dug in the side of a rocky hill. This subterranean temple is certainly of the Pallava period, and is very important from the point of view of Vishnuvite iconography. It is not described in any work, and to our knowledge is not mentioned in any list of South Indian antiquities. We therefore deem it useful to draw attention to the carvings in it. Plate LXXIV shows the interior.

At the entrance to the sanctuary is a long verandah ornamented with statues in high relief. There are twelve images in a row along the wall, and the curious part of it is that all these are identical and represent the god Vishṇu. In Buddhist or Jain monuments, series of Buddhas, or Jain gods, all exactly alike are often found. In Sivaite temples rows of Liṅgams are also common, but the cave is perhaps unique in Vishnuvite iconography. These statues of Vishṇu are not only all alike, but are very beautiful. The shape of the tiara, emblems and dress indicates the Pallava period.

Pallava religion in the 8th century. — The Pallava temples at Kaṅchipuram (Kailāsanātha, Vaikunṭha-Perumal, Matarṅgēśvara.
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Muktēśvara, Tripurāntakēśvara and Airavatēśvara) are covered with sculptures. The Kailāsanātha temple especially is a veritable museum. So it is not difficult to envisage the state of religion in the 8th century at Kāñchipuram.

Sivaism seems predominant. The Liṅgam is the great object of worship. The facade of the Kailāsanātha temple is ornamented with seven rows of cells containing prism shaped Liṅgams. Statues of Nandi are innumerable. Some religious subjects are multiplied to excess, others on the contrary are quite rare.

Among the most often repeated images, the principal is Sōmaskanda (Pl. XIX). The god Śiva is seated beside Pārvati who holds a small child in her lap. This subject so constantly repeated in the Sivaite temples gives a good notion of the fundamental idea of Pallava religion. Śiva as the supreme god, appears between Brahmā and Vishnu. He is propitious and good; Pārvati holding a little child is full of graciousness and motherly love. The moral and social ideas of the Pallava people may be imagined, as the Supreme God is represented as a father, by the side of his wife and child. The Śiva of the Pallavas is not a terrible and cruel god, he does not inspire fear and terror, but shows an example of family life.

Another very common subject is Śiva dancing, but never in the Chidambaram style. Kāli is represented as often as Nada-rāja and Sōmaskanda. Her image may be seen everywhere. She is generally seen standing beside her lion. The following Śiva legends are often represented: Śiva drawing the Gaṅgā out of his hair, Śiva issuing from the column, and Pichandi.

Others such as Śiva and Pārvati in Kailāsa under which is Rāvana, Śiva clothing himself in the elephant's hide, the marriage of Śiva and Pārvati, and Śiva in his chariot driven by Brahmā, are less frequent.

Pulliar's place does not seem important. He is seen in the South-Eastern corner of the court in the Kailāsanātha temple in quite an inconspicuous place in the midst of various ornamental designs. As for Subrahmaniar, he is not to be found anywhere.

The worship of Vishnu was important, for the great Vaikuntha-Perumal temple is dedicated to him. The Vishnuvite subjects
at Kańchipuram are the usual ones seen on monuments of the period: Narasiṁha, Varāha, Viṣṇu on Garuḍa, Raṅganātha, Kuśuma and the serpent Kāliya, and Kuśuma supporting the Góvardhana mountain.

Conclusion: Hinduism before the 10th century. — To recapitulate, the greater part of Sivaite legends before the 10th century seem to be much the same as now. This is not the case with Viṣṇuvaite legends.

Iconography of monuments before the 10th century shows a complete absence of the following subjects: Rāma and all that belongs to his legend; Sītā, Laksmana, Hanumān, the marriage of Rāma and Sītā, the fight of Rāma and Rāvana, Rāmāyaṇam, Rāma’s coronation, etc. Some Kuśuma legends: Kuśuma stealing the butter, Kuśuma and the bathing girls, Kuśuma playing the flute, Kuśuma with his wives Radhā and Rukmīṇī. The other incarnations of Viṣṇu such as: Matsya, Paraśurāma, Balarāma, Kuśi, Māhenī, etc., are all absent.

It seems that it was about the 14th century that the success of certain Viṣṇuvaite sages such as Rāmanuja, and doubtless also the protection of the Bijayanaṅgar princes, produced a re-awakening in Viṣṇuvaite worship, and that at this period new religious ideas inspired a new iconography.
CHAPTER V

COSTUMES, STATUES, CARS, ETC.

§ 1. — The Brahminical Thread.

In our days Brahmins and the greater part of « caste » Hindus wear over the shoulder a thread made of several strands, which goes round the body. It goes over the left shoulder and hangs above the right hip. This thread is made of several strands (before marriage it is made of three threads each made of nine strands, and after marriage nine threads each of nine strands) which for Brahmins are hand spun cotton threads.

At the height of the heart a knot is made called Brahmadu (Brahma's knot). In Tamil it is called punul; in Sanskrit, upavita. What is the meaning of the punul? Abbé Dubois wrote: « The Brahmins and other persons who have the right to wear this thread attach much value to it, and are prouder of it than the great ones of Europe are of decorations of a similar general name, to wear which their birth or services entitle them. »

The punul is conferred on boys of 7 to 9 years of age. The ceremony of investiture of the triple thread called Upanayana is described at length in the work of Abbé J. A. Dubois (Mœurs des peuples de l'Inde, Part II, Chap. 1).

It may be asked what is the history of the Brahminical thread according to ancient Hindu sculptures. An attentive examination of the low-reliefs of the Madura, Bijayanagar, Pândya and Chôla periods, allows a fixed principle to be enunciated. From the 10th century onwards, the Brahminical deities which are represented on temples, all wear a punul of a kind practically the same as at present. It is a cord over the left shoulder, hanging to the right hip. At the height of the heart is the knot of Brahma.

It is enough to examine the statues which ornament the Chôla temples (Tanjore and Gangaikondapuram) to make sure that in
the 10th and 11th centuries the *punul* was not very different from what it is now. (See Pl. LXXV.)

This is not so in the Pallava temples of the 7th century, at Trichinopoly and Mavalipuram. The *punul* which for ten centuries of iconography, that is from the 10th century till today, is a cord, a simple thread, is nowhere to be seen. Sometimes the cord is shown as a broad ribbon or a scarf, but most usually as a roll sometimes fairly thick, placed on the left shoulder and falling towards the right, sometimes on the hip, but more often on the right arm at the height of the elbow.

Plate LXXVI, shows an example of the last position, which is very frequent in the carvings of the 7th century. The person shown in the figure has his arm raised, and it is clearly seen that the roll falls on the arm, and not on the hip.

We assert as follows: *This roll is none other than the punul,* and to prove it we point out that the roll always shows a compression at the height of the heart in exactly the same place as Brahmad's knot. The roll is worn by princes and by gods and appears to be a sign of nobility. Ascetics and religious men wear a scarf which forms a buckle on the left shoulder. Shepherds, servants and women wear nothing of this sort.

It would be interesting to explore the origin of the Brahminical thread with the aid of iconography in carvings previous to the 7th century, which lie beyond the Tamil country; but we are bound down here to the study of iconography in Southern India, and we know of no carvings in this region before the 7th century.

We shall content ourselves with the enunciation of the following principles which in our opinion may be admitted without rashness: The *punul* is seen in carvings of the 7th century in Southern India, but it is never a simple thread as it is now. Almost always it is a roll placed on the left shoulder and falling, not on the hip, but on the right arm at the height of the elbow. This roll has always a compression at the height of the heart.

§ 2. — Costumes.

*Male attire.* — All parts of the costume of divinities have
evolved from the 7th century, to the present time. We have already demonstrated the evolution of the Vishnuvite tiara (Fig. 15). It would take too long to review all the details; we shall be content with the three principal ones.

1. At the present time the chests of the gods have as ornaments three large jewels which hang from the neck. Beginning from the uppermost they are called: Magarakandi, Magarapadam and Kamalapadakam. Nothing of this kind existed in the Pallava period. The first of these jewels only made its appearance in the middle ages. It was only after some centuries that all the breast was covered with jewels.

2. Only since the 15th century is the scarf called Vastram represented. This is passed round the neck and hangs down on each side below the arms.

3. Epaulettes of the sort called bujakirudu are worn by deities in our day. Before the 12th century nothing like this is to be seen, the shoulders being quite bare. At the end of the middle ages a small ornament appeared which has gradually grown bigger and bigger.

Female attire. — In olden days feminine deities were almost entirely naked, but the breasts were covered with a ribbon (kachu or kañjugam), their arms being covered with bracelets from the wrist to the elbow. Now-a-days the goddesses are nearly completely covered with clothing. Their legs are concealed by a cloth. Their bosom is enclosed in a small sort of bodice of Mus- sulman origin called ravukai leaving the waist bare. Then the end of the cloth is passed like a scarf from left to right. They wear rings in their noses (natu, pilaku) and anklets on their feet (padagam).

Multiple arms. — Numerous arms are perhaps the most remarkable peculiarity of Hindu iconography. From the artistic point of view this is not always ungraceful, as the sculptor can thus increase the number of gestures and give more life and movement to his characters. It does not detract much from physical reality. The movement of one arm in a series of rapid and violent gestures, gives an impression of many arms by reason of the successive luminous impressions on the retina.
Let us however remark that the Brahminical deities have only four arms when they are in repose, in that case the two extra arms are only there to express the force of the deity as well as to carry the distinctive emblems of the god. The number of arms is only more than four when the deity is represented in movement (Śiva dancing or hurling himself at an enemy, Trivikrama, Durgā fighting against Mahishāsura, Rāvana fighting Rāma, etc.). It is a kind of cinematography, and this idea is not devoid of interest from the point of view of the philosophy of art.

Mr. Burgess thought he found in the number of arms a chronological character. According to him the number of arms in excess of four, is not found in the most ancient temples: « We have in this rath (the Dharma-raja-ratha at the Seven Pagodas) many of the gods of the Hindu pantheon, but in forms more subdued than are to be found elsewhere. The one extravagance is that they generally have four arms — never more, to distinguish them from mortals; but none of those combinations or extravagances are found in the caves at Ellora, Elephanta and elsewhere. It is the soberest and most reasonable version of the Pantheon yet discovered, and consequently, one of the most interesting, as well as probably the earliest. »

We do not share the opinion of Mr. Burgess. It is true that the divinities carved on the Dharmarāja-ratha have never more than four arms, but the famous low-reliefs of Vāmana, Trivikrama and of Durgā fighting Mahishāsura are surely of the same period and the deities have many more than four arms. The carvings at Mavalipuram date from about 650 A. D.

Our conclusion on the other hand is that since the earliest period (7th century) of South Indian iconography, the Brahminical deities are represented with a number of arms, often considerable.

The two front arms are called kāyi (hand), the arms behind these have no special name, but take those of the emblems they carry. The front arms usually perform very special gestures. The hand is open showing the palm in the gesture called abhayakhastram, which is always made with the right hand, the finger tips pointing upwards. The gesture seems to mean: « Do not come near », but Hindus on the contrary interpret it as meaning:
« Have no fear, I shall protect you » (a-bhaya, that is: not-fear). The gesture called varada-hastam is always made with the left hand the ends of the fingers being downwards. The word varada signifies the act of giving favours.

§ 3. — Statues.

The statues at the back of the sanctuaries are of stone; but those which are carried round during festivals are of copper.

![Fig. 40. — Tiruvachchi and pedestal.](image)

According to the Shastram, these statues should be made of an alloy of five metals, whence the name pañchalógam. Copper should predominate; zinc, lead, silver and gold are in smaller proportions. Behind the statues there is always a sort of halo called tiruvachchi (Fig. 40).
The origin of this ornament is clear: the *tiruvachchi* is only the architectural ornament called *kudu*, which originated with the Buddhist «horse-shoe». At the top of the *tiruvachchi* a lion’s head (*simha-mukha*), and at each side *makaras* with long plumbed tails called *karuku*, can be seen. The pedestal of the statues is like the base of monuments.

It is pierced with two holes in which iron bars are inserted to lift the statue without touching it. Rings are fitted to ancient statues, obviously for the same purpose.

§ 4. — *Cars.*

In the *Pallava* period the cars (*ratha*) were usually supported by two or four wheels, and dragged by horses (see for example A. Rea, *Pallava Architecture*, Pl. LIII). It is probable that similar cars were used to carry gods during processions. In our days, cars (Tamil: *tēr*) are kept outside the precincts of the temple opposite the principal entrance, under huge thatched cone-shaped roofs.

The car (Pl. LXXVII) is constructed on the model of the *vimāna*, but the wooden shrine is supported by a truncated cone placed on axles. The wheels which are generally three yards high are plain and are made of huge slabs of wood. The base of the car (Pl. LXXVIII) is made of several parts which, taking them from the bottom upwards, are called respectively: *pudapar*, *nagapar* and *pusandran*.

Each of these parts have ornamental carved panels. The wood of these panels, as also the whole car, is of carved *ilupai* (*Bassia sapotaceae*) and never of any other sort of wood. These panels are fixed with bolts (two at the top and one at the bottom of each panel), and their usual size is 12 by 16 inches. The panels of the largest cars are not more than 18 inches broad and 36 inches high. The carvings are in high relief.

All modern Hindu iconography is displayed in these, even such subjects taken from the *Krishna* legend, as are of most doubtful propriety. These moreover occupy a special place at the angles of the square base of the car. Every year, before the festival,
this base is coated with oil, and as no trouble is taken to wipe off
the dust first, in time there is formed such a thick layer of the
mixed oil and dirt, that the carvings almost completely disappear
under it.

The shrine in which the god is placed during the procession is a
square pavilion with four openings (one on each face). Dvārapāla
and rampant lions are used by way of decorating it. A simple
cone of painted cloth is usually built up above the dome. Theoret-
ically it is supposed to be an imitation of the vimāna and to be
ornamented with small separate and superimposed pavilions.
It is in this way that the Conjeevaram car is constructed. The
point of the cone is finished off by a stubi, but strange to say
it is placed inside the central axis, and in order to protect it,
a small parasol (pusakara kodai) is placed over it.

Lastly, around the car decorative cylinders of cloth (tombai)
are hung, and in front of it supported on springs are painted
wooden horses, which seem to prance as they drag the car along.
Their reins are held by a richly bedecked personage. This coach-
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