PORTRAIT SCULPTURE
IN
SOUTH INDIA

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BY

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FOREWORD BY

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FOREWORD

In bringing together from varied sources evidences and examples of Indian portrait sculpture, in part hitherto unpublished, Mr. Aravamuthan has made a very notable contribution to our knowledge of Indian art in one of its more special applications, and consequently as a whole. It is to be hoped that the reception accorded to this study will encourage the author to pursue the study in this or other fields; for the field open to research is very large, and the number of students all too small.

There can be no possible doubt that throughout the period in which stone sculpture was produced, and probably still earlier when only impermanent materials were employed, images of donors were set up in connection with their foundations; indeed, for a very much earlier period we have the evidence of undoubted portrait figures in stone, excavated at Mohenjo Daro,[1] though we do not know what was their precise cultural significance. The later portrait statues or reliefs were made and set up for somewhat varying ends, and in a variety of situations. We have, typically, the placing of figures representing donors set up in temples built and dedicated by themselves, or what amounts to the same thing, represented on a small scale on the pedestals of images erected by them, and fulfilling a purpose analogous to that of the usual donor's inscription. Then there are clear cases of the deification of royal ancestors,[2] whose posthumous images were set up in

1 Feb. 27, 1926, and Jan. 7, 1928

2 An instance of the posthumous deification of a king may be quoted from Bana's *Harsacarita*, 215, "now that the late king has assumed his godhead *(devaśhupam gate narendre)*"; the phrase is practically equivalent to our "gone to heaven," and seems to imply that such "becoming a deva" was a customary presumption rather than any exceptional honour. *Cf. *devitvam prapa* and *devita jata*, "having become a goddess", in the *Uttarajjhayanasutta*, *dipika*, 174.1.7 and 276,1.6, cited in J. J. Meyer, *Hindu talat*, p. 181.

[*N.B.*—The list of abbreviations used in the footnotes is appended at the end.]

temples made by direct descendants, and made the object of a cult; the example of the statue of Sembiyan-maha-devi's statue set up by Rajendra-cola-deva I in A.D. 1020, with provision made for worship and offerings, is a case in point.[1] The same queen had herself in A.D. 976 set up in relief in another temple the effigy of her deceased husband, as mentioned by Mr. Aravamuthan on p. 33. The image of Cola-ma-devi, probably a queen of Rajarajendra-cola-deva I, set up by Rajendra-cola-deva (r. A.D. 1018-1035), mentioned on p. 37 and now published for the first time in Fig. 12, seems to be the oldest closely and positively dateable south Indian metal image extant.

Again we have the case of the images of deceased members of the royal family placed in their chattris, which are effectively ancestral mortuary chapels. Beside this, we have the explicit evidence in Bhasa's *Pratima-Nataka*, Act III, of the practice of setting up the images of ancestors in a building, called *devakula* and *pratima-griha*, especially built for the purpose. From the play we learn that worship was offered to the images. The excellence of the workmanship and the "feeling" (*bhava*) embodied in the figures are remarked upon; they produce a delight *(praharsha)* in the mind. It can hardly be doubted that the *devakula* at Mathura, which contained the portrait statues of Kanishka and Cashtana, must have been of this kind.

It seems to me that as regards the term "portrait statues," the available examples in almost every case ought to be called effigies rather than portraits in the ordinary sense of the word; they do as a rule reproduce the details of contemporary costume, but as representations they are types rather than individualised portraits. It is noteworthy that in the *Pratima-Nataka*, Bharata is not only unable to recognise the statue of his own father, but cannot tell whether the figures in the

[1] According to MER., 1926, p. 105, the image is not now extant in the temple; but Mr. Aravamuthan's identification (p. 33 and fig. 9) is not implausible.

devakula represent gods or human beings, though the latter view is suggested to his mind by the fact that they are not provided with any distinctive attributes. In any case the extant figures certainly cannot be said to disprove "the theory of Hindu disinclination to realism." In this connection reference may be made to Sukracarya, *Sukranitisara*, IV.4.76, where the making of likenesses of mortals "even with their characteristic features accurately depicted" is called *asvargya* "not leading to heaven." On the other hand, this very passage is evidence that portraits were actually made; and we must not forget that there is ample literary evidence for the making of realistic, that is easily recognizable, painted portraits, at least from the Gupta period onwards[1], and that such portraits are extant from the seventeenth century onwards.

Mr. Aravamuthan does not take up the question of the representation of royal ancestors or other deified persons in the form of the deity to whom they were devoted in life, hence apparently sometimes in the form of a *lingam*, so usual in Cambodia. Was this custom of setting up posthumous or even contemporary effigies in a form indistinguishable from that of a deity of Indian derivation or a local development? The problem deserves to be thoroughly investigated. The custom may at least be cited of setting up a *lingam* on the *samadh* of a deceased saint or teacher, thus "In the case of *sannyasins* . . . . a raised masonry platform is sometimes set up over the place of burial as though to proclaim to the world that the body buried below has attained to the sacred form of Siva-linga."[2]

The identification of the Parkham and related archaic statues as portrait figures of kings of the fifth century B.C. (p. 10f.) is so doubtful that it might have been better to dismiss the subject with a brief allusion.

1 See my *Nagara painting*, Rupam, No. 37.

2 ASI.S.AR. 1915-16, p. 34, quoting SII., 1914. For other references see ASI.S.AR., 1917-18, pp. 34, 35, and Journ. Am. Or. Soc., vol. 48, p. 264. Cf. the case of Govinda Dikshita cited in *South Indian Portraits*, pp. 87, 88.

But there exist some very remarkable royal portrait heads, certainly of Maurya date, to which Mr. Aravamuthan has not referred ; these were found at Sarnath,[1] and are more individualised than any other known examples of Indian sculpture. The worshipping figures of Cunningham, *Stupa of Bharhut*, Pl. V, are almost certainly effigies of royal donors. The splendid figure of an Andhra king now reproduced for the first time in a more complete state, though still unfortunately headless,[2] is certainly misdated ; a comparison with Cunningham, *loc. cit.*, Pl. XXII, fig. 1, together with stylistic and other considerations (details of the costume, and the abrupt transition from the frontal to the lateral planes) make it impossible to place this figure later than the second century B.C.; Bachhofer, *loc. cit.*, Pl. 109, suggests "about 100 B.C." With this figure too there should be compared another early effigy relief from Amaravati reproduced by Bachhofer on the same Plate, and certainly the representation of a particular individual. Nor can the miniature representation of a worshipping figure on an equally ancient *pakara* slab relief from Jaggayyapeta[3] be described in any other way than as the effigy of a donor.

In Merutunga's *Prabandhacintamani* there are several references to the setting up of effigies of human beings. Thus, Tawney's translation, p. 19, a king establishes an image of Parsvanatha, "furnished with a statue of himself as a worshipper."[4] *Ib.*, p. 90, another king, having completed a temple, "caused to be made figures of distinguished kings, lords of horses, lords of elephants, and lords of men, and so forth, and caused to be placed in front of them his own statue, with its hands joined in an attitude of supplication." *Ib.*, p.

1 Hargreaves, H., *Excavations at Sarnath*, ASI.AR., 1914-15 ; Coomaraswamy, *Hist. Ind. and Indonesian art*, pl. VI., figs. 18-19 (cf. figs. 20, 21) ; Bachhofer, L., *Early Indian sculpture*, pls. 12, 13.

2 It seems to me that the restoration has exaggerated the height of the figure.

3 Burgess, BSAJ., Pl. LV. fig. 2.

4 At Anahillapura : from Forbes, *Ras Mala*, p. 29, it would appear that the king's image is still extant in the shrine.

159, Vastupala, in A.D. 1250 established amongst the Nandisvara shrines of Satrunjaya "statues of Lavanaprasada (the reigning king's father) and of Viradhavala (the reigning king) on elephants, and his own statue on horseback; in the same place, seven statues of his forefathers, and seven statues of spiritual guides; in a courtyard near, the statues of his two elder brothers the great ministers Malavadeva and Luniga in the attitude of worship. . . ."

There can be no doubt that an adequate examination of Indian literature would reveal very many more such cases, or that the number of such human images still surviving is very much larger than has hitherto been supposed. The reader of the present book should not fail to consult also Mr. Aravamuthan's *South Indian Portraits in Stone and Metal* (London, 1930).

ANANDA K. COOMARASWAMY

Boston, *June 1st*, 1930.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

My excuse for venturing on a study of Portraiture in stone and metal in south India, and of the evolution of this art, is that, in spite of its interest, the subject has attracted very little attention. No product of the culture of south India has been more ignored, indeed, than its Art. It is my hope that the study attempted in these pages may help towards an adequate appreciation of an interesting development of Indian Art, and to a proper appraisement of the cultural influences which, in south India, have governed its evolution.

The character of this work has been determined largely by the importance I have attached to specimens which bear inscriptions, or are referred to in epigraphical or other dated or datable records. These records have proved of great value for this study, for they not only contain dates, but they also preserve information about the circumstances in which, and the motives from which, the sculptures were set up. Till the history of south Indian architecture is completely investigated and at least the outlines of the evolution of south Indian iconography are traced, it will not be possible to attempt a satisfactory history of the important branch of Art dealt with in this work.

Except for minor additions and alterations and some re-arrangement, this work has remained in the form in which it was completed by the middle of 1925. Some chapters written originally for this work are being separately published by me under the title, *South Indian Portraits, in Stone and Metal.*

It is perhaps superfluous to point out that the titles on many of the plates point only to the most probable identification of the sculptures illustrated. A full discussion of the probabilities is to be found in the text.

I am bound to acknowledge my great thankfulness to Sir John Marshall, Director-General of Archæology in India, for his kindness in granting me permission to utilise photographs taken by the Archæological Survey of India, in specially relaxing for me the rules regarding their publication, and in sanctioning their supply at a nominal charge: were it not for his kindness the work could not have been published at all. My thanks are also due to the Madras Epigraphist, an officer of the Archæological Survey of India, for having kindly followed up my request and secured photographs of various portrait-pieces, which could not easily be taken by the amateur. I am indebted to Mr. P. Visvanatha Aiyar, Artist of the Madras Epigraphist's Office, for many interesting hints.

To my friend, Mr. K. Ramakotisvara Rao, Editor of the *Triveni*, Madras, I owe a heavy debt of gratitude, as much for the readiness with which he took up the publication of this work in instalments in his excellent journal as for the kindness with which he consented to cease publishing further instalments in order that the work might be published by the India Society and reach a wide public. To the India Society itself my thanks are due for having brought out a work the publication of which in a suitable form had often been despaired of by me.

T. G. ARAVAMUTHAN

Madras.

PORTRAIT SCULPTURE IN SOUTH INDIA

I

INTRODUCTION

'Well-authenticated portrait statues are rare in India': so wrote an able authority on Indian art not many years ago.[1] This paucity was one of the symptoms on which he based a theory of 'Hindu disinclination to or aversion from realistic likeness,' though, in the same breath, he made practically an admission that the paucity was due to no temperamental infirmities of the Hindu.[2]

Very little search has been made for this class of sculptures, and no effort whatever has been made to understand or to appraise the value of such few specimens as have attracted attention.

In at least one portion of India, the southern, there have survived enough examples of portrait sculpture to compel us to abandon, in so far at least as that part of India is concerned, the theory of Hindu disinclination to realism, all too confidently asserted.

Even in the nooks and corners of south India and in its earliest monuments we come across sculptures which are indubitably portraits. We know no reason for supposing that the instinct for portraiture was stronger in the south of India than in the north, and if as many examples of the art of the portrait sculptor are not traceable in the north as in the south, it must be due to causes other than temperamental.

1 Smith, *HFAIC.*, 238. Dr. J. Ph. Vogel too says that 'on the whole, portrait statues of kings are extremely rare in Indian art': *Influences of Indian Art* (India Society, 1925), 81.

2 Smith, *HFAIC.*, 496.

Indian art has yet to be studied with attention and sympathy, and the need for careful and unbiased study is all the greater in the case of the art of the south of India, for the cultural influences which moulded its growth have yet to be determined. In examining the examples and the evolution of portraiture in the south, comparison with specimens in other parts of India and with the course of the evolution in those areas is almost inevitable, and is certainly illuminating. Equally valuable is a study of the class of sculptured monuments known as hero-stones. The true character of the art of portraiture as practised in south India can be grasped, and its history traced, only in the light afforded by the practice of setting up hero-stones and by the motives which impelled the peoples of India to patronise the art of the portrait sculptor.

II

THE BEGINNINGS OF INDIAN PORTRAITURE

For the most authentic of the earliest examples of portrait sculpture in India we have to go to a cave in the Nanaghat, a pass between Poona and Nasik, leading to the town of Junnar from the Konkan country. On the side-walls of the cave are engraved two of the oldest inscriptions of western India, in characters of about the earlier half of the second century B.C.,[1] recording the performance of certain sacrifices. Mutilated badly as the inscriptions now are, they are found to narrate the performance of the sacrifices at the instance of a widowed queen, and they mention her husband (a king), two sons of this couple, the king's father (himself a king), and the father of the queen (a feudal baron),—six personages in all. On the back-wall of the cave are seven badly damaged figures carved in bas-relief, and above each a name is incised. Though the figures have disappeared almost completely through the weathering away of the rock, the labels are still decipherable and indicate that the figures represent a king and a queen, the king's father, three princes, and a feudal baron. The almost close correspondence in the number and the dignities of the persons indicated by the labels and mentioned by the narrative inscriptions, should suffice, by itself, as a reason for suggesting that the narrative and the labels refer to the same persons. But we have the additional circumstances that the names also tally and that the labels and the narrative are incised in characters of the same period. The conclusion seems therefore irresistible that the figures represented the queen at

1 Bühler in Burgess, *ECT.*, 73.

whose instance the sacrifices were celebrated and those relations of hers who derived spiritual benefit therefrom. On a study of the inscriptions and on a consideration of many relevant circumstances, it has been settled that the figures represent king Satakarni, and his wife, father, brother, two sons and father-in-law. The sacrifices were performed at the instance of the queen, evidently because both her husband and father-in-law were dead and her two sons were too young to exercise sovereign power. There can be little doubt that when the sacrifices were performed and the inscriptions were engraved king Simuka Satavahana and king Satakarni were not alive except in memory, and that it is only the others who could possibly have granted sittings to the sculptors who carved the reliefs on the cave-wall. The probabilities, therefore, are, on the one hand, that the artists were content to execute portraits of the deceased from the memory or from previously executed representations, and, on the other hand, that there was no objection to the lineaments of a person yet in the flesh being fixed in carved stone. The order in which the figures are ranged[1] seems to suggest that in marshalling them regard was paid to the closeness of relationship, the order of descent, and the exigencies of the occasion. These seven persons must have been those for whose spiritual benefit the sacrifices were offered, and in these seven figures we have a gallery of portraits figuring a royal family famous in the history of the Dekkhan in the second century B.C., and exemplifying the principles according to which portrait groups were executed in ancient India. But it is one

1 Simuka Satavahana (the king's father), queen Nayanika or Naganika (the widow who had the sacrifices performed), king Satavahana (whose widow is the queen Naganika), prince Kumara Bhayala (evidently the brother of king Satavahana, the one person not mentioned in the *inscriptions*), Maharathi Tranrayika (feudal baron and father of queen Naganika), and two princes, Kumara Hakku-siri (Sakti Sri) and Kumara Vedi-siri (sons of king Satavahana and queen Naganika).—For a full discussion of the inscriptions see Bühler's note in Burgess, *ECT.*, 59-74, and compare *ASI. AR.*, 1924 : 88.

of the numerous ironies of Indian history that the figures themselves—the earliest portraits of indubitable authenticity in all India,—are now irretrievably lost.

An equally indisputable representation of a king was found in excavations made near Mathura (Muttra) in northern India. It is a standing figure of life-size. Though, unfortunately, it is now in a mutilated condition,—all that portion of it above the chest having disappeared,—an inscription which it bears makes it clear, beyond doubt, that it was intended to represent king Kanishka (*c.* 120 A.D.), and this identification has been accepted without question. Though it has been recognised that the sculptor 'has shown considerable skill in faithfully portraying the great king' and that the drapery 'seems to retain a faint recollection of classical sculpture,' yet so crude is the workmanship and so flat the general effect that there can be no doubt that 'the maker of this image, whatever his nationality may have been, was certainly not inspired with the ideals of Grecian Art.'[1]

Fragments of other statues were also found close by, and they too have been the subjects of identifications. The inscription on one of them has been deciphered, though not beyond dispute, as the name of another ruler, Chashtana(*c.* 80-110 A.D.),[2] who was Great Satrap under Kanishka's line,—to which he was also probably related by ties of blood. Another statue, a colossal figure seated on a throne, has been identified, on the strength of a probable reading of an inscription on the pedestal, as that of Wema Kadphises (*c.* 85-120 A.D.) the predecessor of Kanishka.[3] These statues were all found practically within one series of

1 Dr. J. Ph. Vogel, in *ASI. AR.*, 1912: 120-7.

2 K. P. Jayaswal, in *JBORS.*, (1919), v. 511, announced this discovery of B. Bhattacharya, who himself wrote on it in *Ib.*, (1920), vi. 51-3. The Mathura portrait statues have also been discussed by Bachhofer, L., Early Indian sculpture, 1929, pls. 76, 77, 78, and *Zur Ara Kanishka's*, Oslasiatische Zeitschrift, N.F. vi, 1930.

3 By K. P. Jayaswal, *Ib.*, (1920), vi. 12-22.

buildings, part of which at least seems to have been a temple, and near by were discovered traces of a tank. As the inscription on the pedestal of the last mentioned statue refers also to a *devakula*, a garden, a tank and a well, the suggestions have been made that these statues were all placed originally in the *devakula,* and that the garden and the tank belonged to the days when the *devakula* was constructed or was repaired. Another statue of which some fragments only are now found, at a place not far distant from Mathura, has been sought to be identified, again on the basis of an inscription, as one of Kanishka's son.[1] If these identifications are correct,—or, indeed, if the suggestion that all the fragments represent kings is plausible,—we have some justification for believing that all the statues may have stood at one time under the roof of a *devakula* before vandals laid impious hands on them and broke and flung them out.

Excavations at the ruins at Sahri-Bahlol, in the Peshawar district, belonging to about this time, have brought to light numerous and varied examples of portrait sculpture. 'The frequency with which the donors are represented in the relievos[2] usually occupying the face of the image-base, adds human interest to these sculptures. The most common device shows them in pairs worshipping before an incense-bearing altar; but we find them also in attitudes of worship on either side of a small Buddha image and occasionally forming regular family groups . . . as where the sacred begging-bowl is the object of worship. In the base panel of (a) fine Bodhisatva image . . . the artist has endeavoured to introduce a more individual touch, for here we see on one side of the incense-bearing altar besides the donor two smaller figures, probably meant

1 By K. P. Jayaswal, *Ib.*, (1919), v. 5–10.

2 *ASI. AR.*, 1912, pl. xxxvi, fig. 2; pl. xl, figs. 9, 11, 12; pl. xli, fig. 15; pl. xlv, fig. 26; pl. xlvi, fig. 27; pl. xlviii, fig. 33.

for his sons, while on the other side a youth in working attire reduced to a loin cloth drives a plough with two oxen . . . . .[1] Special interest attaches to two statues which unmistakably are intended to represent pious donors. The male one, nearly life-size and of excellent execution but badly injured, shows a realistically modelled portrait head and curious details of costume, including striped trousers tucked into top boots; the left holds the base of what may have been a miniature stupa or shrine. The other figure representing a female, with some indistinct object in her hands, suggests by its execution a much later date.[2] Here too the dress and hair present points of interest. Along with these may be mentioned a curious statue[3] about two and a half feet in height showing a figure with a striking elderly face unmistakably modelled from life and in distinctly realistic fashion.'[4]

Archæological remains of equal antiquity in other parts of India contain figures which cannot but be portraits. It has been confidently asserted by an able authority that 'the *alto-relievos* on the inner facades of the Chaityas at Karli and Kanheri represent families of the (Andhra) dynasty.'[5] On each side of the entrance of the *chaitya* cave at Kanheri we have a panel with figures carved in it,[6] and the fact that the figures 'have a finish scarcely anywhere else displayed, suggests that they were meant to be portrait-statues of the excavators of the cave and their wives.'[7] In the *chaitya* cave at Kondane, one of the earliest of Indian cave temples, there appears 'a single figure' beside which runs an inscription to say that it was 'made by

1 *Ib.*, 1912, pl. xl, fig. 12.
2 *Ib.*, 1912, pl. xli, fig. 13.
3 *Ib.*, 1912, pl. xli, fig. 14.
4 Sir Aurel Stein, *Ib.*, 1912: 106-7.
5 Burgess, *BSAI.*, 97
6 Burgess, *BCT.*, pl. 4; see also Dr. A. K. Coomaraswamy's *History of Indian and Indonesian Art*, pl. 31, fig. 135.
7 Burgess, *BCT.*, 62.

Balaka, the pupil of Kanha (Krishna).'[1] 'Doubtless it represented the excavator of the *chaitya*, and is the earliest *sâlika* or portrait statue, of which we have any remains; but unfortunately it has been entirely defaced. The elaborate and unique style of the head dress—almost all that is left of it—sufficiently indicates the care which the artist had bestowed on it.' There is also reason to believe that 'a similar figure (possibly a female) existed in the corresponding position on the right hand side of the entrance.'[2] In the caves at Udayagiri and Khandagiri in Orissa we have a number of figures which seem to represent historical personages,—especially donors.[3] To a somewhat later age belongs a *vihara*-cave at Ajanta, in which is shown 'a worshipper or *sâlika*' as an attendant on the Buddha.[4] 'It is a male figure of somewhat less than natural size, kneeling before the throne on the right hand of the image, with his hands joined in an attitude of devotion, but holding a small cup or small bowl. It was probably intended to represent the excavator of the cave or at least of the shrine.[5] 'Groups of worshipping figures' are carved in 'the front corners of the shrine' in one of the caves[6] at Aurangabad. 'Seven kneeling figures on the left and six on the right, about life-size, some of them females, but more males, all in an attitude of devotion, looking towards the large image (of the Buddha), occupy the sides right and left of the entrance. . . . These figures, too, are remarkable among such cave sculptures for the styles of head-dress they present, and for the physiognomy:[7] most of them have very thick projecting under-lips and short chins with

1 Burgess, *BCT.*, 9, fig. 9.
2 *Ib.*, 9-10.
3 *ASI.AR.*, 1923: 130-2.
4 Burgess, *BCT.*, 47, and pl. 37, fig. 1.
5 *Ib.*, 47.
6 Cave 3.
7 Burgess, *Antiquities in the Bidar and Aurangabad Districts* (*ASI.W.* iii.), pl. 48, fig. 1; pl. 49, figs. 1-5.

long straight noses, and an almost Egyptian cast of countenance.'[1]

The Satakarni relievos at Nanaghat, the *salikas* at Kondane and Ajanta, the relievo-panels at Kanheri and Karli, the carved donors of the Udayagiri and Khandagiri caves, the groups in the Aurangabad cave, and the statues of the Kushan group at Mathura, show how, as early as the beginning of the 2nd century B.C., the art of portrait sculpture was practised in the middle of India, and how in about a century thereafter it was practised in almost every other part of India. Individual sculptures and family groups are equally common and the sculptor found patronage as much at the hands of the Brahmanical rulers as at those of chiefs who were devotees of the Buddha. Statues fully in the round were as common as relievos and it was not quite unusual for statues to be placed in a statue-house resembling a temple located in a grove and in close proximity to a tank. The figures stood with hands clasped in salutation, or they reverently crouched in the sacred presence, or placed the right hand with pride on the sword which had proved irresistible on many a battlefield. Almost all the motives which could furnish incitement for the carving or the setting up of these sculptures are found exemplified here,—the commemoration of the performance of a sacrifice, the construction of a *chaitya* or a cave, the making of lavish gifts to the deserving, the devotee's anxiety to stand for ever praying in the presence of his God, and the perpetuation of the memory of a line of kings or of a family or even of one individual.[2]

We may pass on to an examination of some sculptures which, being suspected to be of even earlier date,

1 *Ib.*, 72.

2 For some examples of later portrait sculpture in the Dekkhan, refer to *ASI.W.AR.*, 1904 : 30 ; 81-82 ; 31 : 87, 89 ; 53 : 44 ; 1910 : 41-2 : 123-7 ; 1920 : 87 : 83 ; 1921 : 91.

are likely to be of greater value for the study of this branch of sculpture, if they can be shown to be portraits.

Three statues have been well-known for about a century, but they have recently attained celebrity, having become the subjects of a hot controversy which arose out of an attempt to identify them as portraits of certain early Indian kings. Their value is enhanced by the fact that they seem to be among the few of the earliest specimens of the plastic art of India which have survived,—especially among those figures which are carved fully in the round and are not mere relievos, low or high, or are not 'engaged' in a wall or other object. Two of these three statues were discovered together, near Patna.[1] They are standing figures,—one of them is now headless,—of about the height of men, and are excellent works of art. Inscriptions found carved on them have been so variously read that while one set of scholars claim them to be statues of kings, another set declares them to be mere icons, probably of *yakshas*.[2] But even among those who oppose the theory that the statues are those of kings are to be found some who admit that the statues must belong to days as early as the Mauryan times, if not earlier,[3] and that 'the artistic monuments of the Mauryan epoch

1 They are now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta.

2 The theory that they are portrait statues of kings was advanced by K. P. Jayaswal and supported by authorities like R. D. Banerji, MM. Hara Prasad Sastri, Ojha and Arun Sen. The stoutest opponents of the theory are O. C. Gangoly, R. P. Chanda, Dr. L. D. Barnett, Dr. A. K. Coomaraswamy and Dr. R. C. Majumdar. The more important of the papers on this and allied questions are the following :—
K. P. Jaswal, *JBORS.*, (1919), v. 88-109, 214-5, 516-542 ; (1920), vi. 12-22 173—.
R. D. Banerji, *Ib.*, (1919), v. 210-4 ; (1920), vi. 40-50.
MM. H. P. Sastri, *Ib.*, (1919), v. 552-63.
Arun Sen, *Ib.*, (1919), v. 542-9.
Discussion in London, *Ib.*, (1919), v. 512-6.
O. C. Gangoly *Modern Review*, 1919, Oct., 419-24.
Dr. R. C. Majumdar, *JBORS.*, (1920), vi. 474- ; *I.A.*, (1919), xlviii. 25-8 ; *Journal of Department of Letters, Calcutta University*, (1921), iv. 47-84, and *ASI. AR.*, 1923 : 164-70.
N. G. Majumdar, *Indian Historical Quarterly*, ii. 441-6.

3 O. C. Gangoly, in *Modern Review*, 1919 Oct., 424.

represent an art in an advanced stage of development which supposes generations of artistic efforts and experience behind them.'[1] So there is no inherent objection to these figures being ascribed to a pre-Mauryan period, if the inscriptions can be shown to be of that age, nor could there be any objection to their being considered portraits of kings, provided the inscriptions can be so read and iconographical considerations point to no other identification. The inscriptions have been read as referring to Udayin-Aja and Nandi-Vardhana, both of them kings of the Sisunaga dynasty; the former (484-467 B.C.) being the founder of Pataliputra, and the latter (449-409 B.C.) a great conqueror-king of that line. But these readings have been contested and, even where the readings have been granted,the identifications have been disputed. Viewing these statues as mere figures, some regard them as representations of men, while others take them to be icons of deities or supernatural beings. The two figures bear a very close resemblance; but this may be explained as due to their figures representing two members of the same family or, perhaps, twin-deities.[2]

Another statue, also a standing figure, found at Parkham, near Mathura,[3] has been identified as a statue of an earlier king of this line, Kunika Ajatasatru (*c.* 515 B.C.), on the strength of an inscription;[4] but, here again, neither the reading of the inscription nor the identification of the figure is free from controversy. The capital of Ajatasatru was Rajagriha, but the statue was found far away near Mathura: one explanation is that it was set up near Mathura as a memorial of victory, that place having been taken by Ajatasatru,[5]

1 *Ib.*, 419.
2 *Ib.*, 421-4.
3 Now in the Mathura Museum.
4 Also by K. P. Jayaswal, *JBORS.*, (1919) v. 550-1; (1920), vi. 173; see also B. C. Bhattacharya, *Ib.* (1919), v. 402-4.
5 K. P. Jayaswal, *Ib.*, (1920), vi. 156.

or in commemoration of some gifts;[1] and another is that it was perhaps originally installed in Rajagriha, but was subsequently transferred to the vicinity of Mathura by Kanishka, who is known to have carried away trophies from Magadha to that city.[2]

A fourth figure,—this time, one seated on a round chair, but mutilated and decapitated by some vandal,—was found in a village some twelve miles from Mathura. The statue is in the pure Hindu style and an inscription on it, estimated to belong to about 470 B.C., has been read as referring to Darsaka, a successor of Ajatasatru.[3]

If we may treat these four pieces of sculpture as portraits and if we accept the identifications, we should have statues of four kings of the Sisunaga dynasty,—Kunika Ajatasatru (*c.* 515 B.C.), Udayin-Aja (484-467 B.C.), Darsaka (*c.* 470 B.C.) and Nandi-Vardhana (449-409 B.C.). Two of the statues come from near Mathura and the other two from Magadha,—but there is just a chance that those found near Mathura had been removed from the vicinity of Patna. All of them seem to belong to the style of the pre-Mauryan period.

The acceptance of the contention that these four statues are portraits would justify the conclusion that portrait sculpture had made remarkable progress in north India as early even as the 5th century B.C.

This group and the Kushan group, if they are portrait sculptures, would, with the Satakarni group, form the three earliest portrait groups known to Indian history and stand as distinct landmarks in the development of Indian art.

Portraiture in stone had certainly become popular by the second century B.C., and was perhaps practised,

1 MM. Hara Prasad Sastri, *Ib.*, (1919), v. 563.
2 K. P. Jayaswal, *Ib.*, (1920), vi. 176.
3 Also by K. P. Jayaswal, *Ib.*, (1924), x. 203, and *Modern Review*, 1921, Nov., 611-4.

with eminent success, even three centuries earlier. Though few specimens of these early periods have survived, we have satisfactory proof that the art continued to be popular in the mediæval period of north Indian history.

'Royal cemeteries,' are said to be 'still common in Rajputana.' It is added: 'They are called *Chhatris* or umbrellas: they are erected not only to rajas, but to other illustrious dead, and more specially to persons dying in war. Royal cemeteries are set apart at one place. Sometimes they contain statues, sometimes they do not. There are royal cemeteries at Jaipur, Jodhpur, and other Rajputana capitals. But the place containing the royal *chhatris* at Bikanir is called Devagadh. At this place there are statues of all the Bikanir rajas, from the fourth downwards. There is another Devagadh for the first three rajas near the walled town. The present devagadh is six miles distant from the former one. The statues are worshipped every day and food is offered to them. The priests are Sakadvipi Brahmanas (called Sebakas). They do not object to partaking the food offered to the dead rajas. The kings who died in wars are represented on horse-back. Their ranis who ascended the funeral pyres of their husbands are also represented as standing by their husbands.'[1]

King Wun Raj (Vana Raja) is said to have erected, about 742 A.D., a temple at Unhilpoor to 'Panchasura Parusnath' and to have placed in it an image of himself 'in the attitude of a worshipper, covered however, by the scarlet umbrella, denoting his royal state.'[2] The statue, which is of white marble, stands about three feet high and holds its hands joined;

1 MM. Hara Prasad Sastri, *JBORS.*, (1919), v. 559. See also *ASI.W.AR.*, 1907 : 29 : 13 ; 31–2 : 21, 23 ; 1908 : 56-57 : 51 ; 1909 : 39 : 7 ; 1910 : 46 : 14 ; 1911 : 40 : 16 ; 42 : 22 ; 1912 : 53 : 7.

2 Forbes, *Ras Mala*, i. iii.

in salutation;[1] but its 'claim to be the original image of traditions is not authenticated,' and it is a very inferior specimen of sculptural skill because of 'awkwardness of pose and want of art in composition.' Adjacent to this statue stands another, that of Vana Raja's *divan* or minister.[2]

The temples of Rajputana seem to be wealthier in portrait sculpture than other parts of north India proper, and examples of work of about the twelfth century A.D. seem to be not unknown.[3]

In the uttermost recesses of north India, in tracts now included in the kingdom of Nepal, the art found votaries and patrons such as perhaps it did not find elsewhere.

In the Jogesvara temple near Panwanowla in the Almora district near Nepal, 'three almost life-sized brass images of former donor Chand Rajas—Paunchand, Dipchand, and Trimulchand,—stand facing the lingam,' and one of them serves 'as a graceful dipdan holding the lights in its hands most reverently.'"[4] The large number and the unusual excellence of Nepalese portrait statues have been noticed and admired. Statues of Newar kings adorn the crests of tall pillars, the king being shown seated or kneeling, with hands clasped in salutation, and often shaded by an umbrella or a hooded cobra. Romance is sometimes busy with these monuments, as in the case of the statue of 'Yogendra Mall, the mysterious king who disappeared about 1700, and whom people refuse to believe dead.' It is said that 'before his disappearance he had given to his minister a final instruction: so long as the face of the statue remained clear and brilliant, so long as the bird

1 Burgess and Cousens, *Architectural Antiquities of Gujarat*, 44.

2 *Ib.*, 6, 44.

3 Smith, *HFAIC.*, 206-7; see also *ASI.W.AR.*, 1905 : 53 : 40; 56 : 54; 1906 : 57 : nos. 2120-1; 1910 : 50 : 26; 58 : 49; 1912 : 57 : 23; 1914 : 65 : 23.

4 Panna Lal, 'Account of a tour in the Almora District, Himalayas,' in *JBORS.*, (1920), vi. 374-6.

on his head had not flown away, it should be concluded from those signs that he was still alive. The face of the king is shining, and the bird is always in its place. And every evening the mattress is placed in a room on the facade of the durbar and the window is kept open in the expectation of his return.'[1] The statues of the kings are in many instances surrounded by those of their consorts and children. So excellent is each statue that 'it indicates the thought of the master-mind and the touch of the master-hand' and so effective is the display that 'it is doubtful if any country in the world has conceived a more artistic memorial statue than those to be observed in the public squares of the cities of Nepal.' Nor are statues of the commonalty wanting either in number or in quality.[2] Founders of benefactions to temples and people of even low degree who contributed only according to the slenderness of their means were not precluded from having their likenesses, along with those of the other members of their family, if they so wished, placed in the temples which had profited through their bounty, however modest. Even in the case of the statues of kings, 'the figure itself, regarded as a portrait is broadly treated and seems to reproduce the general character of the sitter while the features appear to have been studied from life but conventionalized in order to be in conformity with the entire scheme.'[3]

In the temple of Kamakhya at Gauhati, in Assam, stand two statues representing respectively Nar-Narayan (or Maka-deb), a king of the Koch dynasty, and his younger brother, Sukla-deb who built the temple in 1565 A.D.[4]

1 Prof. Sylvain Lévi, in *Indian Art and Letters*, (1925), i. 55.

2 See, for instance, figure of donor in A. K. Coomaraswamy and G. K. Duggirala, *Mirror of Gesture*, pl. viii.

3 P. Brown, *Picturesque Nepal*, 70-1, 156-162.

4 Sir E. A. Gait, *History of Assam*, 55-6. I must thank Rai Bahadur Rama Prasad Chanda for having drawn my attention to these statues.

It has been said that 'a special characteristic of Tibetan art is the abundance of realistic, highly individualised portrait statuettes of holy Lamas and other Buddhist saints'[1] and that 'the most interesting department of Tibetan, as of Mongolian pictorial art, is that of portraiture.'[2] The influence of Nepal and thus of India is indisputable in this development of Tibetan art.[3]

Ceylon too developed, similarly, what seems to have been almost a school of sculptural portraiture in very early times. 'Portrait statues supposed to be those of ancient kings are a speciality of Ceylonese art . . . two battered examples . . seem to be of high antiquity. One of these, traditionally believed to represent king Devanampiyya Tissa, the contemporary and friend of Asoka, which was found near the Ambasthala *dagaba* at Mihintale, eight miles from Anuradhapura, may be correctly attributed by the popular voice.' Other ancient statues,—though not equally ancient,—are also found in various places in Ceylon,[4] the most important of all being the magnificent portrait of Parãkrama Bahu I. at Polonnaruwa.[5]

In the Dekkhan and in north India the art of portrait sculpture has thus been shown to have flourished from early times. North Indian influence kindled the artistic impulse and shaped the development of this branch of art, not only in Nepal but in Tibet and Ceylon as well.

1 Smith, *HFAIC.*, 198.
2 *Ib.*, 318.
3 See, for instance, Prof. Sylvain Lévi, in *Indian Art and Letters*, (1926), i. 49-67.
4 Smith, *HFAIC.*, 88-92; for later examples, see *Ib.*, 241-2.
5 A. K. Coomaraswamy. *History of Indian and Indonesian Art*, fig. 301.

FIG. 1. A devotee of high rank, king Gautami-putra Satakarni (2nd century A.D.?) Stupa at Amaravati (now in the Madras Museum)

III

EARLY PORTRAITURE IN SOUTH INDIA

Did South India feel and respond to the stirrings of the impulse which in other parts of India was being nobly realised in excellent portraits in stone and metal? The sculptures described below at some length will show how far the South Indian sculptor attempted portraiture and what success he attained. No useful purpose will be served by enumerating all the sculptures which are definitely known, or are suspected, to be portraits: we may, therefore, confine ourselves to the study of representative specimens which are valuable for illustrating adequately the varieties of material and *motif* or for containing a date or a famous name, or for exemplifying a type of sculpture or a style of technique.

The earliest portraits we know of in south India are found in the ruins of the *stupa* of Amaravati. Two of these deserve special attention.

One is a mutilated figure [Fig. 1][1] which represents a devotee of high station who, in his hands joined in salutation against his breast, holds some lotus-buds. So careful is the chiselling that 'the pattern' of the clothing, 'almost to the threads of the cloth, has been minutely represented.'[2] The statue would have been truer to life had it been given greater depth and it might have also gained in dignity, but probably the sculptor had a double objective in making it thin almost as a lath: he suggested perhaps that the subject had Andhra blood in his veins, for a very Andhra type is the tall and spare figure leaning forward

1 This fine statue seems to have been at some time broken into a number of pieces: the head and the arms are missing and have not been traced; the two lower pieces have been put together, but with some 'restoration' which we might well have been spared.

2 Burgess, *BSAI.*, 96.

slightly, and he called attention to the high status of the devotee by accentuating the height. Standing much taller than the human stature, it must have been a very striking piece among the monuments of Amaravati. Indeed, the figure is taller than any of the other carvings of human figures at Amaravati, and is one of the few pieces executed fully in the round. The *motif* too is that of the humble devotee standing devoutly beside the structure he had raised or embellished in honour of his deity. So characteristically Andhra is the figure, so emphasised is the height, so appropriate is it as the figure of a devotee, and so good is the technique, that we are driven to conclude that this statue was intended for the likeness of some potentate who contributed in ample measure to the raising of the monuments at Amaravati.

Along the folds of the drapery runs an inscription which, though partly obliterated, may, with good reason, be taken to say that the statue was presented to the *stupa* by a lady of the name of Gotami (Gautami).[1] If to the circumstances already noticed we add the further facts that the *stupa* of Amaravati was largely embellished by the great Andhra kings, Gautami-putra Sri Satakarni I and Gautami-putra Sri Yajna Satakarni II (of the first and the last quarters respectively of the 2nd century A.D.), that each of these kings had evidently a Gautami for his mother, that one of the Gautamis could have installed, in the architectural out-growths of the *stupa*, a statue of her son in the posture of a devotee, and that this statue was recovered 'from behind the outer railing of the stupa,'[2] one of its older features,—we have perhaps sufficient basis for believing this statue to be a representation of one of the two Gautami-putra Satakarnis.

1 *EI.*, xv. 261, 270, No. 39, fig 39.

2 Burgess, *BSAI.*, 99.

The other represents a group, the principal figure in which is a devotee who was, in all probability, a chief of the name of Agheya-Vachakita-Vira. We have only to look at the figure on either side of him to be convinced that the sculptor's aim was individual portraiture.

South Indian art has, so far, furnished no other examples of portraiture till the Pallava times are reached. The gap between Amaravati and Mahabalipuram is wide, both in chronology and in art: we have hitherto chanced on no specimens of portraiture which could be attributed to the intermediate period.

What is perhaps the very earliest and the most explicit epigraphic reference in all India to the practice of setting up statues of human beings is to be found in two inscriptions on two pillars in a cave temple half-way up the rock at Trichinopoly.[1] On entering the cave (which opens on the south) and turning east we find at the eastern end of the cave a small sanctuary facing the west, carved out of the rock. In the cave stand four pillars, on either side of the shrine, imparting to the cave the appearance of a hall supported by eight pillars. 'Engraved on the pilaster to the right of the sanctuary and at a spot which appears to have been selected for the principal inscription' is the name *Sri Mahendra Vikrama*, and 'the pillars at the other end of the hall contain a number of names and *birudas*, among which is *Gunabhara*.' On two of the supporting pillars of the cave are two important Sanskrit inscriptions. One of them runs thus:[2]

1. When King Gunabhara placed a stone figure in the wonderful stone-temple on the top of the best of

1 For a description of the cave and for a plan of it and an illustration of the sculpture, see A. H. Longhurst, *Pallava Architecture*, (*ASI. M.* 17), i. 13-5, and frontispiece and plan 1.

2 *SII.*, i. no. 34: 30-1.

mountains, he made in this way Sthanu (Siva) stationary and became himself stationary (immortal) in the worlds together with him.

2. King Satrumalla built on this mountain a temple of Girisa (Siva) the husband of the daughter of the king of mountains, in order to make the name Girisa (the mountain-dweller) true to its meaning.
3. After Hara (Siva) had graciously asked him: 'How could I, standing in a temple on earth, view the great power of the Cholas or the river Kaviri?'—king Gunabhara, who resembled Manu in his manner of ruling, assigned to him this mountain-temple, which touches the clouds.
4. Thus having joyfully placed on the top (of the mountain) a matchless stone figure of Hara (Siva), which he caused to be executed, that Purushottama, who bore Siva fixed in his mind, made the loftiness of the mountain fruitful.

On the other pillar are four verses[1] which are equally interesting:

1. Being afraid, that the god who is fond of rivers (Siva), having perceived the Kaviri, whose waters please the eye, who wears a garland of gardens, and who possesses lovely qualities, might fall in love (with her), the daughter of the mountain (Parvati) has, I think, left her father's family and resides permanently on this mountain calling this river the beloved of the Pallava (king).
2. While the king called Gunabhara is worshipper of the *linga*, let the knowledge, which has turned back from hostile (*vipaksha*) conduct, be spread for a long time in the world by this *linga!*
3. This mountain resembles the diadem of the Chola province, this temple of Hara (Siva) its chief

1 *SII.*, i. no. 33 : 28-30.

jewel, and the splendour of Samkara (Siva) its splendour.

4. By the stone chisel a material body of Satyasamdha was executed, and by the same an eternal body of his fame was produced.

It is well known that the titles *Gunabhara*, *Satrumalla* and *Satyasamdha* are among those borne by the Pallava king, Mahendravarman I, and it is well ascertained that this rock-cut temple itself was only one of the many similar temples which that king, true to his other title, *Vichitra-chitta*, 'the curious minded,'[1] set the fashion of constructing in south India.[2] Eliminating all the imagery of the verses of these inscriptions and discarding the quaint conceits which the poet delights in elaborating, we may interpret the verses to mean that Mahendravarman installed a stone-image of Siva in the temple, and achieved immortality for himself by placing in it a statue in his own image. Neither the sanctuary nor the cave-hall contains at present any figure which could be taken for a likeness of a king. A panel representing Siva as Gangadhara is found carved on the wall opposite the shrine, but this cannot be the image of Siva mentioned in the verses, for it is not in the sanctuary. The likeness of the king, and the Siva image, in the form of a *linga*, which are spoken of in the verses, would therefore seem to have both disappeared. In the sanctuary we find two socket-holes, one larger than the other, cut into the floor,—the larger being in the centre of the sanctuary and the smaller being on one side of it; these two sockets may represent the positions of the two principal images of the shrine. Further, both sockets being a few feet from the walls, we may be sure that the two images were not mere relievos, but

1 *El.*, xvii. 14-7.

2 Dr. G. Jouveau-Dubreuil, *PA.*, i. 39-40.

were statues fully in the round. The larger socket-hole represents naturally the location of the *linga*. We cannot be sure if in the smaller socket-hole was planted a figure of Parvati, of which the second inscription speaks, or the figure of the king himself of which mention is made in both the inscriptions. In another cave temple, constructed by this same king, there is, as will be noticed presently, a relief of him carved on one side of the entrance of the sanctuary, and in other rock-cut temples constructed by his successors the fashion was followed of carving in them relievos of the king who constructed them. We may naturally expect that in the Trichinopoly cave-temple the figure of the king was carved in relief, but no trace of even a decayed or mutilated piece of sculpture is to be discerned anywhere in the cave or in the sanctuary. There is reason to suspect that a statue of a devotee was occasionally placed in the *sanctum sanctorum* itself in the attitude of worshipping the idol of the deity to whom the temple is consecrated:[1] this honour of a place in the shrine was, perhaps, conferred on the builder of the temple. There is therefore some justification for assuming that the figure which stood beside Siva in the sanctuary was that of Mahendravarman himself, and not of Parvati. If this conjecture is sound, we have to conclude that the figure must have been a piece of detached sculpture carved quite in the round.

Whether a statue in the round or a mere relief, the figure is lost, and we cannot now judge of the lineaments of the king. The inscriptions are positive

1 In some sculptures we have representations of section-views of temples (see, for example, H. Cousens, *CAKD.*, pl. 107, and Rea, *Chalukyan Architecture*, pl. 21, fig. 3). In the central shrine a devotee is figured as standing in an attitude of worship beside a *linga*. The figure of the devotee may represent either the priest performing worship or a statue of a devotee placed in the shrine. As these sculptures do not show any other human beings, such as lay worshippers, anywhere in the temple, and as the sculptures reproduce the images and the details of the architecture, we have naturally to assume that the devotee figured in the *sanctum* represents a permanent fixture in the shape of a statue.

that the king's likeness was set up during his own life-time and the chances are, therefore, that it was carved by one who had abundant opportunities of observing the king's features. This statue or relief, whichever it was, not only furnishes the earliest known example in south India of the builder of a temple setting up in it a likeness of himself,—if we exclude the figures at Amaravati,—but also shows that a builder of a temple was not obliged to instal in it a full gallery of his family. The second verse of the latter of the two inscriptions is interpreted—it is a highly probable, an almost indisputable interpretation,—as indicating the conversion of the king to Saivism by Tiru-Navukku-Arasu, one of the great protagonists and hymnists of the Tamil school of Saivism.[1] It is a thousand pities that it did not strike this great king, who prayed that 'the knowledge which had turned from hostile conduct' should 'be spared for a long time in this world,' that the features of him who had imparted that 'knowledge' to him should also be similarly 'spared.' It is a great loss that he did not have a statue of his *Guru* set up, in addition to his own, in this temple, where it is that he glories in having turned from the paths of 'hostile conduct'; for, then, we might have had at least one authentic and contemporary portrait of that great saint, instead of the purely conventional images of him for which room is found in every Siva temple of the Tamil country.

Two groups of reliefs in the northern and southern niches respectively of the Adi-Varaha cave-temple at Mahabalipuram,[2] are of very great interest. In the former niche are carved, in rather high relief, the seated figure of a king and, on either side of him, the standing figure of a queen facing him. [Fig. 2] Over the

1 *EI.*, iii. 227.

2 See *MER.*, 1923: 24: 2, and H. Krishna-Sastri *Two Statues of Pallava Kings* (*ASI. M.* 26).

portal of the niche is engraved a name, *Sri Simhavinna Pottrathirajan*. In the other niche are found three figures, the first of whom, a king, leads behind him by the hand a queen who is followed by another queen [Fig. 3]. Over this niche too is found an inscription giving the name, *Sri Mahendra Pottrathirajan*. The two groups face each other. Simhavishnu is shown seated on a tripod, which is perhaps a substitute for a throne, and his right hand is in the *chin-mudra*, quite in consonance with the serenity of his expression. In the other panel, Mahendravarman is shown going to the sanctuary: devoutly he points to it with his right-forefinger and with his left hand he gently leads a queen towards the shrine, and she is followed by another, who, we may fancy, is much younger. The sculptor has not had cunning enough to help the queens to carry themselves with grace and naturalness nor has he learnt the art of inducing them to feel that their hands are not excrescences.

The inscriptions do not indeed say explicitly that they refer to the reliefs, but they are purposeless if they were not intended to serve as labels to the figures. The Adi-Varaha temple was probably the earliest of the cave-temples constructed at Mahabalipuram. The work seems to have been started by Simhavishnu (575-600 A.D.), the seated king, and continued and completed by his son, Mahendravarman (600-25 A.D.) the standing king. The son must have had the figures of his father and himself carved in niches in the temple to show that they were the builders. To this day the son stands reverently before the father, who, seated like a *guru*, expounds some spiritual truths to the son. Had the statue of Mahendravarman I at Trichinopoly survived to us we should have been able to determine how far the statue and the relievo were faithful as portraits.

Fig. 2. Relief sculpture of king Simhavishnu (575-600 A.D.) and his two queens in the Adi-Varaha rock-cut cave temple at Mahabalipuram

FIG. 3. Relief sculpture of king Mahendravarman I (600–25 A.D.) and his two queens in the Adi-Varaha cave-temple at Mahabalipuram

FIG. 4. Relief sculpture of king Narasimhavarman I (625-650 A.D.) in the Dharma-raja ratha at Mahabalipuram

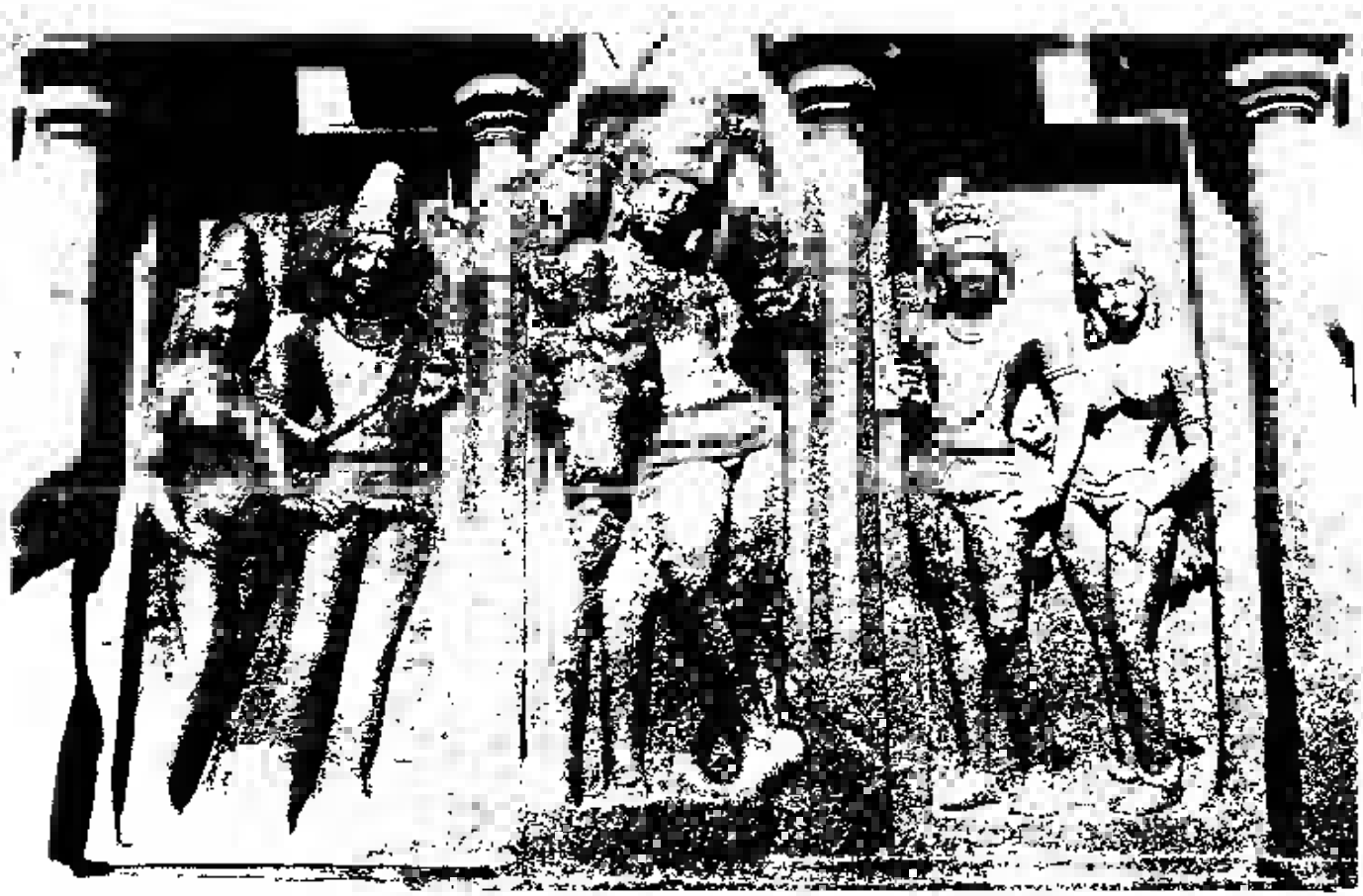

FIG. 5. Relief sculpture of a royal group on either side of Siva, in the Arjuna ratha at Mahabalipuram

The numerous sculptures at Mahabalipuram contain many other figures which were doubtless intended for portraits.

On the outer face of the famous monolithic temple called the Dharma-raja *ratha* are carved a number of figures with inscriptions above them,—all of which are the *birudas* or titles of the Pallava king Narasimhavarman I (625-650 A.D.)[1]—son of Mahendravarman I. Below one of these inscriptions is an alto-relievo [Fig. 4] which, if we may base a conjecture upon the titles blazoned above and around, may be a representation of this king Narasimhavarman I.

On three of the four outer faces of the Arjuna *ratha* are carved a number of reliefs, some of which must be royal groups. They follow the *motif* of the group of Mahendravarman and his queens in the Adi-Varaha temple. On the southern face are two royal groups, one on either side of a representation of Siva [Fig. 5]. The grace of the carriage of the figures is almost as great as that of any of the figures pictured at Mahabalipuram. In a panel on the northern face is a royal group which might be taken to represent king Paramesvaravarman I (*c.* 675 A.D.) and his queen,[2] were it not that the number of royal groups in this *ratha*, the absence of labels, and our ignorance of the exact age of the structure, make it very risky to venture on an identification.

On the eastern face of the same *ratha* a figure which looks almost indubitably that of a king stands gazing at two ladies in the next panel, both of whom appear to be queens. The posing has improved greatly, the arms and the hands are no longer inconvenient outgrowths and the expression shows that the artist has striven to obtain fidelity to life: indeed the execution

1 *E.I.*, x. 5.

2 O. C. Gangoly, in *Modern Review*, 1911 Jan., 11.

is very happy. We have unfortunately no means of deciding with certainty whom these figures portray.

A thin coat of lime and paint being traceable on the reliefs of Simhavishnu and Mahendravarman, we may assume that, taking advantage of the figures having been carved in the interior of a temple beyond the reach of sun and rain, the sculptors had them painted over, while they did not attempt to embellish similarly the other portraits, which are carved on walls exposed to the elements.

Round the central shrine of the Vaikuntha-perumal temple at Conjeevaram runs a raised verandah, the walls of which bear two belts of panels of bas-reliefs, with spaces below for labels. Only some of the spaces have been filled in with labels explanatory of the pictures, and even these are not quite intelligible in the present state of our knowledge of Pallava history,[1] but the panels and the labels seem to 'represent the whole history of the Pallavas in pictures.'[2] The temple was built by Paramesvaravarman I (*c.* 675 A.D.) and finished by Nandivarman-Pallava-malla (*c.* 742 A.D.)[3] but we do not know if these kings contented themselves with picturing the pauranic history of the dynasty which is set out in some detail in its inscriptions, or whether they sought in these panels to bring the history down to their own times. We seem, however, to have in some of the panels and the subjoined labels an attempt to delineate and describe the incidents which led to the succession of Nandivarman-Pallava-malla on the death of Paramesvaravarman II. These panels have not been studied adequately for want of full knowledge of the life and events of those days, and we cannot

1 For illustrations of the panels, see A. Rea, *Pallava Architecture*, pll. 88-92; for the inscriptions, see *SII. T.*, iv. 138, and for discussions, see *MER.*, 1906: 62-3: 2, and Dr. G. Jouveau-Dubreuil, *PA.*, i. 69-71.

2 Dr. G. Jouveau-Dubreuil, *PA.*, i. 70.

3 K. V. Subrahmanya Aiyar in *EI.*, xviii. 117, and H. Krishna Sastri *Two Statues of Pallava Kings* (*ASI. M.* 26), 8-9.

FIG. 6. Drawing of relief sculpture of Pallava Chieftain, in rock-cut cave temple at Kunnandarkoyil, Pudukkotta State

therefore decide if we have any portraits in them.

In the architectural works of the Pallavas we often come across carved panels of human figures, some of which at least, though now taken to represent *dvara-palakas* or gate-keepers, could perhaps more appropriately be identified as portrait sculptures of the builders of the temples. In the rock-cut cave-temple of Kunnandarkoyil stands, for instance, a relief [Fig. 6] which is very probably a portrait of a Pallava: the prominence given to it, the care bestowed on it and its marked individuality, suggest that the sculptor had chosen a Pallava chieftain for his subject.

We have ample ground for the belief that a careful study of Pallava art and history may reveal more statues of the kings of the Pallava dynasty. Pallava art would still seem to be a field full of promise to investigators.

On the wall of a natural cave at Badami 'is carved a large image in a seated Buddha-like attitude . . . . The image is bejewelled with necklace, bracelets and anklets, and wears the sacred thread . . . The right hand, which is raised from the elbow before the breast, bears a *mala* or rosary . . . . The left-hand rests, Jina-like, in the lap, palm upwards. The person is seated upon a lion-throne, the front of which is divided into three compartments, with a lion in each. On either side of him is a *chauri*-bearer, while behind him is the usual throne back, as seen behind Jina images.' There seems to be no doubt about its being a portrait-statue.'

In the Mallikarjuna temple at Pattadakal, which seems to be the temple built by Trailokya-maha-devi, junior queen of Vikramaditya II (733-47 A.D.), we have 'a pair of figures, male and female' (Fig. 7) 'carved upon one of the pilasters, on the north side

1 H. Cousens, *CAKD.*, 57, and fig. 17.

of the hall, and standing out in full from it,' though much damaged. 'The man wears a very elaborate coiffure, in which the hair is plaited and rolled, and is carried up to a great bunch of carefully modelled curls. Round the upper arms and wrists are plain and coiled bracelets . . . On his left, with his left arm about her, stands a woman whose right arm very lovingly embraces his neck. She has the usual jewelled necklets, bracelets and waistbelt.'[1] As these statues look more like portraits than 'merely decorative figures'[2], it is 'possible' that they are representations of queen Trailokya-maha-devi, the builder of the temple, and her husband, Vikramaditya II.[3]

1 H. Cousens, *CAKD.*, 66.
2 *Ib.*, 38.
3 *Ib.*, 66.

FIG. 7. King Vikramaditya II (733-47 A.D.) and Queen Trilokya-maha-devi on pillar in hall of the Mallikarjuna temple at Pattadakal, Bijapur

FIG. 8. A Chola King (?), in the Dravidian temple at Nandi, Mysore State

IV

MEDIÆVAL SCULPTURE

The general oblivion which has come over the history of south India from the decline of the Pallavas to the rise of the Cholas of the Vijayalaya line (about the middle of the 9th century A.D.) envelops also the history of this branch of sculpture in that period. The revival of the Cholas under the kings of the dynasty founded by Vijayalaya leads also to a renascence of art, and from this period we have sculptural material enough to base reliable conclusions upon.

A fine 'seated figure, about 3 feet high, with a bared head' [Fig. 8], in the temple at Nandi, the finest and the most ornate of the Dravidian temples in the province, is probably the earliest known example of post-Pallava portraiture. The statue, which is 'decorated with ornaments and is in the posture of meditation', is said by tradition to represent a Chola king.[1] Whatever view we may hold of this possibility, there can be no doubt that it is a fine specimen of the sculptor's art. It is now found in the oldest portion of the temple,—a portion attributable to the close of the eighth century A.D.[2] Were it not that it is a moveable figure, and that additions were made to the temple in the eleventh century and later, we could have little doubt about the date of the sculpture.

Perhaps to this same period we have to attribute the sculptures in a rock-cut shrine at the foot of the hill at Kunnakkudi, among which are found figures

1 *MysAS. AR.* 1914 : 12 : 20

2 *Ib.*, 1914 : 15 : 23

of the king and queen who constructed the caves.[1]

In a niche of a rock-cut cave in the Siva temple at Tirumalai near Ramnad is 'a standing figure in relief of a king(?), about 6 feet in height, flanked on either side by an attendant. The one on his left stands with folded arms, while the other, a dwarf, holds a huge umbrella over his master's head. Below this group is an ornamental flower vase with a goat on its right and a peacock on the left.'[2] The figure in the centre of the group is perhaps Skanda, and not a king; the person who stands at one side with arms folded across the breast is, more probably, a king who was a devotee of Skanda. His attitude recalls that of the Pallava at Kunnandarkoyil. The figures are cut out of the rock, but show a coat of lime appropriately painted over. If we may judge from the present appearance of the figures, the sculptures must be atttibuted to a period somewhat later than those at Kunnakkudi mentioned above.

On a stone-slab on the bund of the tank at Dharmapuri is carved a group of two persons with a *linga* between them, and above the group runs an inscription of the ninth century A.D., perhaps the eighth, containing some verses by a poet, Divakara, in praise of Vidyavasi, a famous Saiva teacher who was then dead. Probably, the *linga* represents Vidya-rasi, and the human figures are Divakara and another disciple.

At Vallimalai we have an image carved in relief on a rock not far from a Jaina *basti* which was constructed by the Western Ganga king Rajamalla (*c.* 870 A.D.) on his wresting the country round about from a Bana king. An inscription below the relief states that it is an image of Devasena, the pupil of the Bana king's Jain preceptor, Bhavanandin, and that it was set up b

1 *ASI. S. AR.* 1911 : 52 2 *MER.* 1924 : 2 : 5

3 *EI.* x. 64; *T. T.* Shatmar, *Kannada Poets mentioned in Inscriptions* (*ASI. M.* 13) 2-

another Jain *guru*, Aryanandin.[1]

On a stone-slab at Karubele is carved 'a figure of a woman seated on a bench, holding a palm-leaf book in her hand', and below the sculpture is incised an inscription, of about 900 A.D., to say that 'Sami-nirmadi, daughter of Nagarjunayya and Nandingeyabe, is famous for (knowledge of) all the sastras.'[2]

Another early example is a figure, about a foot in height, carved in relief on the south wall of the central shrine of the Siva temple at Tiruvaduturai. Beside the figure is engraved a name showing that it represents Tiruk-karralip-Pichchar,[3] a contemporary of the Chola king, Parantaka I (*c.* 907-945 A.D.).[4] The figure holds the hands joined in the usual attitude of salutation.

How popular was the practice of carving the figure of a devotee or a temple-builder, may be seen in this temple. On one wall is executed relief of a standing figure worshipping a *linga*, and it is identified, in an inscription beside it, as that of one Daman Amalan.[5] Beside a similar relief on another wall runs an inscription which says that the figure is that of a devotee, Ambalavan Tiruvisaluran Tiru-Navukku-Araiyan.[6] Beside a standing figure, 'in a worshipping attitude with palms raised above the head,' on the same wall, is found

1 *MER*, 1895 : 3-4 : 10, *EI*. iv. 140-2 and plate xi. 236-7. It has been thought that numerous other images at various other Jain centres are portraits (*MER*. 1909 : 69 : 5, 1909 : 70 : 8, 1910 : 76-9 : 1-4), but I have ascertained by an examination of the inscriptions themselves (nos. 67-74, 691-705 and 722-31 of 1905, 330-2 of 1908, 62-8 and 75 of 1910), —estampages of which were kindly shown to me by the Madras Epigraphist,—that they have no title to be called such, except perhaps the image below which the name Ajja-nandi is engraved (54 of 1910 ; see *MER*. 1910 : 76 : 1). Perhaps it may be pointed out here that later sculptures are known which seem to represent some Jaina preceptors (see, for instance, *MER*. 1921 : 8 : 4*c* and pl. 1 (2), 1924 : 5 : 7, and *Mys.AS. AR*., 1925 : 51 : no. 44), but we have no justification for considering them portraits.

2 *EC*. 10 Kl. Bp. 65

3 Was he the brother or other relation of Adittan-Karralip-Piratti, a queen of Parantaka I, (*MER*. 1919 : 94 : 9)? How was he related to his namesake of the days of Sundara-Chola (*EI*. XII. 122)?

4 *MER*. 1925 : 80-1 : 10, and *Ib*. 1925 : 132 of 1925

5 *Ib*., 1925 : 141 of 1925. Mr. G. V. Srinivasa Rao, Chief Assistant of the Madras Epigraphist, had the kindness to examine for their palæography this and the three inscriptions referred to below.

6 *Ib*. 1925 : 133 of 1925

a similar inscription, which says that it represents a devotee named Ilaiya[1] Tiru-Navukku-Araiyar,[2] who was perhaps a younger brother or a son or a grandson of the person mentioned above. On this same wall is the relief of Karralip-Pichchar which has been already noticed. On another wall a relief shows two figures, one standing behind the other in front of a *linga*, and beside them runs an inscription to say that the first person is Eluvan Sandara-Adittan, who constructed a tier of the temple, and that the other is Nakkan Vannattu-Adigal, a maidservant of the palace.[3] We do not know how the man and the woman were related to each other, but they both seem to have contributed to the building of the tier. Thus, on the various walls of one temple are carved five separate relievos of devotees, and it is very doubtful if more than two of them were in any way related to each other.

Below an image on the wall of a *mandapa* in the Siva temple at Tirukkurugavur is inscribed the name of an ascetic, Venayil-udaiyan Ilatangilai Aruran.[4]

In the Siva temple at Kadambarkoyil is a bas-relief below which is engraved, in characters of about the tenth century A.D., an inscription which says that that stone temple was built by one Arul-perra-devar.[5]

Another example of the same century is to be found in the Siva temple at Kuhur, where an inscription records that that temple, also of stone, was built by one Madam-udaiyar Varaguna-tondar, and his likeness is sculptured above the inscription.[6]

In the Siva temple at Konerirajapuram there is a group of figures carved in rather low relief, and below it runs an inscription to the effect that the temple was raised in the reign of Uttama-Chola (*c.* 969-985 A.D.) by his mother Sembiyan-ma-devi, in the name of her

1 That is, 'junior'
2 *MER.* 1925 : 131 of 1925
3 *Ib.* 1925 : 106 of 1925
4 *Ib.* 1919 : 440 of 1918
5 *Ib.* 1918 : 37 of 1918
6 *Ib.* 1918 : 298 of 1917

FIG. 9. Bronze statue of Queen Sembiyan-ma-devi, wife of King Gandar-Aditya-Chola, in Siva temple at Konerirajapuram at Tanjore (10th century A.D.)

husband, Gandar-Aditya. The inscription proceeds: 'This is (the image of) the glorious Gandar-Aditya-deva which was (caused to be) made in this sacred stone-temple in the posture of worshipping the sacred feet of the lord.'[1] In the group, Gandar-Aditya sits squatting before a *linga*, his hands joined in salutation, and behind him are his attendants, the first holding a sword in one hand and a fly-whisk in the other, and the second bearing an umbrella, all of which are emblems of sovereignty.[2]

Another relief in the same temple has appended to it an inscription which says that the relief represents one Sattan Gunabattan, who built a shrine in that temple at the instance of Udaiya-Pirattiyar, *alias* Sembiyan-ma-devi, the mother of Uttama-Chola.[3] In this instance we have a portrait of the agent of the person who had the temple built and not of the principal.

A bronze statue found in this temple [Fig. 9] is attributable to this period. It has all the individuality of a portrait, and, in all probability, it is an image of Sembiyan-ma-devi, the queen who founded the temple.

A shrine was raised to Chandesvara in this temple in 1085 A.D. by a private individual, who had his own figure and that of Chandesvara cut on the west wall of the shrine.[4] It is curious that it should have been thought necessary to figure the god on the outside of the wall of his own shrine.

At this place, Konerirajapuram, we find, therefore, that a practice has obtained, from the time when the temple was begun, about 975 A.D., of placing in it likenesses representing the person in whose name the temple was built, the person who built it, and the

1 *SII.* iii. no. 146

2 The editor of the inscription in *SII.* has gone completely astray in his identifications.

3 *SII.* iii. no. 147 4 *MER.* 1910 : 91 : 24

person who had the actual conduct of the work of construction.

On a wall of the Siva temple at Tiruvisalur is carved in low relief the figure of a worshipper [Fig. 10] and close by runs an inscription[1] recording the construction of the *mandapa* by one Ananta-Sivan; perhaps we may take the relief and the inscription together and infer that the relief is a representation of Ananta-Sivan, the builder of the *mandapa*. The worshipper is shown with hands not joined in *anjali* but stretched out soliciting boons.

We have already seen how the memory of Gandar-Aditya was perpetuated by Sembiyan-ma-devi, his queen. Her memory in turn seems to have been perpetuated in a statue set up to her in a temple to Siva which she had herself built at Sembiyan-ma-devi, a village which she re-named after herself and made a gift of to the temple. Grants of land too seem to have been made by the assembly of the village for the offering of food to her image.[2]

When Parantaka II died after a distinguished reign, his queen put an end to herself by committing *sati*. Kundavai, the daughter of this couple, had such regard, for her parents that, when her brother Rajaraja I (985–1013 A.D.) built the great Brihad-Isvara temple at Tanjore, she installed in it images of her father and mother, that is of Parantaka II[3] and his queen,[4] and made ample provision for worship being offered to each of them.[5]

In the last days of Rajaraja I the manager of the Brihad-Isvara temple seems to have set up a solid image of Rajaraja I, along with a similar one of his queen, Loka-maha-devi, in the temple to the building of which

1 *MER.* 1907 : 50 of 1907
2 *Ib.* 1926 : 481 of 1925
3 *SII.* ii. no. 6, paras 1, 13–14
4 *Ib.* ii. no. 6, paras 1, 3–5
5 *Ib.* ii. no. 6, paras 13–18 for the king, and *Ib.*, paras 19–21 for the queen.

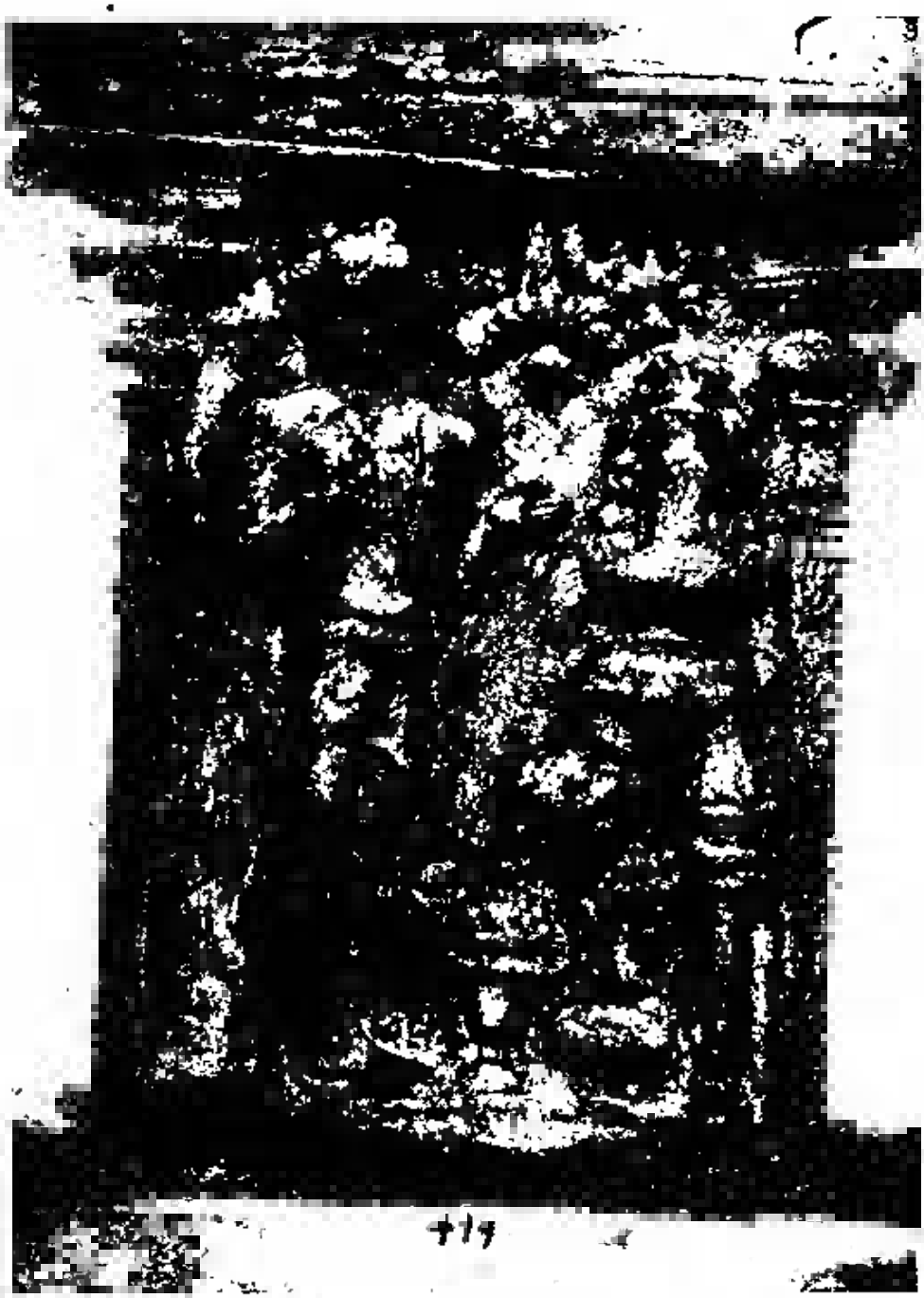

FIG. 8. Relief sculpture of Ananta-Sivan, the border of the mandapa in the temple at Tiruvisalur

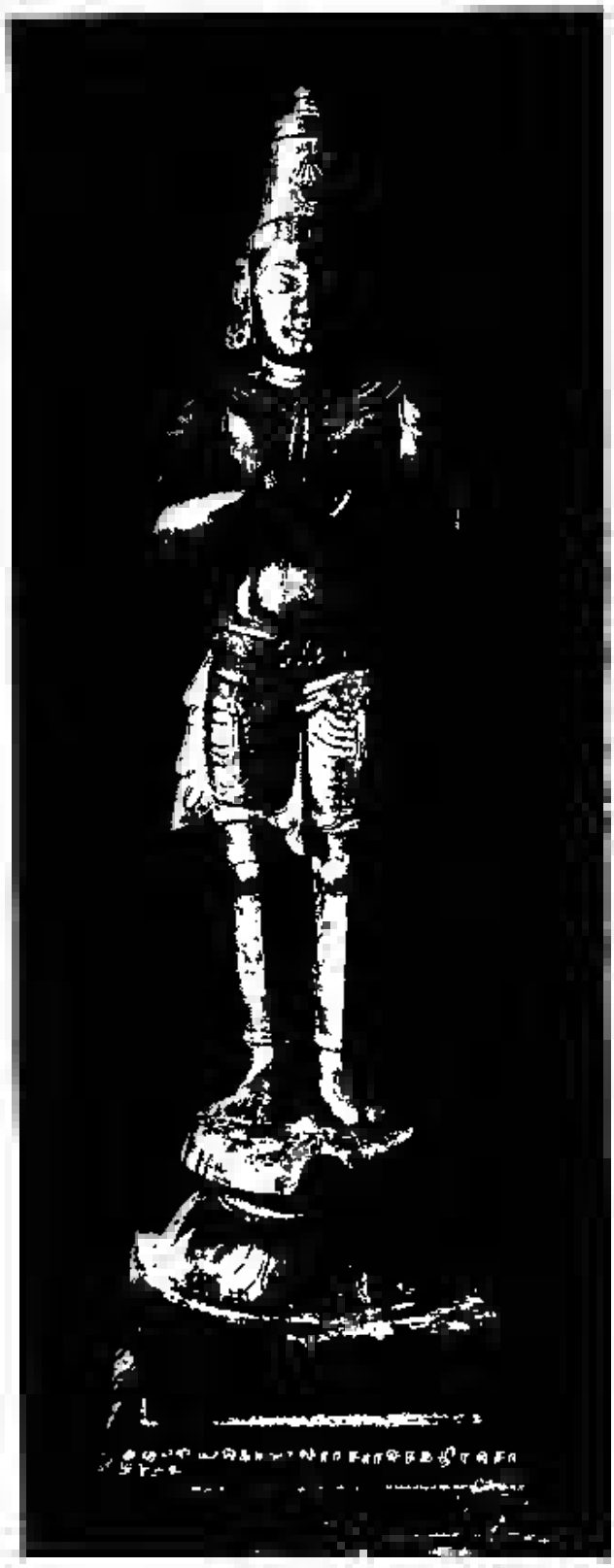

FIG. 11. Metallic statue of King Rajarajendra-sola-raja (Rajaraja I ?) in the Rajarajesvara (Brihadisvara) temple at Tanjore

that king devoted the treasures which he acquired in his numerous conquests. An inscription in the temple does not seem to be susceptible of any other interpretation.[1] The measurements of the two images and the pedestals are given in the inscription: the image of the king was 'one *mulam*, four *viral* and a half in height, from the feet to the hair,' and that of the queen was 'twenty-two *viral* and two *torai* in height.' Among the jewels with which the statues were decked were 'sacred arm-rings' and 'sacred ear-rings.' It is also worth noting that a lamp was kept burning in the presence of the king's statue, just as if it were an image of the deity.[2] No image now in that temple is identifiable with that of the queen Loka-maha-devi: her statue seems to have disappeared. A king's statue [Fig. 11] is found among the images now in the temple, but it is exceedingly doubtful if it is the statue to which the above mentioned inscription relates. All that we know of this statue has been summarised thus: 'In the Brihad-isvara temple at Tanjore is a metallic image with the label, *Rajarajendra-sola-raja of the big temple*, engraved on the pedestal in the modern Tamil alphabet. The king is represented as standing with his palms joined together in a worshipping pose. As a work of art, it is only a second-rate specimen, not to be compared favourably with the image of Krishna-raya at Tirumalai. It is said that this image receives all the honours in the temple, and, when the god is taken out in procession, this royal image escorts the deity. The name as given on the image evidently refers to the Chola king Rajaraja I, for it was he who was intimately connected with the construction and the upkeep of this temple. It should be a later work done to perpetuate the memory of the founder of the great temple. The tradition locally

1 *SII.* ii. no. 38, paras 14, 17, 44, 47; see also *Ib.*, ii (40), 152.

2 *Ib.* ii. no. 41, para 2.

current about this image also corroborates this view."[1] One look at this bronze is enough to show that, compared with the many icons in the same temple which were set up in the days of Rajaraja I, it is of far inferior quality, especially in regard to the moulding of the figure. The fine idealism and the vigorous freedom of those icons do not animate this figure, which is very wooden and unspeakably rigid. Further, the height of the statue of Rajaraja I which was set up in his times is known to us from the inscription in the temple; this height does not tally with the height of the image which now passes for Rajaraja's.[2] The characters on the pedestal are attributable to the seventeenth century: at any rate, they do not belong to Rajaraja's times. From all that we know of Rajaraja we cannot but hold it extremely probable that the manager of the temple acted on Rajaraja's wishes in setting up the two statues, and providing that the king's image should accompany the *utsava-vigraha* of the god in the processions of the great festivals. Perhaps we have to suppose that the original statues were lost, and that the present statue was substituted much later, when the metal worker's art had degenerated greatly in this part of the country. Had the original bronzes survived, they would have been of unique artistic value, for they were not merely the very earliest portrait statues of metal the date of which is indisputable,—though we have many specimens of icons of metal of much earlier date,—but they were also specimens of a period to which belong some of of the very best south Indian bronzes.

An image of even the priest who officiated in the temple seems to have been set up in the time of Rajaraja I, and another priest,[3] Isana-Siva-pandita, made provision for the burning of a lamp before that image.[4]

1 *MER.* 1925 : 81 : 12 2 I took the measurements in June, 1925
3 I am not satisfied that 'priest' is a correct rendering of the word in the text, *Gurukkal.*
4 *SII.* ii. no. 95, para 82

Fig 12. Bronze statue of Sola mā-devī, one of the queens of Rajaraja I, in the Siva temple at Kalahasti (early 11th century A.D.)

At Kalahasti, in the Siva temple, stands a bronze about 2½ feet in height, [Fig. 12] on the pedestal of which runs an inscription stating that it is a likeness of Sola-ma-devi and was cast under the orders of Rajendra-sola-deva.[1] Evidently this Sola-ma-devi is one of the queens of the great Rajaraja I, and her statue was set up under the orders of her step-son Rajarajendra I.

To about this time belongs a piece of sculpture in the Siva temple at Olagapuram, showing a king worshipping a *linga*.

A devotee gave to the Siva temple at Annur in 1031 A.D. some gold for a twilight lamp, assigned over some of his servants for service in the temple, and also presented metallic statues of himself and his wife.[2] We have here the first instance of a donor to a temple accompanying his gifts with statues of himself and of his wife.

Among the sculptures at the top of a stone at Belagami is an image, which, from a label above, we gather to be a representation of Gunagalla. Another inscription below the image says that a Bhuvanaika-malla, 'washing the feet of the Advaita luminary delighting in true wisdom . . . Gunagalla-Yogi,' *alias* Gunagalla Nagavarmacharya, 'who had built a number of temples,' made a grant of a village, 'with all ceremonies,' in 1071 A.D.[3]

In the Siva temple at Srimushnam the reciter of the *Tirup-padiyam*, or 'the Sacred Decad,' a hymn in ten stanzas to the god of that temple, was, for long, one Tambiran-tolan Manakkanjaran, and on his death an image of him was set up in one of the *gopuras* of the temple[4]

1 *MER.* 1922 : 168-b of 1922.

2 *Ib.* 1923 : 594 of 1922

3 *EC.* 7 Sh: Sk. 129.

4 *MER.* 1916 :235 of 1916. Palæographically this inscription is assignable to the 11th century A.D.

Opposite the shrine of the Siva temple at Peddak-allepalli is placed a stone in which is sculptured in relief a seated figure of about life-size. Above this figure runs a label: 'This is the Soma-siva-acharya who, having built this temple, held sway over it.' Below the figure are engraved a number of verses which say that Soma-siva-acharya came of the line of the Pushpa-giri *matha* and that for the *linga* of Sri-Nagesvara at Kadalapuri installed by certain mythological Naga-kumaras he built the temple, in 1292 A.D., at the spot where Janamejaya had performed the serpent sacrifice.[1]

In the Siva temple at Kalahasti stands a pair of bronze figures, each with hands joined in the attitude of worship. One of the figures is a male and the other is a female [Fig. 13]. At one end of the pedestal of of each statue is a projection from which springs a post, the top of which, where it reaches almost the height of the joined hands, is shaped into a cup-like lamp. As an inscription on a wall of the same temple, dated 1119 A.D., says that a lady made a gift of 96 sheep to the temple, out of the yield of which was to be burnt a perpetual light in a lamp-stand cast after the form of her deceased brother, Kettan-Adittan, a servant of a Chola captain,[2] we may conclude that the male figure represents Kettan-Adittan and that it was set up after his death by a relation of his. The other statue, which represents a woman, resembles the former so closely in the features that the suggestion may be ventured that it represents the sister and that it was set up either by herself for her own merit or after her death by her relations as a memorial. The two bronzes would seem, therefore, to be statues of a brother and sister. They are very fine specimens of the metal-worker's art and have all the marks of individualised portraits. Statues

1 I am indebted to Pandit V. Prabhakara Sastri, of the Govt. Oriental Manuscripts Library, Madras, for a transcript of the inscription.

2 *MER.* 1922 : 95 of 1922

holding lamps in their hands are common, but these bronzes are unique in that a special support is provided for each lamp, and the hands are left unencumbered, so that they might be fully joined in salutation. These statues present a combination of the two common *motifs*,—a devotee standing in the attitude of salutation with hands joined in *anjali*, and his holding in his hands a lamp for a light kept perpetually burning for his merit.

In a niche of the famous Kesava temple at Belur stand two figures whom tradition identifies as Vishnuvardhana,[1] the great Hoysala king, (1104-1141 A.D.) and his queen Santale [Fig. 14]. This Vishnuvardhana is famous in south Indian history as the great king who was converted to Vaishnavism by Ramanuja, and as the builder of magnificent temples. The figures are carefully sculptured and were doubtless good likenesses.

Among the metallic images in this temple is one of the same king, Vishnuvardhana. 'The image is about a foot and a half in height, standing on a pedestal [Fig. 15]. The hair is wound into a knot behind the head. (Not visible in the photo.) This is a Vaishnavite custom. It is not however positively known whether Vishnuvardhana kept his hair in such a style. The figure is highly adorned with ear-rings, necklace and ornaments. A sheathed sword is suspended from the girdle on the left side, and a dagger on the right side. On the image, discus, conch, and certain lines and circles are drawn on the palm of the hand, fingers, and legs, indicating great fortune.'[2]

1 R. A. Narasimhachariar, *Monograph on the Kesava Temple, Belur*, 2

2 *MysAS. AR.* 1926 : 7 : 58. In a kind letter to me, dated July 13, 1927, Dr. R. Shama Sastri, Director of Archæological Researches, Mysore, wrote thus: 'When Mr. Rama Rao, Assistant, Mysore Archæological Department, visited the Kesava temple at Belur last year, the Archak named Mutubhatta informed him of the existence of a metallic image of Vishnuvardhana in the *garbhagriha*, unknown to outsiders. It was neither worshipped nor taken out in procession. Mr. Rama Rao prevailed upon the Archak to show the image and allow it to be photographed. When questioned as to the reasons for identifying it with Vishnuvardhana, the Archak referred to a register of the images and other articles of the temple kept in the Taluk

A Brahman made in 1121 A.D. 'a gift of 20 *kalanju* of gold of 9½ fineness for burning daily a twilight lamp, with *ghi* and camphor both morning and evening, in the Vishnu temple at Tirukkannapuram.' The inscription recording this gift goes on to state that he 'presented for the purpose a bronze lamp-stand made after his own image,' and assures us that 'the gift was accepted by the Sri Vaishnavas of the village and those versed in the sacred lore."[1] This gives us an instance of lamps being held in temples not only by figures of females in the form of *dipa-lakshmis*, but also by figures of men.

Disputes having arisen in 1177 A.D. between the trustees of the temple of Kidaramkondan and four private persons in respect of the ownership of a plot of land, the devotees of the God 'rose in a body and charged' them 'with having removed the (boundary) stones' and some persons connected with the temple 'sacrificed their lives by entering fire to attest to the ownership by the temple' of those lands. The land being thereupon decreed to the temple, the false claimants were heavily mulcted, and out of the monies collected from them a sum of 200 *kasu* was used for setting up metallic images of those who had given up their lives, and provision was also made for offerings to to them.[2]

A high relief in the Sathakopa *mandapa* of the famous temple of Srirangam is popularly said to represent the great Tamil poet of the 12th century, Kamban who, according to tradition, recited his version of the *Ramayana* in that hall and obtained the approval of the

Office and said that the image was traditionally handed down from Archak to Archak as that of king Vishnuvardhana. Also he said that for the first time the image was taken out of the dark corner of the *garbhagriha* and shown to an outsider. On examination of the register in the Taluk office at Belur, an entry of a metallic image of Vishnuvardhana among other things was found.'

1 *MER.* 1923 : 509 of 1922

2 *Ib.*, 1925 : 188, 1925 : 1925: 85: 21

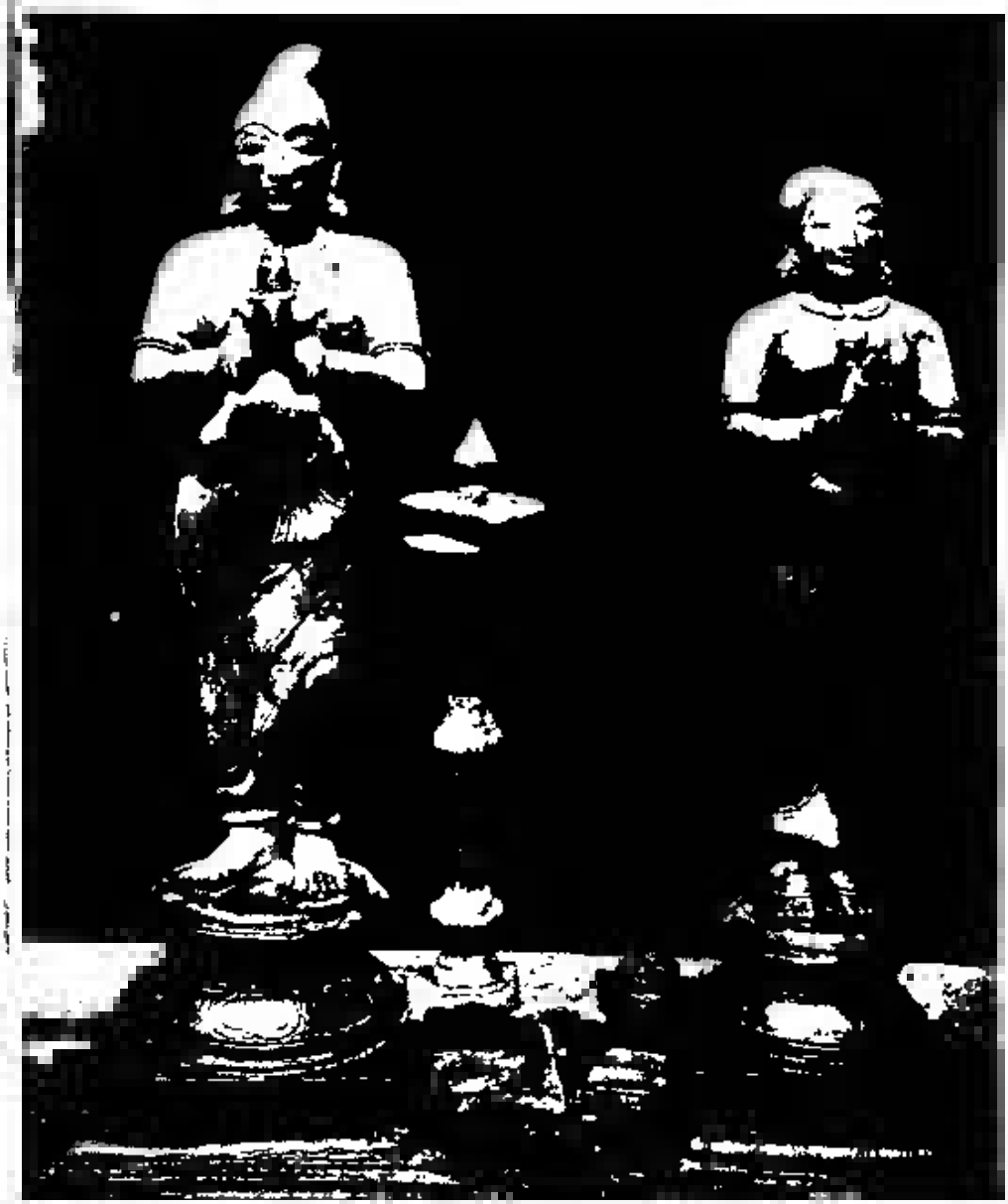

FIG. 13. Pair of bronze figures, Kerran-Adittan and his sister (?) with lamps, on the pedestals, in the Siva temple at Kalahasti
(early 12th century A.D.)

FIG. 14. Statues of King Vishnuvardhana (1104-41 A.D.) and his queen Santale, in the Kesava temple at Belur, Mysore State

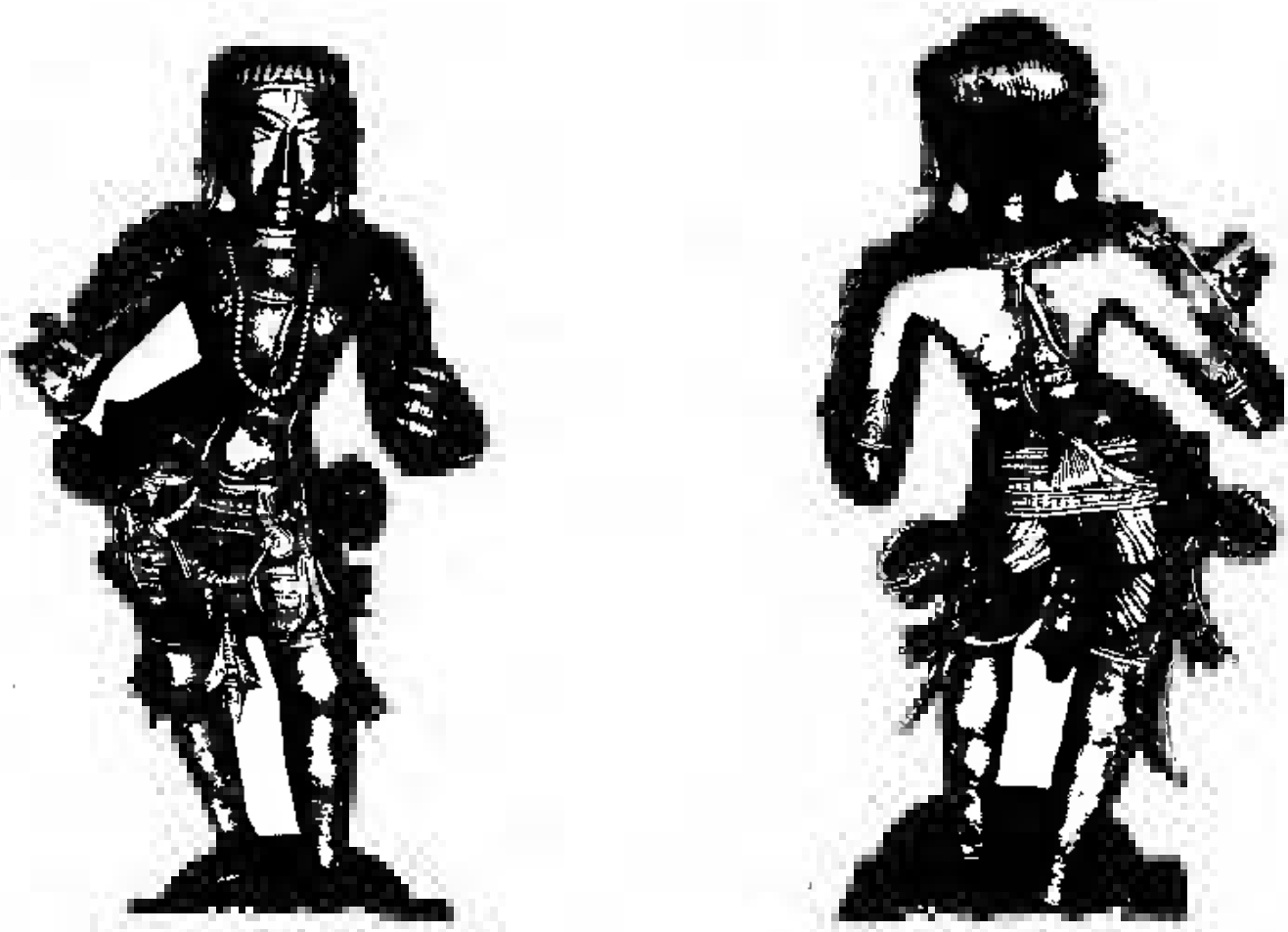

FIG. 15. Metallic Statuette of King Vishnuvardhana (1104–41 A.D.)
in the Kesava temple at Belur, Mysore State

FIG. 16. Bronze statuette of Kulottunga Chola III (1178-1216 A.D.)

FIG. 17. Sculpture of chief, in the Siva temple at Tirumalai, near Ramnad

learned Vaishnavas of the place.

A bronze-statue, over a foot in height, in the Siva temple of Kalahasti, holds a curiously shaped dagger in the right hand [Fig. 16]. The first part of an inscription in the pedestal is a label, 'Kulottunga-sola-devar,' and the second part is a record of the dedication of the image to that temple by one Udaiya-Nambi. If we may rely on palæography and technique and if we are justified in believing that the statue portrays a youth, we may not be wrong in supposing that it represents Kulottunga-Chola III, who ascended the throne in 1178 A.D., when he was sixteen or seventeen years of age.[1]

Beside a sculpture on the wall of the Siva temple at Tiruvidaimarudur, picturing a *linga*, a worshipper, an attendant and a lamp-stand, is an inscription[2] mentioning two names which perhaps were those of the worshipper and the attendant.

In the Siva temple at Tirumalai (near Ramnad) is placed a figure carved in stone [Fig. 17] which is probably to be assigned to this century. That it represents a chief seems to be indisputable, but we are unable to identify him.

Inside the Siva temple at Kurudumale, there stand opposite to the *linga*, three statues which are said to represent the later Chola chief Ilavanji Vasudeva Raja and his consorts. The chief, who belongs to the 13th century, is said to have built or renovated the temple.[3] He wears a beard, and all three figures hold their hands joined in salutation. As sculptures they are not satisfactory, though they are not wanting in expression.

A man is accompanied by his wife and by the

1 *MER.* 1924 : 104 : 20. Kulottunga-Chola I too was young, but not so young, when he came to the Chola throne

2 *Ib.* 1908 : 267 of 1907, referable palæographically to the 12th century A.D.

3 *MysAS.AR.* 1914 : 21 : 33

attendants in a sculptured group in the *mandapa* of the Mallikarjuna temple at Kuruvatti. The sculpture is remarkable for its showing the man in a unique pose, that of reading a palm-leaf book [Fig. 18]. Perhaps the conjecture may be hazarded that he was the king's preceptor, Lokabharana-deva (12th century A.D.), who is known to have been connected with the village and the temple.[1]

A bronze, about two feet in height, recovered as 'treasure trove' at the village of Gandar-kottai, seems to be a statue of a local chief [Fig. 19]. In hands folded in *anjali* he holds a rosary.

Two stone figures at the entrance into the central shrine of the Lakshmi-Narasimha temple at Korukonda, perhaps representing Lakshmi-dasi, a courtezan, and Mummadi-Nayaka, a local chief, seem to have their story told in a long Sanscrit inscription in that temple.[2] 'The temple on the hill came into existence' during this chief's reign, in 1363 A.D., 'under very peculiar circumstances. A Vaishnava teacher, Bhattari, of whom Mummadi was the devoted disciple, told the chief one day that he had reached the last of his human births, and as soon as the mortal frame was given up, he would appear in the form of Lakshmi-Narasimha on the hill at Korukonda. Soon after this revelation the teacher died, and all about his re-birth as God Narasimha was apparently forgotten. A dancing girl of that village saw the teacher in her dream and was told by him of his manifestation on the Parasara-saila. The king, being informed of this, was at once reminded of what the teacher had told him, and permitted the dancing girl to build a temple. She wandered in rags begging for money, pledged her daughter, earned the amount required, built a temple, and consecrated therein

1 *MER.* 1919 : 220 of 1918, see also *EI.* xv. 317

2 *MER.* 1912 : 44 of 1912

FIG. 18. Relief sculpture of Lokaśāsana-deva with palm-leaf book, his consort and three attendants: in the mandapa of the Mallikarjuna temple at Kuruvatti (12th century A.D.)

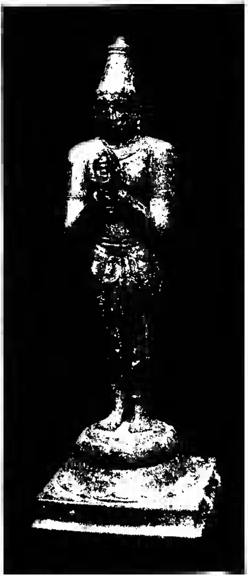

FIG. 19. Bronze statuette of local chief found at Gandar-kottai, South Arcot (now in the Madras Museum)

Fig. 23. Statue (Modern) in Sepulchre at Gorakh-nath *matha* at Kadri

V

MODERN ART

From about the fifteenth century we discern a change in sculptural methods and technique which seems to indicate the early beginnings of modern art.

'On a beam of the tower called Nayudu-mandapa in the middle' of the village of Karempudi, an inscription of 1445 A.D. 'records the erection of the tower by Jivaraksha Timana, son of a Macherla Chennundu, at the spot where Chilama Nayundu planted his spear.' These persons and some others of this family 'are all figured on the beam, some holding spears and others standing in a worshipping posture.'[1] These sculptures are altogether devoid of artistic merit.

'On the wall of what is known as the Penugonda Gate' of the Siva temple at Devarayadurga is sculptured a figure holding a *vina* or lute in the right hand, with a label in characters of about the 15th century, stating that the figure represents the musician Virupanna.'[2] This musician was perhaps attached to the temple.

Standing figures each about a foot in height and wearing a cloak and leaning on a staff are found in the *mandapas* of the Siva temple at Hoskote; these are said to be statues of Tamme Gauda, who built that temple and built the fort of Hoskote about the close of the 15th century.[3] Similar figures are found in other temples such as those at Magadi, Rampura Kempesagara and Vijayanagar (Hampi), and they, are believed to represent generally the builders of the respective temples.[4]

On one of the faces of a tall *garuda-stambha* in the

1 *MER.* 1910 : 555 of 1909; 1910 : 109-10 : 49
2 *MysAS. AR.* 1918 : 3 : 11 3 *Ib.* 1919 : 5 : 17
4 *Ib.* 1915 : 2 : 8, 1915 : 5 : 11, 1918 : 14 : 26.

Vishnu temple at Ummattur is carved 'a male figure, about 3 feet high, standing with folded arms and wearing a garland, a dagger and large ear-rings, which probably represents some Ummattur chief who built or renovated the temple' during the period (about the 16th century) when they held sway over the neighbourhood.[1]

'On the floor of a portion of the temple at Nandi 'are a few prostrating figures with labels over them, one of them representing the Avati chief Bayirappa,' who belonged to the 16th century. 'Similar figures are also found on the *navaranga* floor of the north shrine.'[2]

A copper statue of the renowned Vijayanagara king, Krishna-deva-raya (1509-39 A.D.), is found in the famous temple of Tirumalai where it must have been placed by him in token of his great devotion to the deity of that place. His statue is one of a group of three figures; he stands in the centre, and a queen, Chinna-devi, stands on one side of him, and another queen, Tirumala-devi, stands on the other [Fig. 21]. The identity of each figure is placed beyond doubt by the label incised prominently on a shoulder of each statue. All three statues are made of copper, and are excellent examples of repoussé-work. Each is made in two hollow sections, a frontal and a rear one, put together so as to give the appearance of a solid statue and kept in position by rivets. They are exceedingly well-proportioned without exception and are executed with considerable skill—the workmanship being very delicate in places. The king's statue is about four feet in height, but the statues of the queens have been made to a proportionately smaller scale, in deference, in all probability, to the Indian artistic tradition of figuring

1 *MysAS.AR.* 1917 : 13 : 28.

2 *Ib.* 1914 : 85 : 23 ; *EC.* 10 CB. 27, 28.

FIG. 22. Statue of King Krishna-deva-raya, in the north *gopura* of the Siva temple at Chidambaram

the minor members of a group in a smaller size than that of the principal figure.

With this copper-statue of Krishna-raya we may profitably compare a stone statue in a niche of the northern *gopura* of the famous Siva temple at Chidambaram which is popularly identified as a statue of Krishna-raya [Fig. 22]. This *gopura* and some other portions of the temple seem to have been built by him about the year 1516 A.D.[1] The statue stands a little over a yard in height and appears to greater advantage in the illustration than in its native place.

A subordinate of Krishna-raya says in an inscription in the Siva temple of Srisailam, dated in 1530 A.D., that he built a *mandapa* in front of the bed-room of the god, and presented golden images, and set up standing figures not only of himself and his father-in-law, but also of his master Krishna-raya.[2]

In 1538 A.D. one Ramabhattar-Ayyan made a gift of 6,360 *pon* (gold) for a service instituted by him for the merit of his king, Achyuta-deva-raya, of the Vijayanagar dynasty, in the temple of Kalahasti, and he made a gift of two copper images, one of himself and the other of one Timmaya, so that they might hold lamps before the god. The inscription alone survives;[3] the images have disappeared.

A figure of Bhira-rauthu, son of Mukunda-rauthu, a servant of (Aliya) Rama-raya,[4] with characteristic head-dress and a sword, is pictured in what may be called a line-drawing on a slab on the way to Upper

1 *MER.* 1914 : 98 : 30.

2 *Ib.* 1915 : 14 of 1915.

3 *Ib.* 1924 : 160 of 1924.

4 He died at the battle of Talikota, 1565 A.D. Cousens, in his *Bijapur and its Architectural Remains* (*ASI.IS.*, 37) 9, fig. 4, illustrates a sculptural piece which he says is a likeness of the head of Rama-raya. Father H. Heras, in his *Aravidu Dynasty of Vijayanagara*, i., has accepted this identification. The very narrow forehead, the ugly grin and the *vakra-danta*, or crooked tooth, protruding from either corner of the mouth, are enough to show that the head is merely a piece of sculptural grotesque.

Ahobilam.[1]

Statues of two successors of Krishna-raya, one of them standing by himself, and the other in the company of his consort, are also found in the Tirumalai temple along with the group of Krishna-raya and his queens. These successors of his were also great devotees of the god of Tirumalai and demonstrated their devotion by numerous and costly gifts. The group of a king and queen [Fig. 23] is carved in stone. No names are incised and tradition is silent about their identity, but 'they may represent . . . king Tirumala' (1569-72 A.D.) 'and his queen Vengalamba.'[2] The single statue [Fig. 24] is about 4½ feet in height and is of repoussé work in copper. A name, Venkatapati-raya, being engraved on it, we may take it to be a statue of Venkata I (1586-1614 A.D.), the son of Tirumala.[3] This is undoubtedly a much better piece of work than the Krishna-raya group, and has all the marks of individuality which mark a true portrait.

In the *Pudu-Mandapam*, in front of the famous Sundara temple at Madura, stand ten statues, each of which represents a king of the Nayaka line of Madura. The tradition is that these ten statues were set up at the instance of the king who stands last, Tirumala Nayaka (1623-52 A.D.), when he had this *mandapa* built; but we have no means of ascertaining if tradition speaks true. Each statue is of life-size, and above it is an inscribed label bearing a name.

These ten statues must, strictly speaking, be termed ten groups, for none of these kings stands alone. Each king is only the principal figure of a group, of which the minor members are his queens or favourites, and occasionally, their issue as well. These minor per-

1 *MER.* 1915 : 85 of 1915.

2 *ASIAR.* 1912 : 189 *n.* 3.

3 *MER.* 1904 : 4 : 9; *ASIAR.* 1912 : 189.

FIG. 24. Repoussé copper statue of Venkata I (1586-1614 A.D.), the son of Tirumala : in the Srinivasa-Perumal temple at Tirumalai

FIG. 25. Statue of Tirumma-Nayaka (A.D. 1623-1652) and his queens in the royal groups in the Pudu-Mandapa in front of the Sundara temple at Madura

sonages being carved to a much smaller scale, the principal figure stands out so prominently as almost to absorb all one's attention.

The identity of each statue would stand indisputably established were it not that the inscribed labels, having suffered decay and mutilation, have not been quite adequately deciphered. The physiognomy of the statues is slightly obscured by the paint with which the faces have been daubed: indeed, the statues are painted all over. A few of the statues are painted yellow in the face, in a crude endeavour, perhaps, to indicate the complexion of the subjects. Tradition has it that the practice of painting the statues is as old as the statues themselves.

The statue of Visvanatha stands first, for he was the real founder of this dynasty, and an inscription over his head indicates that he was the first to be 'installed.' The seventh statue, which is the smallest of the ten, is that of Kasturi-Rangappa, whose tenure of the throne seems to have been all too prematurely terminated by his death within eight days of his accession. Next stands the statue of Muttu-Krishnappa (1601-9): he leans so much to one side as to raise a doubt whether one of his legs was not shorter than the other. The ninth is that of his first son, Muttu-Virappa I (*c.* 1609-23), and the tenth [Fig. 25] is that of the second son, the great Tirumala.

When we remember that this line of statues begins appropriately with the founder of the dynasty, and that the statues from the seventh stand ranged in the order in which the respective kings succeeded to the throne, we have to assume that the statues were ranged in the order in which the kings they represent ascended the throne, though a few of the inscriptions and the statues seem to be now found wrongly put together. We may tentatively assume that the second

statue [Fig. 26] is that of Krishnappa I (1564-72), the son of the founder of the line; the third and th fourth are those of his sons Visvanatha II and (Periya) Virappa (1572-95), and the latter's three sons are represented respectively in the fifth, which is that of (Kumara) Krishnappa II *alias* Lingama (1595-1601), in the sixth, which is that of Visvappa, and in the seventh, of which mention has already been made. The king of the eighth statue, it may be pointed out, is the son of the king of the sixth.

A study of this group makes it clear that most, if not all, of the statues were set up in the order in which the kings succeeded each other, that all the statues were set up together and were intended to form a dynastic group, that each statue was itself the principal figure of a family group, that a statue could be set up in the life-time of the subject himself and even for those who had departed this life some three generations before, that the statues, though posed in conventional attitudes, are yet not wanting in the essential characteristics of portraits and that the statues were also painted over in an attempt to make them look life-like.[1] How realistic must have been the scene in the *Pudu-Mandapam* in Tirumala's days when these statues, painted to the life, stood rooted in rapt devotion a little above the common crowd as the images of Sundara and Minakshi, the deities of the temple, were brought in stately procession along the gorgeous nave of the *mandapa* through the throng of the surging multitude!

A group of Tirumala and his queens is placed in the well-known Vishnu temple at Srivilliputtur [Fig. 27], and it deserves to be compared with that at Madura. Another statue in the same temple is said to be a representation of a brother of Tirumala [Fig. 28].

1 A fine study of the statues is contained in the paper of Father H. Heras, S.J., in *QJMS.* xi. 209-18.

FIG. 26. Statue of Krishnappa I (1564–1572 A.D.), in the royal groups in the Puda-Mandapa in front of the Sunda temple at Madura

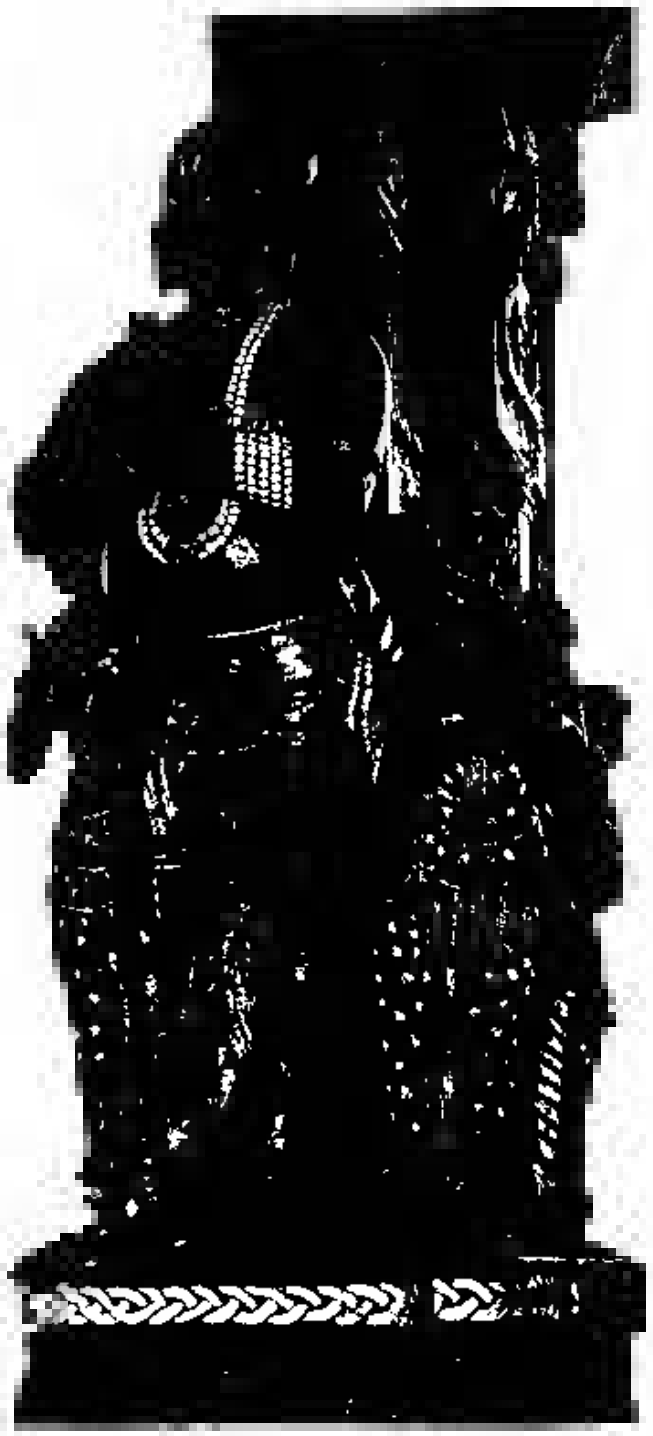

FIG. 27. Tirumala Nayaka and his queens, in the Siva Temple at Srivilliputtur, Ramnad

FIG. 28. Brother of the foregoing with his wives in same temple

FIG. 29. Bronze statue of a king of the Tanjore Nayaka dynasty ; in the Brihad-Isvara temple at Tanjore

FIG. 30. Another king of the Tanjore Nayaka dynasty : in a gallery of royal portrait statues in the Siva temple at Pattisvaram

Statues of Tirumala are found also in the temples at Tirupparankunram and Alagarkoyil, and they too bear close resemblance to the statue in the *Pudu-Mandapam* at Madura.

Within the great temple of Madura there stands a very realistic statue in the usual worshipping attitude, but we have no knowledge of its identity. It is not clear even that it represents a Nayaka; but another figure in the corridor of one of the temple-tank is obviously a member of the Nayaka line, though he has not cared to tell us who he is. Instances of unidentifiable statues in the temples at Madura need not be multiplied.

In the *Pudu-Mandapam* is a figure on horse-back, carved in stone, which is popularly known as a statue of Arya-natha, who helped the first two members of the dynasty of the Nayakas to establish themselves firmly in Madura.

A bronze statue of a Nayaka [Fig. 29] in the Brihad-Isvara temple at Tanjore affords some compensation for the artistic degeneracy of the statue of Rajaraja found in the same temple. Portions of this temple have undergone alterations since the days of Rajaraja I, and attached to some of the pillars near the *nandi-mandapa* are figures of Nayakas. So we may infer that the Nayakas of the bronze and the stone statues were perhaps responsible for some structural alterations in the temple, and were installed in the temple in memory of them.

Govinda Dikshita, a well-known scholar and statesman of the last quarter of the sixteenth and the first quarter of the seventeenth centuries, rebuilt some famous shrines, among which are the Siva (Kumbhesvara) temple at Kumbhakonam, and another temple close by,—that of Siva at Pattisvaram, a place of many historical memories.[1] In the latter temple stand two

1 See my book, *The Kaveri, the Maukharis and the Sangam Age*, 118-22.

stone images,—one of Govinda Dikshita and another of his wife. In the former temple, opposite the shrine of the goddess and just at the end of a row of the canonised Saints of the Tamil Saiva Church, stand a short *linga*, about a foot in height, and the figure of a lady, a yard high,—her hands joined in reverent salutation to the goddess in front of whom she has stationed herself. On enquiry we are told that the *linga* is Govinda Dikshita and that the lady is his wife. Perhaps by the time the renovation of this temple was completed, Govinda Dikshita had passed away, and he was appropriately figured in a *linga* in proof of his having become merged in the Eternal. His wife is represented, not in the garb of a widow, but with all her ornaments, including that jewel of jewels, the *mangalya-sutra*, the badge which indicates that the husband is yet alive. The lady's statue is a fine product of the sculptor's chisel. She stands bold and happy, assured that her husband has become one with the Eternal, and convinced that the goddess of the shrine will, in the fulness of time, vouchsafe to her the grace for which she stands suing.

In a *mandapa* of the Siva temple at Pattisvaram, evidently repaired by Govinda Dikshita, is a gallery of figures which are evidently portrait statues of members of the Tanjore Nayaka dynasty. [Fig. 30]

In the Ramasvami temple at Kumbhakonam, known to have been built by Govinda Dikshita, is a group which is instinct with life. So free is the pose, so vigorous is the attitude, so calm is the expression, and so majestic is the appearance, that the figures would appear to be idealised pictures of men, were it not for their intensely human expression, which stamps them indisputably as portrait statues. In all probability the group shows Ragunatha-Nayaka and his queens.

In the Siva temple on the hills of Sivaganga is a

FIG. 31. Metal statue of the Yalahanka chief, Kempe Gauda (1608), in the Siva temple on the hills of Sivaganga, Mysore State

FIG. 32. Metal statuette of Uligam Basavayya, b[illegible] of the foregoing, in the same temple

group of three statues, each said to represent one of three brothers. One of them is 'a statue of the Yalahanka chief Kempe Gauda with a label on the pedestal' and it 'stands with folded hands in front of the linga cell [Fig. 31]. The figure is about four feet high and the label gives the date 1608 A.D. Another statuette, about 1½ ft. high, also with an inscription on the pedestal, standing to its left . . . . represents Uligam Basavayya [Fig. 32], while a third, about 4½ feet high, standing to its right, without a label and holding a lamp in both the hands, is said to represent Kempe Somanna. It is stated that Uligam Basavayya and Kempe Somanna were Kempe Gauda's brothers. Kempe Gauda is said to have enlarged and liberally endowed the temple.'[1] The severity of the design of the statues of Kempe Gauda and Uligam Basavayya is quite noteworthy, and contributes in no small measure to the artistic excellence of the statues. Fine and vigorous manhood cannot be more faithfully rendered in metal.

On one of the pillars of the Vishnu temple at Melkote is carved 'a bas-relief about 1½ feet high, of the Mysore king Raja-Odayar I (1578-1617 A.D.), standing with folded hands, with the name inscribed on the base. Tradition makes him so great a devotee of the god that on the day of his death he was observed entering the sanctum and was seen no more afterwards.'[2] Another statue of the same king, about 2 feet high, stands in the Lakshminarayana temple at Mysore, and his connection with that temple is established by an inscription which attributes to him the building of one of its towers, and by a tradition which says that so firm was his faith in the god that, when his life was sought by the machinations of his enemies, the god was pleased

1 *Mys.AS.AR.*, 1915 : 11-2 : 18.

2 *Ib.* 1917 : 21 : 44.

to save him by turning into nectar the holy water in which, before serving it to the king as *tirtha-prasada*, the temple priest had, at the instigation of traitors, added poison.[1]

In striking contrast to the severely simple statues of the Kempe Gauda group is the over-tooled bronze of another Mysore king, Kanthirava-Narasa-Odeyar (1638-59 A.D.), found in a temple which he built to Narasimha at Seringapatam. It stands somewhat over a yard high, and wears a robe extravagantly chased and a head-dress elaborately ornamented. None the less the statue seems to have 'a life-like majestic appearance.'[2] But the face swells with pretention, the arms are thrust out ostentatiously, the hands are joined in salutation with frigid firmness, and the posing of the figure is despicable. A good portrait the bronze may be, but it is certainly no work of art. Another statue of the same king is placed in the Trinesvara temple in the fort of Mysore along with a statue of his successor, Doddadeva-Raja-Odeyar (1659-72 A.D.).[3]

A group of statues in the central corridor of the famous temple of Ramesvaram represents chiefs of the Setupati dynasty, who have had the control of that temple for some centuries past. One of the most life-like statues is that of Vijaya-Raghunatha. Indeed, these Setupatis have held themselves the special guardians of the temple, which is one of the most sacred of the shrines associated with the hero of the *Ramayana*. This corridor is indeed a gallery of statues, modelled on the yet more famous gallery at Madura, the imitation being certainly due to the Setupatis having been the vassals of the Madura Nayakas. Some other statues ranged opposite those of the chiefs seem to be representations of their ministers or *divans*.[4]

1 *Ib.*, 1920 : 3 : 10.
2 *Ib.*, 1916 : 28 : 35. 3 *Ib.*, 1916 : 27 : 35.
4 Fergusson and Burgess, *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture*, i. 384.

These statues do not depart in essentials from the normal type of figures standing with hands joined in salutation, and all of them seem to show on the sculptor's part equal ability in evoking from the stone poses as vigorous as we find in the statues at Madura.

A group of portrait statues is found in the corridors of the Siva temple at Tinnevelly, and they seem to represent chiefs who, under the title of *Karttakkal* or 'Agents,' ruled over that part of the country, owing a light feudal allegiance to the Madura Nayakas and, through them, to the Vijayanagara emperors. This corridor of statues is perhaps an imitation of the great gallery at Madura.

A similar group of ten statues is found in the *Garuda-mandapa* of the great Ranganatha temple at Srirangam. They seem to be effigies of Nayakas of the Madura line, but, owing to the absence of inscriptions and even of reliable traditions, and to the sculptures being disfigured with thick coats of white-wash, we are not able to say positively whom they represent.

On a wall of the *gopura* of the Vishnu temple at Tirupati are found seven carvings, below which is engraved an inscription of the seventeenth century A.D. saying that they are a 'family group' of a Maha-mandalesvara, Matla Ananta-rajayya, (son of a Tiruvengalanatha-rajayya, a Choda Maharaja), by whom the *gopura* was built[1]. In the same place are also found other images, which, according to another inscription, seem to be likenesses of the Tiruvengalanatha-rajayya above-mentioned and of his wife[2].

The Vishnu temples of Conjeevaram and Tirumalai have each a group of bronze statues, the central figure in each of which must have been Lala Todar-Mall. An annual festival in the Conjeevaram temple

1 *MER.* 1917 : 764 of 1916, and *EI.* xvi. 245-6. 2 *MER.* 1917. : 763 of 1916.

preserves an historical episode,—the southern expedition of Aurungzebe, about 1688 A.D., causing fright to the temple authorities of Conjeevaram, their removing the image to Udaiyarpalaiyam, some 200 miles to the south, where it was placed safe under the protection of the local chief, his refusal on the subsidence of the panic to allow its removal back to Conjeevaram, and its rescue from his hands by Lala Todar-Mall who, at the instance of his preceptor, Attan-Jiyar, advanced against him in 1710 A.D. with a strong contingent, terrorised him into compliance and brought the image safely back to Conjeevaram. This Todar-Mall was the general of the Nawab of the Carnatic, Saadat-Ullah-Khan. The three metal statues in the Conjeevaram temple are traditionally known as those of Todar-Mall and his father and mother, but they bear no labels.[1] At Tirumalai, too, this general seems to have been able to secure a footing, though we do not know how. Of the four statues of metal which seem to have been placed originally in the temple at Tirumalai, one has disappeared and two are badly mutilated. The one that has disappeared is said to be Todar-Mall's: his name is understood to have been engraved on the shoulder. The only statue in a good state of preservation is that of Khema-Ram, who is said to be the father of Todar-Mall. On the other statues of this group are engraved respectively the names Mata Mohana De and Pita Bi [Fig. 33].[2]

Tradition has a story to tell, as piquant as it is tragic, of how Mangammal, queen of the Nayakaline of Madura (1689-1706 A.D.), had a guilty passion in the days of her widowhood for a young man who was

1 *MER.* 1920 : 121-3 : 64-5, 1921 : 9 : 4. In *Ib.*, 1924: 4: 9, however, the statues are said to be those of Todar-Mall and his two wives, but again, on p. 84, they are said to be statues of Todar-Mall, his father and mother.

2 See *MER.* 1913 : 5 : 5 and *MysAS.AR.* 1920 : 17 : 34. The notes furnished by the Madras Epigraphists in their reports show how perfunctorily they studied the statues at both places. The inscription on the shoulder of the statue of Pita Bi adds that she was the wife of Todar-Mall.

FIG. 33. Todar-Mall group: Bronze statues: at Tirumalai (early 18th century A.D.)

her minister; how, impelled as much by her own love of power as by the evil council of her paramour, she refused to hand over the reins of sovereignty to Vijayaranga-Chokkanatha, her grandson, when he came of age; and how a justly enraged public pulled her from the throne and pushed her into a dungeon and starved her to death, subjecting her to a variant of the curse to which Tantalus was condemned, finely flavoured food being placed within reach of sight and smell, but beyond reach of the hand. In confirmation of the story, tradition points to a picture painted in the ceiling of a corridor running around the 'Golden Lily Tank' of the temple of Sundara at Madura, in which on one side of a representation of the 'Wedding of Sundara' stands queen Mangammal, attended by her grandson, Vijayaranga Chokkanatha, while on the other stands a person who seems to be a high dignitary of state. Tradition lays malicious stress on the queen appearing bedecked in jewels and finery utterly inappropriate to her unfortunate condition of widowhood, calls attention to the youth and the comeliness of the minister, and adds that a piece of sculpture in the corridor is a portrait of the young minister who had made the queen the slave of his passion and the tool of his ambition. The features of the statue answer indeed to those of the minister's portrait in colours in the ceiling, but no further circumstances are known that vouch for the accuracy of the tale. A label beside the painted portrait of the minister calls him (Dalavay) Ramappayya, but we have now no knowledge of a person of that name having been Minakshi's minister; we know only that Narasappayya and Achchayya were her ministers, the latter being the person in office at the time when the queen's affair of the heart may have culminated in the tragic dénouement of which tradition speaks with high relish.[1]

1 R. Satyanathan, *History of the Nayaks of Madura*, 124-5, 220-1, 237.

The label may have undergone alteration,—a painter may, in repainting the scene, have ignorantly amended the label by substituting Ramappayya's name, famous in the history of the Madura line, for that of Achchayya, or the minister may have been a Ramappayya later and less renowned than his famous namesake, or the story may be altogether false; or, again, tradition may have got the correct facts but have taken hold of the wrong evidence, and assigned a romantic reason for the minister being in attendance on the queen. No practice is better established than that of a Hindu sovereign being attended by his minister when engaged in worship, and Mangammal's minister was merely discharging the duties of his office in accompanying her on an occasion when she attended the festival of 'Sundara's Wedding.'

In the north-west corner of the second circuit of the Vishnu temple at Srirangam there stand two pairs of statues. The first pair represents Vijayaranga-Chokkanatha Nayaka of the Madura line (1704-31 A.D.) and his queen; and the second pair represents a brother of Vijayaranga-Chokkanatha and the wife of that brother. They hold their hands out as if they were plying fly-whisks before the idols of the deities of the temple. The statues are made of a core of sandal-wood which is coated with ivory, and so excellent is the workmanship that it is difficult to discern the joints.

'In the Sthanunathav-samin temple at Suchindram there are two stone statues of a king and a prince [Fig. 34]. The tradition connected with them is that they represent Ramavarman and his nephew. It is not unlikely that one of them, the bigger of the two, represents Bala Ramavarman, who . . was in the place, when the Cochin Raja vowed before the god that he and his successors would not undertake any wars against the Travancore king and his successors. He holds in

FIG. 34. Statue of King Bala-Ramavarman and prince : in the Sthanunathav-samin temple at Suchindram, Travancore State (18th century A.D.)

the right hand an uplifted sword, and the left holds the the handle of the scabbard, whose point is directed downwards. The statue to the proper left of the above is in most respects similar to it. The head-dress is different, the right leg is bereft of *vira-kalalai*, and the hands are held in worshipping attitude (*anjali-hasta*). It is not improbable that it represents the crown prince."[1] Both uncle and nephew bore the name Bala-Rama-varman, the uncle being the reigning king, and the nephew, according to Malabar custom, being the Crown Prince. The uncle was on the throne in 1761 A.D.[2] The two statues cannot be considered very fine pieces of work, if we may judge merely from the pose, but the marked individuality of each piece suggests that it is not unlikely that both are real portraits.

Perhaps at the close of the 18th century one Vijayarayar repaired the temple at Senganmal and had a relief in his own likeness carved on one of its walls.[3]

Two statues exist of Sarabhoji (1798–1833 A.D.), the Mahoratha king of Tanjore,—one of marble in the durbar hall of the Tanjore palace, and another of bronze, in the Chakrapani temple of Kumbhakonam. The former was executed by the famous English sculptor, Chantrey, perhaps from portraits given to him by Sarabhoji's English friends. This statue presents the king in the normal attitude of adoration,—hands joined in *anjali*,—though it must have been intended to be set up in the 'Audience Hall.' In the other statue he appears leaner and lankier, and his robe fits his person closely; we do not know who was the sculptor but the technique is purely European.

We have also a relievo-panel of Sarabhoji paying

1 *TrAS.* iv. 112–3

2 There is a doubt whether the statues do not represent earlier members of the Travancore royal line, the bigger statue being considered that of king Ramavarman who ruled about 1700–1725 A.D.

3 *MER.* 1916 : 224 of 1916

a visit to Schwartz, the famous German missionary who was his friend, tutor, champion and even philosopher, when Schwartz lay dying. This panel, executed by Flaxman, is one of the treasures of the principal Christian church at Tanjore.

A rude sculptural representation of Lionel Place, Collector of Chingleput, in the very early years of the last century, was placed in the Vishnu temple of Maḍurantakam in gratitude for his having saved the town from being washed away by the waters of the huge tank on its confines on an occasion when an over-bounteous monsoon had filled the tank with more water than its banks could endure.

A Collector of the Salem district, Davis by name, having made a contribution towards the execution of a pillar in a *mandapa* of the Siva temple at Tiruchengodu, in 1823 A.D., 'a figure with hat and a walking stick is carved on one side of the pillar.'[1]

These relievos and statues do not by any means exhaust the sculptures in the south of India which fall into the category of portraits, but they form a representative collection exhibiting adequately the varieties of material, mode and *motif*. Examples could be multiplied indefinitely. At Madura itself, in its numerous shrines and their appendages, we find statues of various persons whose identity is now unascertainable. The Vishnu temple at Mannargudi for instance, contains some twenty statues, in every part of the temple from the outer *mandapa* to the halls immediately before the *sanctum sanctorum*, in relief or in the round, free or engaged to a pillar, most of them being about a yard or less in height, but not one is of any merit or significance; the only group of any interest stands in the hall just before the principal shrine, and is shown special honour at festivals.

1 *ASI.S.AR.* 1918 : 16

VI

SAINTS AND PRECEPTORS

Mention, but no more than mention, has to be made of another class of sculptures of which specimens fill practically every south Indian temple to Vishnu or Siva. In the Tamil country every Siva temple contains a set of sixty-three images representing the sixty-three *Nayanmar* or Saints of Tamil Saivism, and every Vishnu temple contains a group of sculptures of the *Alvars* or the Saints and the *Acharyas* or the Preceptors of Tamil Vaishnavism. These images are certainly considered portraits by the pious, but a study of any two sets of images makes it palpable that, though portraiture may have been intended it was not achieved, except occasionally in the case of the image of so eminent a personality as Ramanuja. A posture or a symbol was originally associated with each saint, and every generation of sculptors has followed the convention without attempting to give to each figure an individual expression. The Alvars, the Acharyas, and the Nayanmar are not portrayed in these sculptures with any greater fidelity to historic truth than the Buddha or the Bodhisattvas are represented in the numberless paintings or carvings of Buddhist art, or the Tirthankaras in Jain art, or the Lamas by Tibetan artists, or the Madonna of the Christians.

Certain sculptures of Vaishnava Acharyas are attested by tradition and by chronicles to be real portraits, and mention may therefore be made of them. The chronicles further give very interesting accounts of how images of the outstanding religious preceptors came to be set up.

Ramanuja, the greatest of the preceptors of Vaish-

navism (1018-1138 A.D.), allowed images of himself to be installed in his own life-time. One of the hagiologists says that Ramanuja, having renovated a great Vishnu temple at Tirunarayanapuram (Melkote) during a long sojourn in Mysore, was about to return to Srirangam, when his disciples represented to him in moving terms how greatly they would feel the separation. Thereupon, Ramanuja had an image of himself created,[1] and he established in it his powers (*sakti*) and handed it over to his disciples for their worship. According to the same hagiologist, when Ramanuja, years later, had become so old as to make his following apprehend that he might not long survive, the disciples prayed him that for their benefit and for the benefit of posterity he would allow an image of himself to be set up at Sriperumbudur, his birth-place. On his granting permission, a sculptor cast an image and brought it before him, and he thereupon approved of it and embraced it hard so that it might glow with every power (*sakti*) of his. It was then taken to Sriperumbudur, and installed there, along with a *mula-vigraha*, on a day appointed by Ramanuja himself. The chronicle adds that Ramanuja, having one day found himself suddenly so weak as to feel that his end was quite at hand, asked what day of the year it was, and in reply was told that it was the very day he had appointed for the consecration of the images at Sriperumbudur, some three hundred miles away.[2] The hagiologist evidently intended to suggest that the consecration of the images was the cause of the weakness felt by Ramanuja. It is said also that within a few days of his death an image of him was set up at Srirangam.[3]

1 The passage may also mean that he created the image himself.

2 Pinbu-Alagiya-Perumal-Jiyar, *Guru-paramparo-prabhavam (6000-padi)*.

3 *Ib.* But some of the mss. of this work do not contain this piece of information.

Another hagiologist[1] confirms the account of Ramanuja permitting an image of himself to be set up at Melkote, but gives a different version of his allowing images to be set up when he was approaching the end of his life. According to this, Ramanuja having been persuaded that he would be helping his doctrine to spread and flourish if he permitted images of himself to be set up, three images, evidently of metal, were shortly after brought before him, and he thereupon embraced them and directed them to be placed severally at Srirangam, Sriperumbudur and Tirunarayanapuram (Melkote), and he further permitted his image to be installed in every place where his followers were found. Accordingly, on his death, three images were installed in the three places as directed by him, and other images were set up in other Vaishnava centres.[2]

Tradition says that the shrine of Ramanuja at Srirangam has been reared on the spot where he was interred, that the *mula-vigraha* is placed right above his remains, and that this *vigraha* is fashioned out of clay, red-earth, and the ochre-coloured garment worn by him in his last days; even now the cloth is clearly discernible.

A figure of brick and mortar in the third floor of the Vishnu temple at Tirukkoshtiyur is said to be an image of this Acharya. He had his spiritual initiation from his *guru* at this place, but, feeling that the injunction to keep the teaching secret and to impart it to only the elect was wholly unjustifiable and would prevent the gospel reaching the sinful among men, he chose deliberately to break the injunction, mounted the temple and, placing himself at a coign of vantage, proclaimed the sacred teaching to all who would hearken. It is at this spot, marking one of the most

1 Tritiya-Brahma-tantra-sva-tantra-svami, *Guru-paramparа-prabhavam (3000-padi)*.

2 See *Ib.* According to this writer, the image first set up at Tirunarayanapuram was a *mula-vigraha*. He makes it appear also that a *mula-vigraha* was installed along with the metal statue which was set up at Srirangam with Ramanuja's approval. For yet another version, see the *Koyil-Olugu*.

significant events in his career, that, according to popular account, this image stands.[1] Even if this figure had been placed there in Ramanuja's life-time, we may take it that it could not long have retained its character as a portrait, for the bricklayer must have retouched the image whenever brick and mortar mouldered away.

A statue of another great Vaishnava preceptor, Vedanta Desika, is said to have been made in very interesting circumstances. He bore the title *sarva-tantra-sva-tantra*, and justified it by the versatility of his attainments. A short while before his death he was challenged by a sculptor to maintain that title by making an image of himself. That night Desikà was instructed in a dream by God to fashion the image in a sitting attitude, the right hand formed in the *jnana-mudra* and the left holding a book. In the morning Desika sent for the presumptuous sculptor, and in his presence modelled the image in wax and then made from it a metal cast. The sculptor was astonished at the remarkable success with which Desika reproduced his own features and figure. His surprise was all the greater when, on his attempting to scrape off with his chisel a little of the metal which he fancied was a trifle superfluous on the cheek, the statue began bleeding at the place where the chisel had grazed it; the sculptor was quite convinced that Desika had performed the difficult task of judging his own features with an accuracy which professed sculptors could not pretend to. Desika had the statue covered up and stowed away, for the reason that it represented him all too faithfully in every limb and in every part. Not content with this display of his ability as a practical sculptor, Desika furnished further proof of his remarkable attainments in the art by producing a treatise on sculpture. An image of him was installed in the

1 *MER.* 1924 : 2 : 5. See also Garuda-vahana-pandita's *Divya-suri-charita*.

temple of Srirangam immediately after his death. Some time later, it is said, the deity of Srirangam directed that statues of none of the preceptors who came after Desika should be set up in that temple.[1]

Manavala-maha-muni, a third great Vaishnava preceptor, permitted statues of himself to be set up in his last days; he handed over to his disciples a copper vessel which he was accustomed to use, and they utilized it for making two statues of him.[2]

In one of the other Vaishnava chronicles[3] we have a story of how a Pandya king, Jatavarman Sundara-Pandya I (*c.* 1261 A.D.), enlarged greatly the temple at Srirangam and made gifts of jewels to the god, spending 36 *lakhs* of *pon* (gold pieces), and how the temple authorities refused to grant his request that he might set up a statue of himself in the temple. Why this request met with refusal is more than we can now attempt to explain, especially as the chronicle is silent on that head.

This chronicle proceeds to state that the famous Vaishnava saint, Tiru-Mangai-Alvar, a personality of much earlier times, built a shrine in the temple of Srirangam and had a *mula-bera* and an *utsava-vigraha* of himself installed.

The same chronicle says elsewhere that in 1512 A.D. likenesses were carved and set up, and inscriptions incised, in memory of two *jiyars* and some *ekangis* who, some twenty years earlier, as a protest against the exactions and persecutions of a chieftain, Koneri-rayan, had committed suicide by throwing themselves from the *gopura* of the temple.

In one of the minor shrines of the Arulala-Perumal temple at Conjeeveram we have an image of Lakshmi-Kumara-Tatacharya, the great *guru* of Venkata I of

1 All the information above is derived from the work of the latter of the two hagiologists mentioned above.

2 Pillai-Lokarya-Jiyar, *Yatindra-pravana-prabhavam*. 3 *Koyil-Olugu*.

the Vijayanagara line, but we have no warrant for believing that it is a likeness, or was set up either in his own life-time or shortly after. To one who is curious to know how he deserves a place in this temple the answer is plainly written in the numerous inscriptions on its walls, which make mention of his attainments and achievements and the innumerable ways in which he was of service to the temple.[1]

Opposite the shrine of the goddess in the Vishnu (Sarangapani) temple at Kumbhakonam is a niche in which is placed a figure which is said to represent a certain Lakshmi-Kumara-Tatacharya. We do not know for certain if this person is identical with the *guru* mentioned above, but it is not improbable, for the former calls himself 'Lakshmi-Kumara-Tatacharya of Kanchipuram and Kumbhakonam.'[2] This tiny shrine is under the contol of some persons who are evidently among his descendants, and *naivedya* is offered by them to the image every day.[3]

1 See, for instance, *MER.* 1920 : 115-6 : 51,

2 See, for instance, *MER.* 1920 : 531 of 1919

3 There is another tradition that the image represents one Lakshmi-Narasimha-svami of Mysore who, to get cured of stomach-ache, propitiated the god of the temple by renovating portions of it.

VII

MATERIAL, METHOD AND MOTIF

Most of the portrait sculptures in south India are found in temples or *stupas* or in places closely associated with them,—such as corridors or *mandapas*. We cannot indeed point to more than a few instances of sculptures of this class being found in a place not a *stupa* or a temple. One of them is the slab (found along the road leading to Upper Ahobilam) on which Bhira-Rauthu is figured in a simple line-sketch : it must have been set up on the road almost as a mile-stone marking a stage in a devotee's pilgrimage in the flesh and in the spirit to the shrine up the hill. The image of Devasena at Vallimalai is carved on the face of a rock. The effigy of Gorakh-Nath was placed on his tomb in the graveyard of his *matha*. The stone on which the Vidya-rasi group is carved was found on the bank of a tank.

Some of these sculptures are placed in the gate-ways of temples, some are carved in relief on the outer walls of shrines, some on either side of the entrance into them and two may have been placed in the sanctuary itself. We have to infer that the stone sculpture of Mahendravarman in the Trichinopoly cave-temple was installed in the sanctury and it seems probable that the group of Rajaraja and his queen Loka-maha-devi was placed in the sanctuary of the temple at Tanjore, but we cannot cite further instances. The more usual practice was to place them in niches adjacent to the shrines, or in embrasures which sometimes look miniature shrines.

That at the present day these sculptures are found almost exclusively in temples must be due to the circumstance that temples are the only ancient monuments which have survived to us. How varied might have been the types of these sculptures had other classes of ancient buildings survived is established by the discovery of the statue of Kanishka and its *devakula* or statue-house, and by the discovery of portraits in the remains of the *stupa* of Amaravati. Even the *debris* which covered the ruins at Mathura served a good purpose, that of preserving for the archæologist and for posterity the vestiges of a structure the like of which have utterly perished elsewhere through lack of even such ignoble protection. The *devagadhs* of Rajputana seem to have caught up in mediæval times the ancient tradition of which the only surviving evidence is the ruined Kushan *devakula*. They are not temples, but are, if the term may be used loosely, mausoleums. The disappearance of other varieties of 'statue-houses' and our ignorance of those types of portrait-sculpture which may have been appropriate to such varieties make it impossible for us to be positive on any aspect of this branch of art.

The statues are made in almost every variety of material. Stone is the commonest material, but brick and mortar are not uncommon. Ramanuja's effigy over his sepulchre seems to be made of clay, red-earth and cloth. We have a set of statues carved in sandal-wood and veneered over with ivory. Those of metal are generally cast in what is technically called *pancha-loham* (an alloy of five metals), but we know also of images of bronze and copper.

Statues of stone are naturally the more numerous. They are generally carved out of the stones available in the locality. Portrait-sculptors, like the sculptors who fashioned the images of gods and goddesses, were content

with the material collected by the architect to build the temple with. Marble and other varieties of stone capable of receiving a high degree of polish do not seem to have been at all made use of, except at Amaravati, where marble was used, evidently because the *stupa* was finished in that material. Nor do the sculptors seem to have attempted to impart to the sculptures even that little polish which the stones were capable of taking. The ancient practice of laying a thin coat of lime on the surface of the sculptured stone does not explain why the sculptures were not polished; for, the practice was not generally observed even when the sculptures were set up in sheltered places, and could not have been observed where the places were in the open, as in the *mandapas* and the outer walls of temples, or were carved on the faces of rocks exposed to sun and rain.

The Simhavishnu and Mahendravarman relievos at Mahabalipuram show traces of a thin coat of plaster having been applied over the carving on stone; perhaps they were painted over suitably. The statues of the Madura Nayakas are painted to show the complexion of the subjects and to display the magnificence of the dress and the splendour of the ornaments, but the painting is now done so crudely that the statues are rendered despicable. The plastering and painting of stone images is an ancient Indian practice, which, however, in south India is still practised only in the portrait gallery at Madura.

The stone sculptures which we now have are of various degrees of fullness and finish. The line engraving of Bhira-Rauthu, the Pallava relievos at Mahabalipuram, which are generally of life size, the small and almost insignificant figures jutting out of pillars in the *mukha-mandapas* of Mysore temples, the crude piece of stone which does duty for Mr. Place at Madhurantakam, but

might almost be a palæolith, the statues fully in the round such as the free sitting statue of the anonymous Chola who chose a contemplative attitude, perhaps in relaxation from the cares of sovereignty, the quarter-size statue of Krishna-raya at Chidambaram and the greater than life-size figures of a devotee at Amaravati or of the Nayakas in the *Pudu-Mandapam* at Madura,—these are enough to give an idea of the extraordinary variation in size, in quality and in technique. The sculptor who at Amaravati carved the devotee's statue to a scale greater than nature's realised that beside, or in, a *stupa* a statue of average human height would stand dwarfed.

While the stone portraits are of all degrees of fullness, proportion and finish, the metallic ones are in the round and are cast at least to a fourth of the human height and are almost always of excellent quality. The earliest portrait statues of metal that we have knowledge of do not seem to be much earlier than the days of Rajaraja I. The statues of that king and of his wife and of Parantaka II and of his queen and of the priest who then officiated in that temple, all which were placed in the great temple of Tanjore by the end of the first third of the 11th century A.D., must have been of excellent workmanship, if we may judge from the quality of the icons of divinities set up in that temple by Rajaraja himself. The bronze of Sola-ma-devi at Kalahasti is of high quality, and the bronzes of the Chola captain, Kettan Adittan, and his sister, installed in the same temple about 1120 A.D., are of equal excellence. The freedom of pose and the vigour of execution which they exhibit furnish proof of the confidence with which the metal workers of those days undertook portraits in bronze. It is superfluous to recount the merits of each of the other portrait-bronzes which we have described. The group of Krishna-

Raya and the statue of Venkata at Tirumalai are the only known examples of repoussé work. Generally executed in half the human size and sometimes, as in the case of the Kempe-Gauda group at Sivaganga or the Todar-Mall group at Conjeevaram, approaching the full human figure in proportions, the statues in metal are of distinguished appearance and of almost uniform quality. None of them could be pronounced insignificant, though we may have to except the pseudo-Rajaraja and the Seringapatam bronze of Kanthirava, both of which are artisically contemptible. No higher testimony to the artistic genius of the south Indian craftsman could be found than the fact that among a score of metallic statues belonging to some eight centuries not more than two could be pronounced to have fallen short of excellence.

Many of the statues, whether of stone or metal, are individual figures, but some are only individuals in a group. Usually the group is one of a husband and his wife or wives, but we know of a group of brother and sister,[1] a group of three brothers,[2] two groups of father and son,[3] a group of a king and the heir-apparent, who was not the king's son but nephew,[4] and two groups of a nobleman and his relatives,[5] and another group of devotees who gave up their lives for securing to their god the land that had been his.[6] We have even a group of a man and a woman who are not known to be in anyway connected with each other, except perhaps as joint builders of a part of a temple.[7] We have groups of kings or chiefs of a dynasty as at Madura, Pattisvaram, Tinnevelly and Srirangam, and a group of

1 The Chola captain rnd his sister
2 The Kempe Gauda group
3 Simhavishnu and Mahendra: Kanthirava and Dodda-deva
4 At Suchindram
5 The Todar-Mall groups at Tirumalai and Conjeeveram.
6 At Kidaramkondan
7 One of the relievos at Tiruvadutural

chiefs and their ministers at Ramesvaram.[1] Occasionally, as in the case of one or two of the Nayakas of Madura, the group includes perhaps a son or even a daughter, and in the case of Tirumala Nayaka we have, in a frieze on the pedestal, an appreciable part of the population of his harem.

Where statues of a number of kings of one dynasty are set up together, they are arranged in order of succession.

It is not uncommon for a number of such groups to be set up together so as to form a grand group. The group of Simhavishnu and of his queens is situated opposite the group of Mahendravarman and his queens, and the two groups, together with a few other groups, form one major group of striking appearance. Similar major groups are the collections of Vijayanagara kings at Tirumalai and of the Nayakas at Srirangam, Pattisvaram and Madura. The full-length statues in the shrines of the Ramesvaram temple and the corridors of the Tinnevelly temple and the grand group of the Nayakas at Madura are of great importance to the student of sculpture, for they show how portraiture can be made an integral feature of architecture; these statues and groups, in spite of their individual grandeur, sink into subdued magnificence in their setting as parts of huge pillars in *mandapas* of generous proportions. The sculptor who would design statues and sculptural groups, and the architect who would dispose the groups to effective architectural purpose, may each learn a good portion of his art from a close study of the galleries of Madura, Ramesvaram, Tinnevelly, and Srirangam. Equally instructive would the study be to the sculptor who would carve single or detached statues, for the sculptors did not consider the statues as

1 Just as in north India we find groups of a king and his ministers, like the Vana-raja group at Unhilpur, and that of a nobleman and his *diwan* at Mount Abu.

mere addenda to, or excrescences upon, architectural pillars, but looked at them as individual works of art and bestowed on them all the skill of which they were capable.

Most of these figures are in the standing attitude, and only a few are seated. Gandar-Aditya, Soma-siva-acharya and the anonymous king at Nandi are seated on the floor. Simhavishnu is seated on a tripod; the lady famous for her mastery of the *sastras* sits on a bench; the Buddha-like figure at Badami occupies a lion-throne. Even among the north Indian statues mentioned already, only one of the Kushans and one of the Sisunagas and a few of the Nepalese kings are represented in a sitting posture. The seated posture was obviously considered appropriate to the learned and the saintly.

Many are the sculptures carved on the stony floors of temples, showing a worshipper lying prone, with his head turned towards the deity and his hands stretched above his head and joined in *anjali*, just as if he were prostrating himself in worship. These figures furnish only the rear-view of the devotees and are valueless for a study of portraiture. Equestrian figures, such as that of Arya-natha, are very rare, and may have been set up to commemorate warriors. We know of only a few examples, all in Mysore, of a person being shown leaning on a staff; probably these represent members of a particular group or sect.

Only in the bronzes of Sembiyan-ma-devi, Sota-ma-devi and Vishnuvardhana did the sculptors pose the subject with a freedom not usually conferred on the devotee.

The most common mode of disposing the hands of the statues, joining them in *anjali* or salutation, is certainly due to the statues being generally located in temples, but we have a unique example, at Tanjore, of a king, Sarabhoji, standing with hands joined in salu-

tation, not in a temple, but in his Hall of Audience. The devotee's statue at Amaravati holds some lotus-buds in its hands, which are joined in worship,[1] and the bronze of Sola-ma-devi holds a flower between its fingers. Between the folded palms of the bronze of the chieftain-devotee found at Gandar-kottai we find a rosary of a few beads.

In the Pallava portrait-relievos the principal figures generally point with the right hand towards the sanctuary and they occasionally lead their companions with the left. The builder of a *mandapa* in the Tiruvisalur temple stretches forth his hands in silent solicitation of boons. The statues of the Vijayaranga-Chokkanatha group at Srirangam stand as if they were plying the fly-whisk in the presence of the deity. While the Nayaka king at Kumbhakonam has devotion enough to keep his sword sheathed, the king at Suchindram, mindful of being the guardian of the god and the temple, has drawn his sword from the scabbard and holds it aloft in warning to the evil-minded ; so too does Kulottunga III display his dagger. Sami-Nirmadi, the learned lady of Karubele, and Lokabharana, the *raja-guru* of Kuruvatti, hold palm-leaf books.

Three statues demand attention for the exceptional treatment of the hands. Simhavishnu's right hand is in the *chin-mudra*, and his queens stand listening to him. Simhavishnu's seated posture, the serenity of his countenance, the *chin-mudra* and the listening attitude of his queens, seem to suggest that he is expounding to his queens some of the eternal verities and that they are listening to him in rapt attention. The statue at Nandi, which according to tradition represents a Chola king, shows him seated and with the *chin-mudra*. The bronze statue of Vishnuvardhana gives him also the same *mudra*. Builders of temples, whether royal or

1 For a similar use of the lotus, see *ASI.W.AR.*, 1904 : 30 : 81.

common, not being normally installed in the seated form in the temples which they built, and it being rarer still for them to affect the *chin-mudra*, we may indulge a suspicion that there were circumstances in the lives of these kings justifying the *mudra*; but we are not able now to discover what those circumstances may have been,—not even in the case of Vishnuvardhana. The appropriateness of these *mudras* for these figures cannot be now pronounced upon, no means being available to us of ascertaining if or how the subjects of the portraits deserved them.

Men and women of every grade of society are subjects of portraiture. Kings are common and ministers not rare. The Chola captain comes from the army, and Lakshmi-Dasi comes from the ranks of courtezans. Shrines are raised over images of religious preceptors like Ramanuja, and niches are found for a temple musician playing a *vina* and for the reciters of 'Sacred Decads.'

The catholicism of which Brahmanism is capable is illustrated by the figures of two Europeans, Place and Davis, being allowed to be set up in temples.

The sculptures are often given labels containing the names of the persons represented, the earliest known instances being that of Kanishka in north India (if we omit the other Kushans and the Sisunagas), those of the Nanaghat group in the Dekkhan, and those of Simhavishnu and Mahendravarman at Mahabalipuram in south India. The labels were engraved on the pedestals, as in many of the bronzes, or on the upper mouldings of the niches, as in the Mahabalipuram rock-cut temple, or on the drapery of the figure, as in the Satakarni statue, or even on the shoulder, as in the Vijayanagara and the Todar-Mall statues at Tirumalai. Sometimes an inscription runs beside the sculptures, settting forth the circumstances in which, and the

persons for whom, they were executed. But often the figures were left without any indications of either identity or purpose.

None of the figures bears any indication of whose handiwork it is; the sculptors have studiously refrained from signing them. Tradition says of Ramanuja and Vedanta Desika, obliquely in the case of the former and directly in that of the latter, 'that they fashioned their own images, but we have no means of testing the reliability of the tradition.

VIII

MEMORIAL STONES

Portrait-sculptures and inscriptions do not by themselves help us to appreciate fully the nature of the thoughts and the beliefs which underlie the practice and the art of portraiture in south India. Some types of sculptured memorials very common in the south deserve careful study not merely for the peculiarities they display, but also for the light they throw on the origins and the development of portraiture in south India. These memorials may at first appear to be varieties of portrait-sculptures, but they really stand in a class by themselves. In south India these are generally called *vira-kals*, or 'hero-stones.'

The principal, and the most common, type is a stone standing free, bearing on one face a sculptured figure, or scene, with an explanatory inscription. The sculpture may be crude or highly finished, or be a carving of a single person or a series of panels depicting the various stages of a story, and the inscription may be a mere label or may contain an elaborate eulogy in resounding verse. 'They are upright slabs of stone, upon the faces of which are horizontal bands of sculpture with inscribed bands between. The lowest band, or bands, of sculpture usually represents a battle-scene, in which the hero, of gigantic proportions, to whose memory the stone has been raised, is causing havoc all round him. The next bands show him being carried to paradise after his death and seated in that elysium, surrounded by fair attendants waiting to do his will. The uppermost compartment contains representations of various objects of worship, and symbols of the religion to which he was attached

when living. The inscriptions upon the bands between the sculptures record the death of the hero, which may have taken place in battle, in reclaiming stolen cattle, in self-defence against robbers, or in the hunting-field."[1] A few examples of these monuments deserve to be mentioned in detail.

A rough stone-slab at Kil-Muttugur 'bears, in bas-relief, a warrior who is marching towards the proper left. He holds a bow in his left hand and a sword in his right, and wears a head-dress, a necklace, and a girdle. Behind him, on the proper right, is engraved a small quadruped, which looks like a donkey, but may be meant for a horse.' A Tamil inscription 'distributed round the upper portion of the sculpture' runs thus: 'Prosperity! In the twenty-ninth year of king Parakesarivarman who conquered Madirai,' (that is, in 936 A.D.) 'when cattle were lifted at Mukkuttur by the Perumanadigal,—Vadunavaran Varadan Tandaṉ, having recovered (them) fell.'[2]

Another stone-slab at the same place 'bears, in relief, a warrior in a defiant attitude, who holds a bow and some other weapon.' Above the sculpture is engraved a Tamil Inscription, which says that 'in the third year of the king the victorious Narasimhavarman —when Sanmadura lifted cattle at Mukkuṭṭur—Atimattar Murugan, an inhabitant of Pakkam, a servant of Valimadura, the chief of Tagadur-nadu, who ruled over the northern bank (of the river) in Vinru-nadu, having recovered the cattle, fell.'[3]

On a stone at Hebbini are 'a representation of a bearded warrior with helmet, sword, shield and sword-belt,' and an inscription in Tamil telling that 'in the twelfth (year of the reign) of king Vijaya-Isvaravarman, when Karoniri Bana-raja seized Siraiyur in battle, Adiyar fell,

1 H. Cousens, *CAKD.* 142
2 *EI.* iv. no. 22 B : 178–9, and the upper figure in plate facing p. 178
3 *Ib.* iv. no. 52 D : 360, and the lower figure in plate facing p. 360

who had the stones set up and paid for the expenses, and occasionally they close with an imprecation against those who would injure the monuments.

Attention may now be drawn to the special features of some other hero-stones.

A hero-stone of about 1053 A.D. states that a person whose name is now lost 'set up the image stone' and paid the wages of the sculptor, and it gives also the name of the 'writer' of the inscription.[1]

An inscription of about 750 A.D on a hero-stone says that 'on the cows of Mandu-uru being carried off' a warrior fell in the raid and that 'for him was granted' a piece of 'rice land' by way of *netta-padi*.[2] Another hero-stone bears an inscription, of about 860 A.D., which records that 'when Ganga-mandala and Kanchi-mandala both rose against Pandya, Arumbara-ganda pierced through the foot-guards, and, hewing them to pieces, died', and that 'for him was granted as a *kal-nad*' land under a tank 'free from all imposts.'[3] A third hero-stone bears an inscription containing not only the name of the sculptor, but also the further information that in the days of Madhava Muttarasa of the Ganga line, about 890 A.D., when 'the army having marched upon Mahavali Banarasa,' was 'penetrating' a village, a soldier 'smote and fell' and that 'for him was granted as a *kal-nad* thirty ploughs of land' under a tank, 'free of all imposts.'[4] On another hero-stone is incised an inscription, dated about 1108 A.D., which tells us that three brothers, who give their genealogy for six generations, had a hero-stone set up 'in front of the gate' of a temple 'which our father had caused to be built,' that the hero-stone was installed 'on account of our younger

1 At Nandanahosahalli ; *EC.* 10Kl : Sd 73
2 At Kallur ; *EC.* 10 Kl : Sp 20
3 At Motagapalli ; *EC.* 10 Kl : Mb 148
4 At Tallapalli ; *EC.* 10 Kl : Bp 13

brother . . . who died of wounds received while boar-hunting' and that to the sculptor who had 'set up (the stone to last) as long as the earth lasts after we have passed away' they 'granted, with pouring of water,' certain lands, 'as a *kudangai* . . . for doing this (stone) work.'[1] An inscription on another hero-stone records a grant to the *achari* who 'composed' the *bira-gal* and to the sculptor.[2]

These examples make it clear that it was not unusual for grants of land to be made so that the produce might be utilised for the offerings which had to be made for the propitiation of the deceased warrior's spirit. So great was the importance attached to the monuments of the warriors who had died in battle defending their lord and their land that the State was ready to forego its 'imposts' on these grants. It is also noteworthy that those who set up the monuments made gifts of land to the sculptor who carved the effigy on the stone, and to the poet who composed the panegyric engraved around the effigy.

But hero-stones were evidently set up not merely to those who fell in a fight, but also to those who resigned their lives with resolution. A *vira-kal* was set up, in the ninth century, A.D., to a Saiva ascetic who walked through a stretch of fire and then stood in it till he was burnt to death.[3] 'King Ballala's chief minister Kuvara-Lakshma' set up at Halebid a pillar with a *vira-sasana* on it and, 'as evidence that in faithfulness to his master Garuda alone was his equal, and that he and no others were equal to Garuda, the images of Garuda and himself were equally engraved thereon.' When Ballala died, about 1220 A.D., the minister 'together with his wife, mounted up on the splendid stone pillar, covered with the poetical *vira-sasana*,

1 At Chikkalanerpuhobli; *EC.* 10 Kl : Sd 82
2 At Jenukallu; *EC.* 11 Cd : Hl 106
3 At Kotur, *IA.* (1891) xx. 69

proclaiming his devotion to his master. And on the pillar they became united with Lakshmi and with Garuda'.[1] The euphemism of these last words is explained by the sculptures on the pillar which 'point unmistakably to suicide, being all figures of men with swords cutting off their own arms and legs, and even their own heads.'[2]

A sculptured panel on a stone at Doddahundi illustrates the scene of the death of a king, Nitimarga Permanadi *alias* Ranavikrama. 'He is shown lying on a couch, from the back of which there stand up two royal umbrellas. Near his head there stands his eldest son, Satyavakya,' *alias* Rajamalla, 'with one similar umbrella behind him. And on the couch there is seated a follower of the prince, named Agarayya, who is represented as supporting across his knees the legs of the dying prince, and as holding with his right hand a dagger, which he seems to be drawing out from the left side of the prince.' Below the panel runs an inscription in Kanarese, recording that Nitimarga 'ascended to heaven' and that 'when he was ascending' Agarayya, 'by right of being a son of the house of Permanadi,' was 'buried under him,' perhaps in consequence of a vow taken by him not to survive his liege-lord, and that Satyavakya, 'the eldest son of Nitimarga,' gave a piece of uncultivated land, perhaps for offerings to his soul.[3] A similar incident occurred when Alliga, 'the servant of the shining feet' of another prince 'was buried under him,'[4] a grant of land was made for him and a hero-stone set up recording these facts.[5]

An equally interesting practice is evidenced by a stone at Anaji, on which, in characters of about the

1 *EC.* 5 Hn : Bl 112 2 *EC.* 5 Hn 23

3 *EI.* vi. no. 6A : 41-5, and *EC.* 11 Cd: *n* 1 on p. 73 of Eng. tr. For illustration, see pl. facing *EI.* vi. 41

4 *EC.* 11 Cd : Dg 119 5 At Nandigudi

fifth century A.D., is incised an inscription in Sanskrit, recording an incident called *prayopavesa* in Sanskrit, and *vadakku-iruttal* in Tamil.[1] 'Holding Mahesvara supreme, . . . Sivanandavarma, in the ruin of his country,—Krishnavarma's army being overcome in the tumultuous battle which took place between Nanakkasa-Pallava-raja and Krishnavarma-raja—with calm mind having taken a solemn vow, making a bed of *darbha* grass, eating pure food, desiring fame which should endure for a long time, with the virtuous qualities described in the *sruti* and the *smriti*, filled with wisdom, his mind weaned from enjoyments of men, looking forward to the attainment of *svarga*, desired the happiness of Indra's world. Having extended the supreme happiness of his line, as long as moon and stars endure, . . . he gained admittance to the desired company of heroes, and though so admitted, yet was possessed of merit ensuring the rise of descendants who should establish his line.'[2]

At Sravana-Belgola, a place sacred to Jains, we have numerous stones on which are incised interesting epitaphs, and these stones, on being set up, 'were consecrated with great gifts, worship and anointment'[3]—the epitaph-stones being set up, 'in the notion that honour paid to the spot where those of blameless conduct departed to the other world would indeed be honour paid to them.'[4]

Some 'memorial stones to *gurus*,' at Bastihalli, 'are specially interesting. The *guru*, with his name written over him, is represented as seated on one side of a small table like a camp-stool, called *thavana kolu*, giving instruction to his disciple seated on the other side.'[5] For instance, one of these stones bears an

1 See Pandit M. Raghava-Aiyangar's article in the *Sen-Tamil*, viii., 1-3
2 *EC.* 11 Cd : Dg 161
3 See, for instance, *EC.* 2 SB² 64, 118, 127, 128, 258
4 *EC.* 2SB² 258 5 *EC.* 5 Hn 42

inscription, of 1274 A.D., 'Balachandra-pandita-deva makes comments on the *Sara-chatushta* and other works. Nemichandra-pandita-deva listens,' and, below, is a sculpture picturing the *guru* teaching and the pupil listening. That these stones were set up as memorials on the death of the *gurus* is obvious from the continuation of the inscription, which says that 'all the *bhavyas* (the blessed ones, the Jains) of the royal city Dorasamudra, performing all the ceremonies suitable for the occasion, as a memorial of his departure (death), made images of their *guru* and of the *pancha-parameshti*, and set them up, extending his merit and fame.'[1]

We are not without examples of memorials varying in form from the single stones set up as *vira-kals* or *ma-sati-kals*.

A stone-slab is set up on either side of a hero-stone at right angles to it and a fourth slab is laid on top, and we have a 'hero-shrine.'[2]

Yet another variation is the *sila-kuta*, or 'stone-house.' 'To the south-east of Sravana-Belgola is an inscribed Jaina tomb . . . It is a square stone-structure, about four feet broad and five feet high, surmounted by a turret, but walled up on all sides with stone-slabs without any opening.'[3] An inscription on it says that a Balachandra-deva's son died in 1213 A.D. of severe fever and adds that 'on the spot where . . . the body was cremated Bairoja was directed to build this *sila-kuta* as an act of reverence.'[4]

Memorial stones seem to have been installed not only to human beings, but even to beasts. On a stone-tablet at Atakur is found in a panel a carving represent-

1 *EC.* 5 Hn : Bl 131
2 *ASI. S. AR.* 1916 : 29
3 *EC.* 2 SB² Intr. 33
4 *EC.* 2 SB² 389

ing 'a hound and a boar fighting.'[1] Below the panel is an inscription, of 949-50 A.D., recording that Butuga II, 'being pleased in battle with the illustrious Manalera', one of his champions, presented to him his favourite hound Kali, 'which is called the one that bays loudly,' that 'on their loosing their hound at a mighty boar' on a hill in the village of Belatur 'the boar and the hound killed each other,' that 'to (commemorate) that, they set up (this) stone in front of the temple . . . at Atakur' and that 'they gave land (yielding) two *kandugas* (of grain).' The inscription then closes with an imprecation against those who would 'destroy the land,' and declares that, 'if the *gorava* who manages the estate should fail to do worship to that stone, he shall incur the guilt of the sin committed by the hound.'[2]

There is even a stone installed, at Batgere, in recognition of the bravery of a warrior on a battle-field who was not, however, slain in the battle. When 'Sahadeva attacked Battakere and laid the place waste', a Brahman named Ganaramma, who seems to have held some official post as superintendent of buildings, fought valiantly against him.' From some 'supplementary Sanskrit verses' it is plain that 'Ganaramma was not killed in the fight, but survived and (perhaps) received some grant,' in 888 A.D., 'in recognition of his prowess.'[3]

Ample evidence is therefore available to show that hero-stones were set up not only to those who had unflinchingly parted with their lives when the occasion arose, but also to those who had risked, though not lost, their lives, in enterprises fraught with danger. If a 'hero' who deliberately stood in a stretch of fire till he was burnt to ashes, or another

1 *El.* vi. 50, and plate facing that page
2 *Ib.* vi. no. 6C : 56
3 *Ib.* xiii. 187-90

hero who committed *hara-kiri* on the death of his lord or patron, or another who gave up his life by *prayopavesa*, or a lady who would not survive her husband and became a *sati*, was shown the honour of a stone being set up for him or her, so too was a person who fought valiantly in defence of his country and was fortunate enough to emerge unscathed. Grants of land were made for offerings to the spirit of the deceased hero, or by way of recognition of the hero's eminent services. Even the hound which died in killing the boar was considered to have attained *vira-svarga* and to be entitled to the honour of a hero-stone; provision was made for the worship of even that stone.

The hero-shrine and the *sila-kuta* are in all probability variations of the monumental stone, and there does not seem to be much reason for considering them to be varieties of the dolmen.

We may now gather together the information about hero-stones available in the earliest classics of Tamil literature, the only one of the literatures of south India which furnishes valuable information about them.

On the death of a warrior a stone was planted in his memory, occasionally in the middle of his village, after being bathed in water.[1] A spear and a shield were usually placed beside the stone and a palisade raised around.[2] The stone itself was often erected on a platform,[3] and was then decked with peacock feathers,[4] adorned with a garland of flowers of a red hue,[5] and anointed with honey.[6]

1 *Pura-Nanuru*, 329
2 *Aha-Nanuru*, 67, 131; *Pattup-Pattu*, ix. *(Patti-nap-palai)*, 78-9.
3 *Pura-Nanuru*, 264.
4 *Ib.* 232, 260, 264; *Aha-Nanuru*, 35, 67, 131
5 *Pura-Nanuru*, 264; *Aha-Nanuru*, 131
6 *Pura-Nanuru*, 232

The hero was thenceforward spoken of as having become turned into stone.[1] A poet, seeing that his patron was dead and that a hero-stone had been set up in his memory, called on his brother-poets to foregather and rail at Death for that their patron 'had become a stone.'[2] Naturally, the stone became an object of worship:[3] incense was kept smoking in its presence:[4] offerings too were made to it at dawn,[5] inclusive of libations of *arrack* and sacrifices of lambs:[6] it was even enjoined on bards that they should not pass them by without worshipping them.[7]

The name of the hero and his fame were incised on the stone,[8] which was then set up in a very narrow enclosure with a canopy of cloth; a poet, lamenting the death of his hero, says: 'The name of the warrior whose life was resplendent with glory is now on a stone, which, decked with peacock feathers, has been planted under a canopy of cloth in space all too narrow to allow of room for any one else.'[9] Another poet, who was so attached to his king as to lay down his life at the foot of the liege-lord's memorial stone, says that, even when the king had become turned to stone, he could not have lost his wonted liberality, and that he would not have grown so parsimonious as to deny space beside him for the poet to lie down in and die.[10] The statue seems to have been set up in a narrow enclosure;[11] but the reason for the practice is not clear, unless we are to assume that it was because the *pindas*, or offerings made to the *manes* of the deceased, were to be laid on grass in a place not much bigger than an elephant's foot print.[12]

1 *Pura-Nanuru*, 223, 261, 265
2 *Ib.* 221
3 *Ib.* 306; *Aha-Nanuru*, 35
4 *Pura-Nanuru*, 329
5 *Ib.* 329; *Aha-Nanuru*, 289
6 *Aha-Nanuru*, 35
7 *Pura-Nanuru*, 263
8 *Ib.* 260, 264; *Aha-Nanuru*, 53, 67, 131; *Pattu-Pattu*, x. 388-9
9 *Pura-Nanuru*, 260
10 *Ib.* 223
11 *Ib.* 234, 249, 260
12 *Ib.* 234

References to the practice of setting up hero-stones are to be found—apart from literature proper—in the *Tol-kappiyam*, a work of 'Grammar' which is said to be much earlier than the bulk of the literature of the Sangam Age, and has, in consequence, been attributed to a period much anterior to the 7th century, A.D. According to this work the ceremonials pertaining to setting up the stone are six: *Katchi*, looking for a suitable stone; *Kal-kol*, bringing it; *Nirp-padai*, placing it in water; *Nadu-kal*, setting it up; *Perum-padai*, honouring it with sacrifices, and *Valttal*, eulogising it.[1] This short and quite mnemonic list makes it clear that a suitable stone was sought and chosen, brought to the place where it was to be set up, bathed ceremonially in holy water, and then installed and worshipped with sacrifices. A scholiast of high reputation, but of much later times,[2] commenting on this list, takes each process to stand really for two processes, distinct from each other, though similar in nature. Thus, he takes *Katchi* to mean 'looking for' a suitable stone and also 'looking at' it after it has been installed. This interpretation, in no way inconsistent with the text, may be taken to indicate that according to the *Tol-kappiyam* a hero-stone was set up thus: on the death of the hero, a suitable stone was sought for and chosen with appropriate ceremonial, brought to the place where it was to be set up, washed with holy water, engraved with the name of the hero and the achievements which had made him famous, and then installed with appropriate ceremonies and anointed with holy water; the spirit of the departed hero was then invoked to reside in the stone, so that the stone might become a deity, and at every anniversary there was a grand celebration. Another work[3], not so

1 *Tol-kappiyam, Poru-ladikaram*, 60
2 Nachchinarkku-iniyar
3 Aiyan-Aridanar's *Purap-porul-venba-malai*

ancient, follows practically the same classification and adds one more process, *Il-kondu-pukudal*, 'building a temple and entering it'—which means that a temple was raised and the hero-stone was placed in it. This work furnishes some additional details: when a stone was chosen as suitable, it was sprinkled with water and flowers; incense was offered and bells were rung; it was then bathed in fragrant water, and a garland was thrown round it; then it was anointed with honey and adorned with peacock feathers and the hero's name was engraved on it; the stone was then set up ceremonially, the hero was praised and bells were again rung; thereafter even wayfarers passing by raised their hands and joined them in salutation before the stone.'

The *Silapp-adikaram*, a poem attributed to the age of the Sangam, narrates the story of a lady, Kannaki, resigning her life when her husband fell victim to a judicial murder, of the resolve of a king, Sem-Kuttuvan, to set up a stone in memory of this 'Our Lady of Chastity,' of his expedition to the foot of the Himalayas for a suitable stone, of his securing one, bathing it in the Ganges, bringing it over to his dominions and installing it within a temple which he constructed to accommodate it. The cantos in which these events are chronicled[2] bear titles which reproduce the names of practically all the processes mentioned in the *Tol-kappiyam*,[3] but an additional canto follows, styled *Varam-taru-kadai*, 'the Canto of the Granting of Boons,'[4] in which "Our Lady of Chastity," having been deified, acts in character and grants boons not only to the king who had been at such pains to instal her in a temple but also to others who were present on the occasion. A statue of Kannaki's husband, Kovalan, seems also

1 *Pura-nanuru*, 263
2 Cantos xxv.-xxix.
3 No Canto is assigned to Perum-padai, but the process itself is referred to in the canto, *Nadu-Kal*.
4 Canto xxx.

to have been placed beside Kannaki's in the temple built to her.[1] Why Sem-Kuttuvan should have gone all the way to the Himalayas for a stone for Kannaki's image is perhaps unintelligible to us now. It is generally assumed that so firm was the belief of the Indian of even the distant south in the sanctity of the Himalayas and the Ganges that he went so far north for a memorial stone. But perhaps there is a different explanation of the origin of the practice. 'It is not the least remarkable fact about rude stone monuments that the builders often went far afield for the stones which they used, so that the monument belongs to a different formation from the country round it. This is the case with the Locmariaquer Menhir, which, though it weighs nearly 350 tons, must have been dragged a considerable distance before being set up."[2] In the light of this practice, which seems to have been followed all the world over, the terms *Katchi* and *Kal-kol* acquire a new significance; the grammarians must have had recollections of a period when those who desired to set up 'menhirs' went long distances for suitable stones.

It may be noticed that, though these authorities say that the name and the fame of the hero were inscribed on the stone, not one mentions that the stone was carved to represent a human figure, however faintly,—much less the figure and features of the hero.[3] This silence is remarkable, especially because some verses of the *Silapp-adikaram* seem to suggest that the memorial stone of Kannaki must have been fashioned in her image.[4] Even the earliest hero-stones that we know of

1 *Mani-mekalai*, xxv. 1-10

2 Dr. R. A. Macalister in Hastings's *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, xi, 877

3 A poem in the Ahananuru (365) speaks of an elephant kicking an hero-stone, mistaking it for a human being. The reader is at liberty to place his own valuation upon this piece of testimony to the success with which sculptors could counterfeit the human form in stone.

4 For instance, see xxvi *(Kal-kol)* 14, *kadavul eluda or kal*, 'a stone on which to write (or to fashion into) the deity', and xxviii *(Nadu-kal)* 28, *kai vinai murriya deyvap padimam*, 'a divine statue the very perfection of handiwork'

bear on one face an inscription recording the name and achievements of the hero, and on the other a bas-relief representing a hero, with a bow in the hand. We cannot indeed be sure that the relievos were even approximate, not to say adequate, likenesses of the heroes. Perhaps the inscription was considered more important than the relievo, and so no mention was made of it in literary works. Stones raised in honour of minor persons, such as captains or men in the lower ranks of the army, were not perhaps,—and quite naturally too,—thought worth the trouble of being fully worked into statues, and were therefore set up in the open, sometimes in the vicinity of their houses and sometimes on the battlefields where they had lost their lives.[1] But more labour would have been spent upon memorials of kings and other men of high station, and the stones would have been installed in temples which, having crumbled since, have brought oblivion—and perhaps, also destruction—on the stones as well. While the memorials of men of lower degree have survived through sheer neglect, the stones over which temples were lovingly and piously raised may have perished through that very love and piety.

No definite conclusion should be based on the absence of literary references in Tamil to the practice of carving a stone in the shape of deceased person. Sati-stones too are not specifically mentioned in Tamil literature, but they are common in the Tamil country. The stone-image set up to represent 'Our Lady of Chastity,' according to the *Silapp-adikaram*, is not a hero-stone, nor is it properly a sati-stone, for she did not literally ascend the funeral pyre of her husband:[2] but, if we consider the resoluteness with which she gave up her life, we can have no difficulty in accepting the image as really belonging to the class of hero-

1 Ahananuru, 67, Puraranuru, 314.
2 See Pandit M. Raghava Aiyangar, *Seran Senguttuvan*, 148-9

stones: the references in the Tamil 'grammars' are wide enough to include almost all hero-stones found in the country, except those set up to persons who fought a battle but did not fall in it, and the one set up to the hound of Butuga II.

That in the age of the Sangam the arts had in south India developed so far as to justify us in concluding that, had the sculptors cared, they could have carved excellent portraits in stone, is fully proved by the allusions in the literature of that period to the skill of the practitioners of the various arts and the excellence of their work.[1]

A poet, in praising the father of the king who, in the *Silapp-adikaram*, brought a stone down from the Himalayas, and set it up in a temple raised to Kannaki's memory, says that the tribute rendered to him by his vanquished adversaries included a statue made of gold.[2] Another poet, in holding up to public execration a king, Nannan, says that he ordered a girl to be put to death for the sole crime of having picked up and eaten a fruit which had floated down a stream—evidently from a royal demesne higher up—in which she was bathing, and that he refused an offer of her relations to pay a penalty of not only eighty-one elephants, but also of a statue of gold of the weight of that girl.[3] If the ransom was offered not merely as gold, but as gold measured to the weight of the girl and cast into the shape of a statue, it is not improbable that the statue was cast also into a likeness of the girl; indeed the language of the poem seems to require this inference. A third poet narrates how a Pandya king who laid siege to and captured a Chera fortress took

1 For instance, a hall with marvellous paintings in it is said to have stood beside the famous temple at Tirupparankuoram: *Pari-Padal*, xviii. 27-9, xix. 53-8. The *Manimekalai* speaks often of highly sculptured temples; artists are said to have been capable of depicting to the life every kind of living thing (iii. 126-31).

2 *Ahanauru*, 127

3 *Kurun-tokai*, 292

also a statue found in it.[1] Evidently statues were greatly prized, and not so much for the gold which went to their making as for their artistic merits.

No hero-stone, however, can be said to bear sculptures worth styling portraits. There are, indeed, a few hero-stones on which are carved full-length figures of warriors, but none of them is of any artistic value. Numerous stones are known on which are carved beautiful panels depicting the progress of the warrior from the battlefield to the heaven of the heroes, but the sculptures are too small and crowded to have permitted any attempt at portraiture. We may therefore take it that though the sculptor was not debarred from depicting the human figure, and perhaps the features and expression of the particular hero, the essential requisite was an inscription giving the name of the hero and recounting his deeds of valour, and, obviously, importance was attached to the ceremonies with which the stone was set up and to the continuance of the worship paid to it. A study of the hero-stones and the information gleaned from the Tamil classics concur in pointing to this conclusion. These stones were set up as monuments and not as portraits; the general crudeness of the workmanship confirms this conclusion. Though the sculptures cannot therefore be treated as portraits, it is hard to assume that sculptors to whom grants of land were made for carving them would not have endowed them with some resemblance.

1 *Aka-nanuru*, 149

IX
CONCLUSION

Whatever or however varied the origins of portraiture in India—especially in south India—there can be no doubt about its having reached a high level of excellence at a very early date. The earliest relics of portraiture in what is strictly the south of India are to be found at Amaravati, but a few centuries have to be crossed before we reach the statues in the round at Trichinoply and the relievos at Mahabalipuram. In the intermediate period, memorial stones must have been common, for they furnished themes for the early Tamil poets but we cannot be sure if these stones were worked up into statues, though from the *Silapp-adikaram* and references, *e.g.* to golden statues, in the Tamil classics, support the belief that statues in the round were not uncommon. The Amaravati school of sculpture has been supposed to have been subject to foreign influences, and a suggestion has been ventured that the statue which was set up in honour of the heroine of the *Silapp-adikaram* may have been fashioned under the sway of Roman influence.[1] The suspicion that non-Indian influences affected the growth of south Indian art requires more cogent proof than has been so far advanced. In any event, the foreign influences were strictly confined to the technique, and every trace of such influence has disappeared before we reach the art of Mahabalipuram. Except perhaps in the technique, not the least touch of any non-Indian influence is discernible in the evolution of the art of portraiture in south India, and what influence was derived from beyond India must have been evanescent.

After the famous Pallavas, the art suffered decline and did not recover till the days of Parantaka I. In

1 Dr. Jouveau-Dubreuil, *P.A.* ii. 25-6.

the Kanarese country we find the beginnings of a school of sculpture which has given us some of our best specimens. To about the close of the tenth century A.D. belongs the earliest known portrait in metal, and, while we cannot say how much older the art was, we find that in the reign of Rajaraja I and immediately after him it reached a level of excellence which it has scarcely maintained since. The fall of the Cholas sees also a marked decline in the practice of this art, but it revives under the Vijayanagar kings. Their patronage of the art was enlightened and unstinted, and their viceroys—and even the feudatories of their viceroys—carried on the tradition with such zeal and to such good purpose that the galleries of statues at Madura, Ramesvaram, Srirangam, Pattisvaram and Srimushnam contain some of the best work of the south Indian sculptor. Evidence is not wanting to show that till the beginning of the last century the art was practised in south India with eminent success.

The attempt made here to study comparatively the development of portrait-sculpture in India in the light furnished by the earliest Tamil classics, by Sanskrit literature, by those examples of this branch of art which have escaped time, neglect and vandalism, both in the south and the north of India, and by the inscriptions which record the setting up of these sculptures, has brought out clearly that the motives and the methods of the art were similar both in the north of India and in the south and that the differences are negligible. In the present state of our knowledge we cannot now pretend to determine which influence predominated or how or when. The indigenous school, it is obvious, has kept itself unsullied in essentials by foreign influences and has embodied in its productions the genuine spirit of Indian faith and culture.

LIST OF PLACE NAMES

PLACE	TALUK	DISTRICT	PROVINCE
Ahobilam (Upper)	Sivrel	Kurnool	Madras
Alagarkoyil	Madura	Madura	Madras
Amaravati	Sattennapalle	Guntur	Madras
Anaji	Davangere	Chitaldrug	Mysore
Annur	Avanasi	Coimbatore	Madras
Aramboli	Tovala	Padmanabhapuram	Travancore
Badami	Badami	Bijapur	Bombay
Bastihalli	Belur	Hassan	Mysore
Batgere	Gadag	Dharwar	Bombay
Belagami	Shikarpur	Shimoga	Mysore
Belur	Belur	Hassan	Mysore
Chidambaram	Chidambaram	South Arcot	Madras
Conjeeveram	Conjeeveram	Chingleput	Mysore
Devarayadurga	Tumkur	Tumkur	Mysore
Dharmapuri	Dharmapuri	Salem	Madras
Gandarkottai	Cuddalore	South Arcot	Madras
Halebid	Belur	Hassan	Mysore
Hoskote	Hoskote	Bangalore	Mysore
Kadambarkoyil	Kulittalai	Trichinopoly	Madras
Kadri	Mangalore	South Canara	Madras
Kalahasti	Kalahasti	Chittor	Madras
Kanchipuram-Conjeevaram	—	—	—
Karempudi	Palnad	Guntur	Madras
Konerirajapuram	Kumbhakonam	Tanjore	Madras
Kuhur	Kumbhakonam	Tanjore	Madras
Kumbhakonam	Kumbhakonam	Tanjore	Madras
Kunnakkudi	Sivaganga	Ramnad	Madras
Kunnandarkoyil	—	—	Pudukkotta
Kurudamale	Mulbagal	Kolar	Mysore
Kuruvatti	Harapanahalle	Bellari	Madras
Madhurantakam	Madhurantakam	Chingleput	Madras
Madura	Madura	Madura	Madras
Mahabalipuram	Chingleput	Chingleput	Madras
Mannargudi	Mannargudi	Tanjore	Madras
Melkote	Seringapatam	Mysore	Mysore
Nandi	Chikballapur	Kolar	Mysore
Olagapuram	Tindivanam	South Arcot	Madras
Pattadakal	Badami	Bijapur	Bombay
Pattisvaram	Kumbhakonam	Tanjore	Madras
Peddakallepalli	Divi	Krishna	Madras
Rameswaram	Ramnad	Ramnad	Madras
Senganmal	Chingleput	Chingleput	Madras
Seringapatam	Seringapatam	Mysore	Mysore
Sivaganga	Nelamangala	Bangalore	Mysore

PLACE	TALUK	DISTRICT	PROVINCE
Sravana-Belgola	Channarayapatna	Hassan	Mysore
Srimushnam	Chidambaram	South Arcot	Mysore
Srirangam	Trichinopoly	Trichinopoly	Mysore
Srisailam	Nandikotkur	Kurnool	Mysore
Srivilliputtur	Srivilliputtur	Ramnad	Mysore
Suchindram	Agastisvaram	Padmanabhapuram	Travancore
Tanjore	Tanjore	Tanjore	Madras
Tavarekere	Mulbagal	Kolar	Mysore
Tinnevelly	Tinnevelly	Tinnevelly	Madras
Tiruchengodu	Tiruchengodu	Salem	Madras
Tirukkannapuram	Nannilam	Tanjore	Madras
Tirukkoshtiyur	Tiruppattur	Ramnad	Madras
Tirukkurugavur	Shiyali	Tanjore	Madras
Tirumalai	Chandragiri	Chittor	Madras
Tirumalai	Tiruppattur	Ramnad	Madras
Tirupati	Chandragiri	Chittor	Madras
Tiruvaduturai	Mayavaram	Tanjore	Madras
Tiruvidaimarudur	Kumbhakonan	Tanjore	Madras
Tiruvisalur	Kumbhakonan	Tanjore	Madras
Trichinopoly	Trichinopoly	Trichinopoly	Madras
Ummattur	Chamrajnagar	Mysore	Mysore
Upper Ahobilam	Sirvel	Kurnool	Madras
Vallimalai	Chittor	Chittor	Madras

ABBREVIATIONS

ASI	Archæological Survey of India
ASI.M	" " " *Memoir*
ASI.AR	" " " *Annual Report*
ASI.S.AR	" " " " " Southern Circle
ASI.W.	" " " Western Circle
ASI.W.AR	" " " " " *Annual Report*
Burgess, *BCT*	Burgess, J., *Report on the Buddhist Cave Temples and their Inscriptions*, 1883 (*ASI.W.* iv.)
Burgess, *BSAJ*	Burgess, J., *Buddhist Stupas of Amaravati and Jaggayyapeta*, 1887 (*ASSI.*)
Burgess, *ECT*	Burgess, J., *Report on Elura Cave Temples and the Brahmanical and Jain Caves in Western India*, 1883, (*ASI.W.* v.)
Cousens, *CAKD*	Cousens, H., *Chalukyan Architecture of the Kanarese Districts*, 1926 (*ASI. New Impl. Series*, xlii.)
EC	*Epigraphia Carnatica*. *EC.* 11 Cd : 27, for instance, refers to p. 27 of the Introduction to the volume, namely the 11th, containing the inscriptions found in the Chitaldrug District. *EC.* 11 Cd : Dg 59, for instance, refers to inscription No. 59 found in Davanagere Taluk and included in the 11th volume—the volume assigned to the Chitaldrug District The abbreviations of the names of the Districts and the Taluks are those adopted throughout in the Series.
EI	*Epigraphia Indica*, Calcutta.
IA	*Indian Antiquary*, Bombay.
JBORS	*Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society*, Patna.
Jouveau-Dubreuil, *PA.*	Jouveau-Dubreuil, Dr. G., *Pallava Antiquities*, tr. into Eng. by V. S. Swaminatha Dikshitar, Pondicherry, 1916, 1918.
MER	The Madras Epigraphist's Report. Issued formerly as Orders of the Government of Madras on the Reports of the Assistant Archæological Superintendent for Epigraphy, Southern Circle, Archæological Survey of India; recently styled, *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*. *MER.* 1912 : 44 of 1912, for instance, refers to inscription No. 44 of 1912 listed in the Report for 1911-2.

MER	*MER.* 1912 : 87 : 68, for instance, refers to page 87, para 68, of the Report for 1911-2.
MysAS. AR	Archæological Survey of Mysore, *Annual Report.*
QJMS	*Quarterly Journal of the Mythic Society*, Bangalore.
SII	*South Indian Inscriptions.*
SII.T	*South Indian Inscriptions*, (*Texts*)
Smith, *HFAIC*	Smith, V. A., *History of Fine Art in India and Ceylon.*
TrAS	*Travancore Archæological Series.*

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Portrait Sculpture in south India