

## Chola Royal Women and Temple Endowments

K. Girija

Assistant Professor, P.G. Department of History, Jayaraj Annapackiam College for Women (Autonomous), Periyakulam

Religion can play a predominant role in society in two ways i.e., either by claiming so much of the man's attention and conscience that he has little of his personality left over for other affairs or by feeding the fire of religious fanaticism and generating into social antagonism. Religion not only bring in ethics, creativity, holistic development, relationship, accountability, devotion and faith, hope and inspiration, inner experience and mystical vision etc., but it also can instill divisions, hatred, disunity, exploitation, domination, revenge and violence.

Religion is very powerful and purposeful factor in society. It is an institution which has grip over the people in all civilized societies. Therefore, the religions reflect both god and man. As it is life to be lived not a theory to be accepted or a belief to be adhere to it allows scope and validity to varied approaches to the divine.<sup>i</sup> Religion is the faculty of mind which enables to a man to grasp the infinite independent of sense and reason.<sup>ii</sup> Temples are the main stay and backbone of the Hindu religion. Worshipping Gods in temples infuses divinity and purity in the mind and heart of the devotees.<sup>iii</sup> The Hindus give more importance to *danam*, i.e., gifts. It's ordinate from the *dharmastra* of the Hindus that a portion of earnings of every human being should be set apart and devoted to charity.<sup>iv</sup>

Ancient temple of the Tamil was referred to Sangam literature. Temples could have been originated from the pre-historic *dolmens*. The house of God is referred to *koil* and *kottam* and the God in the *koil* is referred to *kon*, *iraivan* and *kadavul* in the Sangam literature.<sup>v</sup> The temples should have different origins from *dolmens* and huts of the primitive or the Buddhist *Stupa*. The shape of the hut resembles the *stupa* and reminds one of the top of the central shrine called the *vimana*. The deity itself originally the stump of a tree (*Kandu* in ancient Tamil) *Kanthu* a wooden plank constituted the principle object of worship. It was believed that when the temple decays, the god leaves it. The figures of various deities were painted either on the wall or on a screen which was kept hanging in the *sanctum*. From the literary sources we come to know that there were also residences in the temple premises and the temple had fence which clearly indicates the existence of a *prakara* around the temple.<sup>vi</sup>

The Bhakthi movement which emerged as a volcano to sweep the rivals in the extremity country in sixth century A.D. the people to give to temples in order to get blessings and favour of the deities.<sup>vii</sup> The supreme faith of the Hindus was in their *karma*. *Dana* or gift was slowly trying to substitute it including sacrifice. Gifts were considered extremely efficacious. So *dana* had become the religious fashion of the day. In due course the temple not only took up society's religious interest but also served as educational, cultural and economic institution.<sup>viii</sup> In the medieval society, the monarchy, religion and temple were inseparable part of society. Monarch was considered as the representative of god or next to god. Divine right theory of kingship was

accepted by the people of medieval society before the emergence of god as ruler on earth. It was the duty of the king to protect the interest of the people.

K.A.Nilakanta Sastri says “under the Cholas of the line of Vijayalaya may be said to commence the silver age of South Indian Saivism and Vaisnavism”. Religion played a significant role in shaping the social structures. Hinduism attained supremacy under the Cholas, and due to royal patronage Saivism got promoted.

In course of time the monarch wanted to perpetuate this belief among people through the institution of religion by constructing temples and maintaining them by grants. Temple became a powerful socio-religious institution,<sup>ix</sup> with grants made by the kings’ royal family members, chieftains, officials, and common people. There were examples in history that people purchased lands from the individuals or from the village assemblies, and some were lands granted to temple.<sup>x</sup> A variety of land grants were made to the temples. The donors aspired for merit for themselves or for their dead ancestors or for their masters by making these grants.<sup>xi</sup> Grants were made for maintenance of flower garden<sup>xii</sup> and servants.<sup>xiii</sup> They were also given for making food offering to the deity’s daily.<sup>xiv</sup> Grants were made to the temples for the maintenance of perpetual lamps.<sup>xv</sup>

For instance of the supply the articles of worship<sup>xvi</sup>, for the celebration of festivals<sup>xvii</sup>, for the recitation of holy texts before God<sup>xviii</sup>, for the feeding of Brahmins<sup>xix</sup>, for the renovation and repair of the temples. The grants made the temples to operate on sound and independent financial footing which resulted in multifarious activities of the temple.<sup>xx</sup> In the medieval period, sculpturally, architecturally the temple became the most important institution of the Tamil country. It played a pivotal role in the medieval Tamil society.

### STATUS OF CHOLA WOMEN

Women in Tamil society especially the elite women had a place of their own. They had contributed much to the spiritual development of the society. They liberally contributed to the temple. Women were placed under no restraint in their social life and activities, though modesty was considered the highest among their graces. Inscriptions are eloquent of women of the upper classes owning property in their own rights and disposing of it as they chose.<sup>xxi</sup>

### OCCASIONS OF GRANT AND GIFTS

The numerous inscriptions of the Chola dynasty the various occasions of making gifts, gifts made on the *ayana*<sup>xxvii</sup> day, on *sankrantis* on the eclipses of the sun and moon on new moon and full moon days. Grants and gifts were made by every class of people. The Pallavas, the Pandyas and Cholas kings were great patrons of temples.<sup>xxiii</sup> The king used to make grants on the day of his birth day, coronation<sup>xxiv</sup>, at the time of leading expeditions, on the occasion of victory in a battle field<sup>xxv</sup>, on the birth of a son, for the prosperity of his son, at the time of renovating<sup>xxvi</sup>, or setting of the divinities, at the same time of visiting the temple,<sup>xxvii</sup> while he was camping, for long life healthy and victory<sup>xxviii</sup>, while performing *hemagarbha and tulabhara*<sup>xxix</sup>.

The occasions of making grants by the royal ladies, chiefs, officials and other rich and poor individuals are also found in the inscriptional records. There are numerous reference to grants made for the merit of the husband, mother, father, daughter,<sup>xxx</sup> and other relatives, for the merit and commemoration of the servants (warrior) who lost their life in the battle field<sup>xxxi</sup> during the

eclipse days, for the welfare and prosperity of the family and kings, village and country<sup>xxxii</sup>. The other occasion for making grants to temples by individuals was to expiate the sins committed by them<sup>xxxiii</sup>; successes in combat for oneself, recovery from illness and other were also among the motives that induced the people to start works of charity.

### THE PRODUCT OR ITEM OF GRANT

The grant means the contribution made for a particular activity. Hinduism is very ritualistic by performing various religious rites in the temples the Hindus believed that they would go nearer to god and gain both materially which in turn depended on various types of donations made for specific purposes.<sup>xxxiv</sup> The number and size of the temple built in the pre-Pallava period were few and small respectively and the cost of maintenance was also easy but when the big size of temple came into existence there was a need for more funds. When the temples' need for more became a reality, they turned themselves into cities of miniature in the medieval period.<sup>xxxv</sup> The items of grants include village grants, money grants, grant animals (cow, sheep) utensils, ornaments, articles necessary for worship and grants of various dues and taxes.

### Village Grant

Village grant was usually made by the king. The princes or Yuvaraja were empowered to make village grants.<sup>xxxvi</sup> The royal ladies and chieftains made grants of either village or its revenue after getting the approval from reigning king. The *devadana* village was suffixed by the term *nallur*.<sup>xxxvii</sup> There are only few instances of village grants in the Pallava and Pandya period. During the Chola period the village donation to the temple was higher.<sup>xxxviii</sup> One thousands three hundred village listed Chola *mandalam* fifty were *devadana* villages.<sup>xxxix</sup>

### Land Grant

Land grant was most desired as articles of gift. To increase the wealth, size, name and fame of the temple land gift was especially favoured for certain reason. Land donation lauded in the Pallava Charter as the best *dhana* (gift) greater than any other *dhana*. Land is very potential economic entity. It provides money, water coupons and as whole temple needed things. The temple received lots of land donation and gradually became the biggest land holder.<sup>xl</sup>

The boundary of the land to be donated was clearly demarcated and demarcating stones were laid on the four corners of the land. The term used for donations generally suffix 'puram' like *kidaippuram*<sup>xli</sup>, *tiruchchenadaippuram*,<sup>xlii</sup> *ambalappuram*,<sup>xliii</sup> *tiruvilappuram*<sup>xliv</sup>, *pudukkuppuram*<sup>xlv</sup>, *unnailgaippuram*,<sup>xlvi</sup> *valippattuppuram*,<sup>xlvii</sup> *tirunandavanappuram*<sup>xlviii</sup>, *tiruvilakkuneyppuram*.<sup>xliv</sup> The land donated for the worship of the deity was known as *archanbhogam*.

### Gift of Gold and Other Jewels

The devotion of the people is found expression in the gift to the deities of rich ornaments and various articles necessary for daily worship. The Chola inscriptions also give a rich account of gold ornaments and precious jewels offered to deities. Most of the ornaments were donated by kings and members of the royal family. The gift of a silver plate and a pot and also a *churi* with gold handle was presented by Sembiyanmahadevi to Tirunaraiyur temple.<sup>li</sup> Donations of ornaments were made not only to decorate the icons but also to enrich the temple treasury.<sup>lii</sup>

**Gift of Money** Gift of money were made by all rank society to temples for lamp,<sup>liii</sup> land purchase, supply of articles necessary for daily worship and for feeding learned Brahmins.<sup>liv</sup> Money gift were popular from about 1000 A.D.<sup>lv</sup> Taxes on lands and villages collected in cash were also made over by the king and by the assemblies to the temple.<sup>lvi</sup>

### Gift of Utensils

A variety of utensil used for various purposes like for performing *pujas*, to cook and offer food to god and for making offerings was presented to temples by several people. A record of Rajaraja I, a gift of two silver vessels in which offerings were to be made to god Tiruvaraneri- Alvar by Udaiya Pirattiyar Sembiyan Mahadeviyar for the merit of Uttama Choladeva.<sup>lvii</sup> Kundavai, the elder sister of Rajaraja I donated silver vessels not only to the Siva temple but also to Vishnu temple and a Jain *alaya*.<sup>lviii</sup> Vessels of gold and silver were offered to gods and goddess.

### Gift of Animals

Gift of animals like cows, buffaloes, bulls, sheep for maintaining for lamps in the temples and for the preparation of offering were made. Sandaiyan, a Cavalier of Mahimalaiya Irukkuvelir made a gift of 31 cows for the supply of milk for the early morning, bath of the deity, milk and ghee for offerings in the temple of Tirunilakkunrathu Paramesvara.<sup>lix</sup>

### Gift of Food Grains

The temple received offering of different kinds of foodstuffs and grains. Food offering were made in great quantities on festival days and it was called *sribali*.<sup>lx</sup> At time food grains were supplied directly to meet the immediate needs of the temple. A record of Nandippottaraiya registers a gift of 100 *kalam* of paddy by Alsiriyan for maintaining a sacred lamp in the temple Sirunangai Isvaragaram at Tirukkodika.<sup>lxi</sup>

### Gift of Slaves

The existence of slavery during the Pallava and Pandya periods was attested in the Bhakti literature of the *Nayanmars* and *Alwars* by the terms *adiyar*, *adigal* and *adimai* which denote slaves, but their association with temple is not proved by concrete evidence. It was during the period of the Imperial Cholas, the inscriptional proof is available for the existence of the slaves. They were purchased by temple directly<sup>lxii</sup> or were purchased by somebody and donated to temple.<sup>lxiii</sup> The slaves were of both sexes and they were classification into non-voluntary, voluntary. These slaves were made over to the temple by an order of the king, by purchase from several parties and by gifts from private individuals.<sup>lxiv</sup>

### GRANTS MADE BY ROYAL FAMILY

The member of the royal household followed the examples set up by the king. The king's mother, sisters, queens, princes made varied endowments this happened on the return of the king from war, the consecration of a new shrine, the festivals of bath of gods, improvement or extension of the temple premises. There are considerable numbers of evidences available for a study of endowments made by the royal family members.<sup>lxv</sup>

Endowments were made for renovations which were carried out in the temples by many categories of people. In spite of the religious sentiments which characterized the age we have on record about the efforts made to preserve temples. These however were extraordinary events.

Normally the temple was the recipient of considerable endowments from various quarters and for various purposes. An important occasion for endowments was the temple festivals. Endowments were made not only for the older festivals but also for those to be established. Endowments were made liberally to temples by army generals also in the form of providing *mandapas* and *salais*.<sup>lxvi</sup>

The temple was the biggest consumer of the locality. It gave employment to numerous priests, servants of various categories, hymnists, musicians, dancing girls etc. This large establishment was maintained by donations of various things by people of all sorts. In fact, however there are few records involving direct grants made by the Chola rulers, members of their families, or others close to them and these grants were made to a few institutions only, ones which had a special relationship of the ruling family. One was the Tanjore temple of Rajaraja I. Many grants of income from the land were made to temples, *matha* and similar institutions; they were also first purchased by the donor, including the royal donor.<sup>lxvii</sup>

Land endowments to temples were the most significant evidence of the condition of agricultural economy in the country. Even private individuals provided tax-free lands to temples and they became part of *devadana*. Endowments to religious and charitable institutions could be classified as *devadana* (Saiva temples) *Tiruvideiattam* (Vaishnava Temple) *Mathapuram* (Mathas), *Brahmadeya bhataritti* (Brahmanas) *Pulavar*, *Murrutuvvar*, (Poets), *Kanimurrattu* (Astrologers) and *Solbhogam* (Educational institutions).<sup>lxviii</sup>

The Tanjore inscriptions it may be gathered that some of the villages which borrowed money and agreed to supply paddy and watchmen to the temple of Rajarajaeswara (the modern Brihadisvara) at Tanjore were Peru-milattur in Kilarkurram in Nittavinoda - Valanadu.<sup>lxix</sup> Noteworthy is the apparently catalyzing role played by Chola queens in the evolution of the Cholas toward the artistic practices of incorporative kingship. Royal women in south India had for some centuries perpetuated a tradition of religious giving. This culminated just before the beginning of Rajaraja I Chola's reign in the ambitious building program of Chola queen Sembiyan Madevi. The possibility that women played such a pivotal role in political and ritual development urges us to distinguish between male and female donations made by the Chola family. The prominence of these women also invites us to speculate about the gender dynamics of this period.<sup>lxx</sup>

### Queen Sembiyan Mādēvi

Sembiyan Mādēvi was a title borne by various queens of the Chola Empire.<sup>lxxi</sup> She was mother of Madurantaka Uttama Chola Deva. She was the grandmother of Rajaraja I.<sup>lxxii</sup> She was one of most powerful queens of the Chola Empire who over a period of sixty years constructed numerous temples and gave generous gifts to many temples in South India.<sup>lxxiii</sup>

An inscription dated 941 A.D. found in *Uyyakkontam Tirumalain* near Tiruchirappalli, informs that 90 sheep were gifted for a lamp to the temple of *Tirukkarkuti Paramesvara at Nandipanmamankalam*, a *brahmadeya* on the southern bank of the river *Kaveri*.<sup>lxxiv</sup> Queen Tribhuvana Mādēviyar granted land for feeding one hundred Brahmins on the days of *uttarayana sankranti* in the temple of Kailasamudaiya Mādēva at Sembiyanmādēvi in Tanjore district.<sup>lxxv</sup>

An undated inscription of Uttama Chola from Sempiyan Madevi gifted refers to an endowment made by *Chaturvetipattar* of *Caturvedimangalam* in *Alanattu*, 158 *kalanju* to the God in the village for the celebration of a festival in the month of *Cittirai* every year.<sup>lxxvi</sup> An interesting

record from Konerirajapuram near Tiruvidaimarudur in the Tanjore district states that while Uttama Chola was ruling his mother Sri Sembiyan Mādēviyar built the temple of Tirunallam – Udaiyar (at Konerirajapuram) in the name of her lord the glorious Gandaradittandeva<sup>lxxvii</sup>.

The maintenances of a perpetual lamp, rice, for sacred of milk, curd, fried paddy, requirements of purify category ceremonies on the twelve *sankranti* days and the feeding expenses on festivals days. In same year in 972 A.D. four hundred *kasus* were gifted for the food offerings to the deity in the temple.<sup>lxxviii</sup> In 974 A.D. and in 976 she granted two copper lamps<sup>lxxix</sup> and 118 copper vessels to the *Svetaranyesvara* temple at Tiruvenkadu. Same queen granted one gold pot, an image of Chandrasekhar, a copper pedestal, a silver *prabhavali*, some gold flower and gold ornaments to the image in 988 A.D. She said to have made an endowment for a lamp to be kept permanently in front of the Siva.<sup>lxxx</sup>

Sri Sembiyan Mādēviyar was particularly fond of building temples. The Apatsahayesvara temple at Aduturai was built by her in the sixteenth year of her sons' reign and the Umamahesvara temple at Konerirajapuram was built perhaps in the same reign<sup>lxxxii</sup>. A shrine in the Tyagarajasvamin temple at Tiruvarur was constructed in the seventh year of Rajaraja<sup>lxxxiii</sup> and in the sixteenth year of the same reign she built a shrine in the Chandramaulisvara temple at Tirpuvakkara<sup>lxxxiii</sup>.

### Queen Viranarayani

Viranarayani was the wife of Uthama Chola (979A.D.) and daughter of Iianrukkarayar. She contributed cash and land grants to the activities of the Tiruppali in the Nagaswarasamy Temple.<sup>lxxxiv</sup> Same queen grant of 20 *Kasu* to use turmeric for bathing the idol of Nagaswarasamy Temple and water to bath the primary deity of *abhishegam* was brought from the river Kaveri.<sup>lxxxv</sup>

### D-3. Queen Viman Kundavai

Viman Kuntavai was a queen of Arincaya, son of Parantaka I.<sup>lxxxvi</sup> She is known from only three inscriptions. In 966 A.D. an endowment of 2 plots of land after purchase, one by Aditan Kodaipirattiyar, the another queen of Arincayapenmar for providing for the sacred bath of the god with 108 pots of water and of offering on the day of Vishnu in chittirai (April).<sup>lxxxvii</sup>

In 968 A.D. she granted a piece of land for providing 1000 pots full of water to the god for conducting a ceremony to Tiruvananthisvarattu Paramasvamin in Utayarkudi on the occasion of *sankranti* every month.<sup>lxxxviii</sup> Another queen Kodai-pirattiyar<sup>lxxxix</sup> made a gift towards the supply of 1000 pot full of water for the same purpose.<sup>xc</sup>

### Kundavai (Daughter of Sundarachola)

Kundavaipirattiyar, the magnanimous personality was a princess of the Chola family. She was the daughter of the Sundara Chola and Vanavan Mahadevi.<sup>xcii</sup> She was the elder sister of Rajaraj I, the wife of Vallavaraiyar Vandyadevar,<sup>xcii</sup> donated a lot of gifts to Peruvudiyar temple. She set up four bronze images; two of them were of Uma Parameswar the consorts of Dakshinameru Vitankar, and Tanjai Vitankar and other two of her mother and father, Ponmaligai-tunjjiya Devar (Sundara Chola) and Vanavan Mahadevi respectively. She was mentioned as '*Tammai*' (mother).<sup>xciii</sup> She gifted away a lot of gold to these images during the festival times. The Vishnu temple at Dadapuram in South Arcot district was completed probably before 1006 A.D. and she granted

vessels and 5,000 *kalanju* of gold, to be laid with precious stone ornaments and 3,413 pearls, 7,067 diamonds, 1,001 corals etc.<sup>xciv</sup>

Kundavai endowed a gift of 120 sheep for burning perpetual lamp in the Iravi Kulamanikkisvara temple at Dadapuram in 1010 A.D. She made certain for the benefit of the endowments which testifies her keen interest for the welfare of the people. She founded a free dispensary and named it after her father Sundarachola Vinnagar *Adalursalai* in 1015 A.D. Savarnan Ariyan Madhurantakan was appointed as the physician in the hospital. She bought nine *ma* of land and donated for the maintenance of the free dispensary. The local *sabha* exempted the land from paying the taxes.<sup>xcv</sup> In 1016 A.D. she bought a piece of land and a house site for 120 *kasus* in the Palaiyavanavaumādēvi *Caturvedimangalam* in Innampar nadu of Rajendrasimha *valanadu*. She again donated 90 sheep for burning ten lamps in the same temple.<sup>xcvi</sup> She had spent most of her time in the palace at Palaiyaru, the secondary capital of the Cholas. She had ordered a many gifts from Palaiyaru Palace.

### Queen Pancavan Mādēvi

Pancavanmādēvi, the illustrious queen of Uttamachola was known from two inscriptions, one from Sembian Mahadevi in Tanjore district, and another from Tirumalpuram in North Arcot district.<sup>xcvii</sup> In the former, she is said to donate a flywhisk with golden handle donate a flywhisk with golden handle weighing 30 *kalanju* of gold to the Kailasanathaswami temple in 985A.D. The latter is an undated record which refers to a gift of 120 sheep for burning a perpetual lamp in the temple of Perumanatikal at Govintapadi in Vallanadu, a subdivision of Damarkottam.<sup>xcviii</sup> Vanavan Mahadevi, another queen of Uttamachola. She gift made by special offerings on the day of *kettai* in the month of *Cittirai* in the temple of Kailasanatha.<sup>xcix</sup> Minavan Mādēviyar, another queen of Uttamachola made a gift of land after purchasing it for 25 *kalanjus* of gold for the maintenance of a perpetual lamp in the Svetaranyesvara temple, Tiruvenkadu, Srigali taluk, Thanjavur district.<sup>c</sup>

### Queen Vanavan Mādēvi

Vanavan Mahadevi was the queen of Rajaraja I. she was the mother of Rajendra I and also known as Tribhuvanamādēviyar. She made a gift of land ½ *veli* and odd in extend for a perpetual lamp to the temple.<sup>ci</sup> In 1010 A.D. she made a gift of 30 *kasus* for a perpetual lamp to the temple at Tiruvenkadu. She granted 58 sheep for burning a perpetual lamp in the Manikanteswara temple at Tirualpuram.<sup>cii</sup> Again she donated 96 sheep for a two perpetual lamp in the same temple.<sup>ciii</sup>

### Queen Pancavan Mādēvi

Pancavan Mādēvi, another queen of Rajaraja I was Nakkan Tilaiakiyar alias Pancavanmmādēvi.<sup>civ</sup> She was also known as Cholanmādēviyar.<sup>cv</sup> In 1006 A.D both Rajaraja I and Pancavan Mādēvi visited the temple at Tiruppukalur, granted lands for conducting special worship to the god every month on the day of their natal star *satayam*.<sup>cvi</sup>

Queen Nakkan Pancavanmādēvi, the king granted in 1012 A.D., the additional income of paddy due on some lands which were surveyed and assessed excepting the *devadana* lands of Urankuti to the temple at Melappaluvur in Tiruchirappalli district.<sup>cvii</sup> In 1014 A.D., she granted two copper images of Sundarar and Umaparameswari and granted some ornaments to the Brahadeesvarar

Temple at Tanjore built by Rajaraj I.<sup>cxviii</sup> she visited nearby temples and granted number of endowments.

### **Kundavai (Daughter of Rajaraj I)**

Kundavai was born in the Chola family, the daughter of Rajaraja I and mother Tantisaktivitanki alias Olakamahadevi.<sup>cxix</sup> She married Vimaladitya, the son of Eastern Chalukya king Dadarvana. In 1014 A.D. she donated some gold ornaments, with her younger sister Mahavatikal and her mother Tantisaktivitanki to the image of Kshetrapala, Tiruvalanchuli temple at Tanjore district.<sup>cx</sup>

### **Queen Panchavanmādēvi**

Rajendra I had a queen named Panchavanmādēvii. She has granted an endowment in 1018 A.D. She endowed 333 *kasus* yielding an interest of 41 5/8 *kasus* per annum for providing incense etc. to the temple at Tiruvenkadu in Tanjore district<sup>cxii</sup>. Vanavan Mādēvi, another queen of Rajendra I was also known as Vanavan Mādēvi alias Tribhuvana Mādēviyar.<sup>cxiii</sup> Rajendra I had founded in 1020 A.D. a village in her name Vanavan Mādēvi and settled in it 4000 Brahmins. The village identified the present village Agaram in Chingleput district.<sup>cxiiii</sup> In 1028 A.D. she granted a gold vessel to the temple at Tirumalavadi. A silver vessel was also endowed to the temple. Rajendra I had another wife named Pukunramutaiya Ayyan Viramahadevi. She endowed some *kalanju* of gold for the maintenance of a perpetual lamp in the temple.<sup>cxv</sup>

In 1029 A.D. she had instituted public endowments and established a courtly Udaiyarkudi in her and provided a piece of land for meeting the expenses of that feeding house. The income accrued from the granted land was to be utilized for providing meals to 10 devotees at the time of midday offering and worship of the god and feeding 25 Brahmins in the choultry.<sup>cxvi</sup> Vira Mādēvi was another wife of Rajendra I alias Mummudi Chola Perumal. She granted some *kalanju* of gold for the maintenance of a perpetual lamp in the temple Tirtamalai in Salem district in 1016 A.D.<sup>cxvii</sup>

### **Madurantakai**

Madurantakai was daughter of Rajendra II who was son of Rajendra I and her mother Kiladatikal, the only queen of Rajendra II.<sup>cxviii</sup> She married Eastern Chalukya princes.<sup>cxviii</sup> It's evident from the women of the Chola royal family actively participated in the society. Even though, they were staunch adherents of Saivism, they were tolerant enough to construct temple to other religious sects the Chola queens had some fascinated to the title Pancava Mādēvi.

Three significant personalities respect were Sembiyanmādēvi, mother of King Uttama Chola, Lokamādēvi (or Olokamādēvi) Dantisākti queen of Raja Raja Chola, and Kundavai, his sister. The queen Sembiyanmādēvi, in addition to her numerous gifts and endowments, exercised such authority even in the reign of her grand nephew Rajaraja that she could command one of the temple managers to donate money to meet the expenditures incurred in the daily rituals of the temple, besides fixing the emoluments of the temple servants, and arranging for various items of temple expenditures to be met from land assignments.<sup>cxix</sup> Queen Lokamādēvi not only built a temple in her own name (Lokamāhādēvisvaram), but she also took a keen interest in the day-to-day management of the temple. Even as a dowager queen she ordered the reclamation and cultivation of waste lands in a village, the income to be used for special festivals in the temple.<sup>cxix</sup>



The queens not only equal secular powers but also religious powers. It is the king's prerogative to maintain the law-dharma. The queen also is said to maintain dharma "aram purakkum". In the beginning of 13th Century the queen not only shared the powers with the king, under Rajaraja III, but also assumed independent powers "tani anai utan anai perru". From the middle of 13th Century A. D., the Pandyas took over rule from the Cholas, who also repeated the same powers of the queens as mentioned in Chola records.<sup>cxvi</sup>

The royal women's had actively involved in the temple oriented service and made endowments liberally. It is evident from Chola inscriptions that the Chola queens had actively participated in the activities of the society. Even though they were staunch followers of Saivism, they were tolerant enough to construct temples to other religious sects. Many Chola queens personally visited temples and granted endowments. Women like Queen Sembiyan Mādēvi, Queen Viman Kuntavai, Kundavai (Daughter of Sundarachola), Queen Pancavan Mādēvi, Queen Vanavan Mādēvi had the freedom and property to build temples and made endowments for offerings and maintenance of temple.

Religion was the part and parcel of the life of the Chola royal women. In fact, they strengthened the hands of their men rulers who traded upon religious polity as one of the means to sustain their power. The Medieval South India of 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> century, though carried along with it, the feudal characters and imperialistic motives of the rulers of the ancient period, the influence of alien culture and the development of composite culture had a bearing on the role, the contribution and on the changing attitudes of women during the period.

#### ENDNOTES:

<sup>i</sup> S.Radhakrishnan, *Religion and Culture*, Orient Paperbacks, New Delhi, 1968, pp 25-26.

<sup>ii</sup> *An Encyclopaedia of Religion*, Delhi, 1976, p.305.

<sup>iii</sup> P.V.Jagadish Ayyar, *South Indian Shrines*, Delhi 2003, p.1.

<sup>iv</sup> *Ibid.*, p.11.

<sup>v</sup> N. Subramanian, *Sangam polity*, Ennes Publication, Madurai, 1980, p.377.

<sup>vi</sup> S.R.Balasubramanian, *Early Chola Art*, Part I, Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1996, p.17.

<sup>vii</sup> B.S.Chandrababu, *The Land and People of Tamilnadu: An Historical Overview*, Madurai, 2003, p.51.

<sup>viii</sup> B.S.Chandrababu, *History of People and Their Environs*, Indian University Press, Chennai, 2011, p.110.

<sup>ix</sup> K.A.Nilakanda Sastri, *The Cholas*, University of Madras, Madras, 1984, p.640.

<sup>x</sup> *S.I.I.*, Vol. XIV, No.19; *A.R.E.* No. 128 of 1905.

<sup>xi</sup> *A.R.E.* No. 54 of 1918.

<sup>xii</sup> *A.R.E.* No. 98 of 1931-32.

<sup>xiii</sup> *A.R.E.* No. 209 of 1921; *S.I.I.*, Vol. XIII, No.295.

<sup>xiv</sup> *Epigraphic Indica*, Vol. XXVIII, p.93.

<sup>xv</sup> *A.R.E.* No. 69 of 1937-38.

<sup>xvi</sup> *A.R.E.* No. 251 of 1967-68.

<sup>xvii</sup> *I.P.S.*, part I, No.38.

<sup>xviii</sup> *S.I.I.*, Vol. XIII, No.50.

<sup>xix</sup> *S.I.I.*, Vol. XIX, No.81.

<sup>xx</sup> B.S.Chandrababu, *Op.cit.*, p.109.

<sup>xxi</sup> K.A.Nilakanta Sastri, *Op.cit.*, p.552.

<sup>xxii</sup> *A.R.E.*, No.176 of 1923.

- xxiii G. Meenakshi, *Administration and Social Life under the Pallavas*, Rathnam Press, Madras, 1977, p.175.
- xxiv *S.I.I.*, Vol. XIX, No.6, *S.I.I.*, Vol. XIII, No.44 & 46.
- xxv *S.I.I.*, Vol. XIV, No.10.
- xxvi *S.I.I.*, Vol. XIX, No.235, *S.I.I.*, Vol. VIII, No.308.
- xxvii *E.I.*, Vol. III, No.48.
- xxviii *A.R.E.* No. 396 of 1922.
- xxix *S.I.I.*, Vol. XIII, No.144.
- xxx *S.I.I.*, Vol. XIV, No.31. *A.R.E.* No. 176 of 1922.
- xxxi *S.I.I.*, Vol. XIV, No.62, *A.R.E.* No. 271 of 1963-64.
- xxxii *S.I.I.*, Vol. XVII, No.470.
- xxxiii *A.R.E.* No. 156 of 1918.
- xxxiv V.Balambal, *Studies in Chola History*, Delhi, 1998, p.152.
- xxxv A.L.Basham, *The Wonder that was India*, London, 1954, p.200
- xxxvi *S.I.I.*, Vol. XXII, No.186, p.1.
- xxxvii *S.I.I.*, Vol. III, No.73, p.11., *I.P.S.*, Part I, No. 126.
- xxxviii Burtein Stein, *Peasant State and Society in Medieval South India*, Delhi, 1980, p.53.
- xxxix Y. Subbarayulu, *Political Geography of the Chola Country*, Chennai, 2001, p.34.
- xl N.Subramanian and Venkat Raman, *Epigraphy: A Survey*, p.12.
- xli *S.I.I.*, Vol. XIV, No.56.
- xlii *A.R.E.*, 47 of 1925.
- xliii *S.I.I.*, Vol. III, No.150.
- xliv *I.P.S.*, Part I, No. 19.
- xlvi *S.I.I.*, Vol. XXIV, No.81.
- xlvii *S.I.I.*, Vol. XII, No.67., *S.I.I.*, Vol. XIX, No.49.
- xlviii *S.I.I.*, Vol. II, No.654.
- xlix *S.I.I.*, Vol. XIII, No.314.
- l *A.R.E.*, 116 of 1905.
- li *S.I.I.*, Vol. XII, No.53.
- lii *S.I.I.*, Vol. III, No.10., *A.R.E.*, 156 of 1908.
- liii V.Balambal, *op.cit*, p.39.
- liiii *S.I.I.*, Vol. XIV, No.8.
- liv *S.I.I.*, Vol. XIII, No.55.
- lv *S.I.I.*, Vol. XIV, No.28.
- lvi P.K. Pandeya, *Temple Economy under the Cholas*, New Delhi, 1984, p.39.
- lvii *S.I.I.*, Vol. XIII, No.1.
- lviii *A.R.E.*, No. 8 of 1919.
- lix *S.I.I.*, Vol. XIII, No.23.
- lx *S.I.I.*, Vol. XIII, No.202., *I.P.S.*, Part I, No. 38.
- lxi *S.I.I.*, Vol. XII, No.55.
- lxii *A.R.E.*, No. 499 of 1904.
- lxiii Sadasiva Pandarathar, *Pirkalacholarvaralaru*, Chidambaram, 1974, p.87.
- lxiv *A.R.E.*, No. 223 of 1917.
- lxv *S.I.I.*, Vol. XIII, No.144.
- lxvi *S.I.I.* Vol. III, No.108.
- lxvii Button Stein (Ed), *Essays on South Indian*, Vikas Publishing house (P) Ltd., New Delhi, 1976, p.74.
- lxviii *S.I.I.* Vol. III, No.6, p.9.
- lxix *S.I.I.*, Vol. II, Part I, p.74 and Part II, p.229.

- <sup>lxx</sup> Padma Kaimal, *Early Cōl a Kings and "Early Cōl a Temples": Art and the Evolution of Kingship*, *Artibus Asiae*, Vol. 56, No. 1/2 (1996), p.35.
- <sup>lxxi</sup> Hermann Kulke., *A History of India* , Delhi, 2004, p.145
- <sup>lxxii</sup> *S.I.I.*, Vol. II, No.79; Vol.IV, No.543.
- <sup>lxxiii</sup> *S.I.I.*, Vol. XVII, No.222; *A.R.E.* No. 200 of 1904.
- <sup>lxxiv</sup> *S.I.I.*, Vol. II, No.75.
- <sup>lxxv</sup> *S.I.I.*, Vol. XIX, No.379.
- <sup>lxxvi</sup> *S.I.I.*, Vol. XIII, No.225.
- <sup>lxxvii</sup> *A.R.E.*, 450 of 1908, p. 91.
- <sup>lxxviii</sup> *A.R.E.*, No. 159 of 1908.
- <sup>lxxix</sup> *S.I.I.*, Vol. XIII, introduction, p.vii.
- <sup>lxxx</sup> *S.I.I.*, Vol. II, No.144; *A.R.E.* No. 444 of 1918.
- <sup>lxxxi</sup> *A.R.E.*, 357 of 1907, p. 91
- <sup>lxxxii</sup> *A.R.E.*, No. 571 of 1904, p.91.
- <sup>lxxxiii</sup> *A.R.E.*, No. 200 of 1904.
- <sup>lxxxiv</sup> *S.I.I.*, Vol. III, No.137.
- <sup>lxxxv</sup> *A.R.E.*, No. 234 of 1911.
- <sup>lxxxvi</sup> *S.I.I.*, Vol. XIII, No.224.
- <sup>lxxxvii</sup> *S.I.I.*, Vol. XIII, No.225.
- <sup>lxxxviii</sup> K.A.N. Sastri, *Op.cit.*, p.152.
- <sup>lxxxix</sup> V.Balambal, *studies in Chola History*, Kalinga Publications, Delhi, 1992, p.77.
- <sup>xc</sup> *S.I.I.*, Vol. XIII, No.225.
- <sup>xci</sup> K.A.Nilakanta Sastri, *Op.cit.*, p.186.
- <sup>xcii</sup> M.Alagulkshmi, An M.A. project titled *Inscription of Rajarajesvaram Temple- A Study*, submitted to Madurai Kamaraj University, 2002, p.27.
- <sup>xciii</sup> *S.I.I.*, Vol. III, No. 205; ARE No. 236 of 1902.
- <sup>xciv</sup> *A.R.E.*, No. 8 of 1919.
- <sup>xcv</sup> *A.R.E.*, No.248 of 1923.
- <sup>xcvi</sup> *A.R.E.*, No's 112, 113 of 1925.
- <sup>xcvii</sup> *S.I.I.*, Vol, XIX, No.31.
- <sup>xcviii</sup> *A.R.E.*, No. 448 of 1918
- <sup>xcix</sup> *A.R.E.*, No. 460 of 1918
- <sup>c</sup> *S.I.I.*, Vol. XXIII, No.206.
- <sup>ci</sup> *S.I.I.*, Vol. XIX, No.347.
- <sup>cii</sup> V.Balambal, *Op.cit.*, pp.80-81.
- <sup>ciii</sup> *A.R.E.*, No. 385 of 1918.
- <sup>civ</sup> *A.R.E.* No. 54 of 1928.
- <sup>cv</sup> V.Balambal., *Op.cit.*, p.83.
- <sup>cvi</sup> *A.R.E.*, No. 574 of 1928.
- <sup>cvi</sup> *A.R.E.*, No. 623 of 1916.
- <sup>cviii</sup> *S.I.I.*, Vol. II, No.51.
- <sup>cix</sup> *S.I.I.*, Vol. VIII, No.234.
- <sup>cx</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>cxii</sup> *A.R.E.*, No. 464 of 1918.
- <sup>cxiii</sup> *A.R.E.*, No. 624 of 1920.
- <sup>cxiii</sup> *A.R.E.*, No. 232 of 1930-31., Part II, Para 11, p.43.
- <sup>cxiv</sup> *S.I.I.*, Vol. V, No.639.
- <sup>cxv</sup> *A.R.E.*, No. 627 of 1920.

- 
- cxvi *S.I.I.*, Vol. XIX, No.86.  
cxvii K.A.Nilakanta Sastri, *Op.cit.*, p.288.  
cxviii *E.I.*, Vol.V, p.77.  
cxix *VRR*, Vol ii, Tanjore, 672, 673 and 687.  
cxx *S.I.T.I.*, Vol II, 610 and *VRR*, Vol I, Chingelpet, 727.  
cxxi *S.I.I.*, Vol. 14, No 5/512.

www.ijahms.com