A Man's World? Gender, Family, and Architectural Patronage, in Medieval India

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Shortly before 908 C.E., a woman named Naṅgai Bhūti Āditya Piḍāriyār sponsored the construction of a granite temple (*Fig. 1*) to the god Śiva Candraśekhara in Tiruccenḍuṟai, a village that lies twelve kilometers up the Kāvēṟī River from modern Tirucirāpalli in India's south-eastern state of Tamiḻnāḍu (*Fig. 2*).[1] The purpose of this article is to explore issues of gender raised by her patronage of this monument: is there any point in knowing that this building's patron was a woman?[2] Readers in the twenty-first century need to know Naṅgai's gender because the agency her patronage demonstrates challenges stereotypes of India as a place of ruthless and universal repression of women.[3] To Naṅgai's contemporaries, however, her identity as a woman probably had little significance as they regarded the expensive and highly visible temple she sponsored. Tamiḻ donative patterns suggest that south Indian men *and* women of privilege frequently made public displays of pious generosity, action still perceived as highly virtuous in Tamiḻ society.[4] Wealth enabled her to sponsor an entire temple; her gender may have been irrelevant.[5]

Naṅgai's case reminds us that, in many places and times, art patronage has been expected of women. Art patronage has not been universally regarded, as some regard it now, as an essentially male sphere of activity, penetrated by women to appropriate male authority or to resist patriarchal subordination.[6] Naṅgai's patronage also reminds us how widely different cultures' constructions of gender may vary, and that methods of gender study for European art may apply only selectively to Indic art.[7]

Instead of seeking in Naṅgai's temple signs of her rebellion against male authority, therefore, I inquire into the nature of Naṅgai's agency and of the identity she projected through this gift to Śiva. Because temple inscriptions report that Naṅgai was born into the powerful Irukkuvēḷ family and married to a son of the ruling Cōḻa king, I have explored marriage patterns and notions of family, looking for correlations between family affiliations and architectural styles. I have found that Naṅgai's temple resembles to a significant degree temples built by her Irukkuvēḷ relatives—her father, brother, and brother's son—but has little in common with Cōḻa practices. This is noteworthy because Naṅgai may have been affiliated with the Cōḻas when she built her temple. If not already married to the Cōḻa prince, she probably knew she would be soon. And she certainly continued to make large gifts to her temple after she had married. Marriage, in fact or in prospect, did not discourage her from presenting her identity in terms of her natal family.

The features of Naṅgai's temple also suggest that conformity with her natal family's practice of temple construction did not efface her individual identity. In its architectural details her temple differs from temples sponsored by other Irukkuvēḷs in much the same degree that those temples vary from each other. If the artisans building these

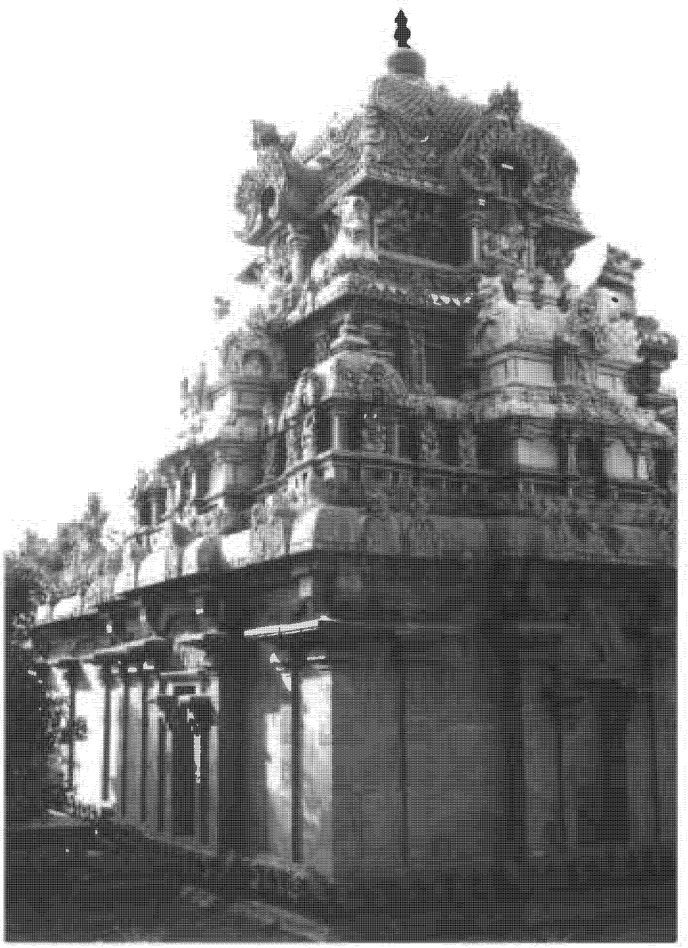

Fig. 1. Candraśekhara temple seen from the northwest, Tiruccenḍuṟai. Built by 908 by Naṅgai Bhūti Āditya Piḍāriyār (this and all succeeding photos by author).

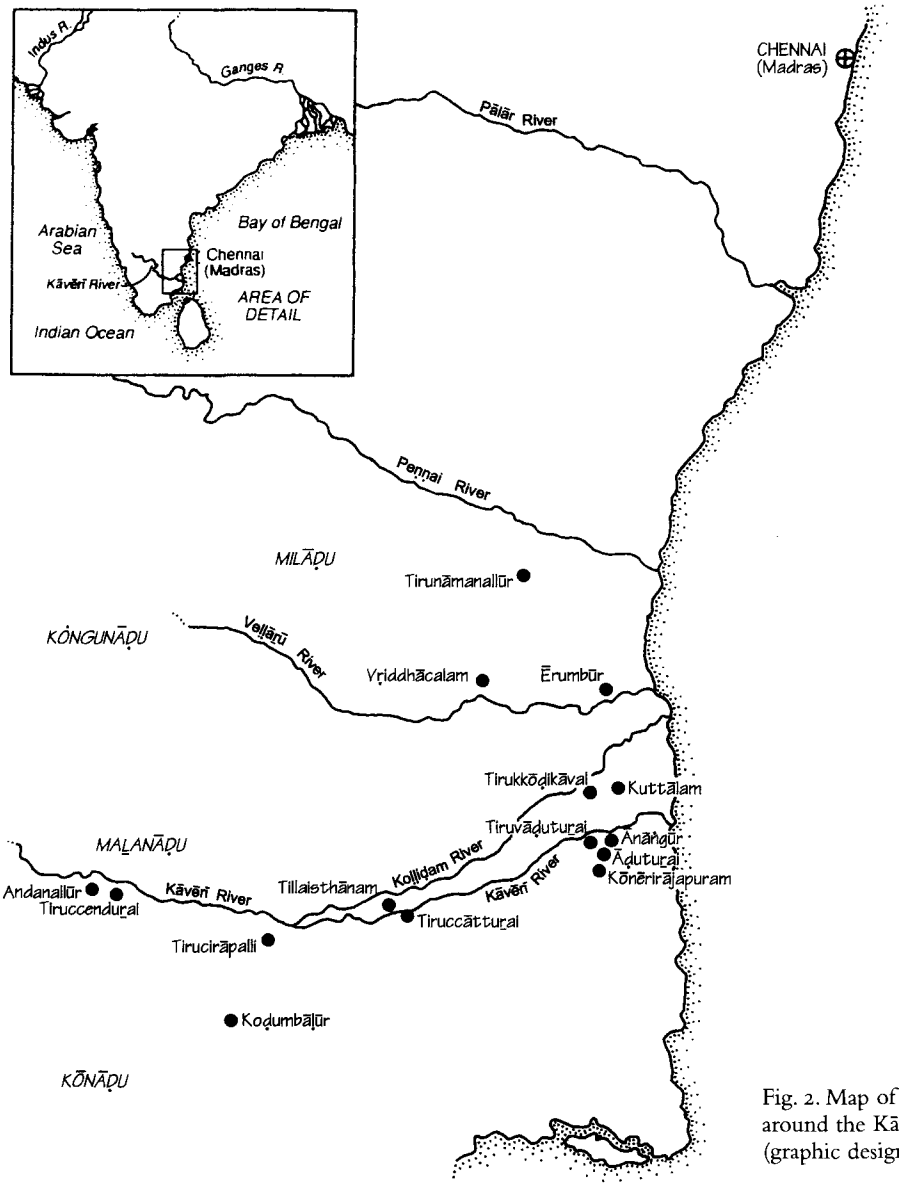

Fig. 2. Map of selected temple sites around the Kāvērī delta, Tamiḻnāḍu (graphic design: Julia Meyerson).

monuments followed patrons' instructions about visual design, those artisans seem to have been equally responsive to women and to men. At the same time, Naṅgai's temple does not differ markedly from those of her male relatives in its size, degree of ornament, or other aspects where difference could suggest defiance against exclusive male prerogatives. Within the context of her natal family, her agency as a patron seems to have been ungendered.

PATRONAGE IN THE KĀVĒRĪ DELTA

This essay forms part of my continuing inquiry into the patronage of some hundred temples built in the Kāvērī delta of central Tamiḻnāḍu during the ninth and tenth centuries. I have argued elsewhere that fewer than half a dozen of these monuments were, as earlier scholarship had claimed, "Early Cōḻa temples" built by the first kings of the Cōḻa dynasty.[8] Many inscriptions cover these temples, but their main purpose was to record financial arrangements for temple maintenance; they rarely name the people who sponsored architectural construction. Of those that do, most name important residents of nearby towns or members of princely families (such as the Irukkuvēḷs) with whom the Cōḻas intermarried. Of the few Cōḻa patrons named, women considerably outnumber men. Early Cōḻa kings do not seem to have been in a position to act as discerning monarch-connoisseurs of temple architecture, and their regnal periods are not relevant structures upon which to frame a chronological development of temple form, as most scholarship on these monuments has attempted to do.

These temples are, moreover, scattered among many villages. They differ from one another in many features of their architecture. Scholars have successfully linked many variations in South Asian temple architecture to differences in place and time. Temples built in the ninth and tenth centuries across the delta of the branching Kāvērī do share a macro-style that distinguishes them from temples of other periods and of neighboring areas. Variations of form within that early Kāvērī macro-style have, however, resisted scholars' attempts to organize them into convincing micro-regions and subperiods.[9] The chief reason for their failure, I suspect, is that they seek a single, linear developmental sequence, based on the assumption that architectural production was centralized under the patronage of the Cōḻa kings.[10]

I am convinced by the temples' inscriptions, geographic distribution, and architectural diversity that temple patronage before the eleventh century was dispersed among many residents of the Kāvērī delta. Various patrons appear to have contracted with various artisan workshops in a complex and perhaps irregular web of associations. Though the impact of artisans on architectural style must have been profound, I am not yet able to distinguish where artisans' influence left off and patrons' influence began. Inscriptions do not name artisans as they do patrons, depriving us of that secondary layer of evidence to compare against the visual evidence of the temples. I therefore begin the task of sorting out these temples' stylistic variations with the more fully documented side of the story, patronage, grouping by patron those temples whose patronage we know from inscriptions. I confine my speculations in this essay to formal patterns that coincide with inscribed Irukkuvēḷ patronage. My assumption is that artisans too played a major role in formulating the Irukkuvēḷ temple style, and that the consistency of style suggests the presence of a single workshop.

Scholars have suggested that members of the Irukkuvēḷ, Muttaraiyar, and Paḻuvēṭṭaraiyar families, all of whom inscriptions name as patrons of temple construction, built in distinctive family substyles.[11] Because I had found so little evidence of early Cōḻa kings influencing temple construction, I began this research expecting to find that patronage by other families also had little impact on temple form. I have found instead that temples bearing inscriptions explicitly linking their construction to Naṅgai and her natal relatives do resemble each other enough to convince me of an Irukkuvēḷ family style of architecture. I would also note that they share more features than most early Kāvērī-area temples have in common. [12] Consistent features of the Irukkuvēl style include two similar designs for the towered roof over the shrine, the presence of three large niches on the central shrine (*vimāna*), the absence of niches on the vestibule (*ardhamaṇḍapa*), two patterns for facetting exterior walls of the vimāna, and a preference for lotus-petal and lion-shaped moldings encircling the temple's foundation.

NAṄGAI'S FAMILIES

An inscription of 909 C.E., incised into the Tiruccenduṟai temple's south wall, declares Naṅgai's membership in two of the region's most powerful families.[13] This record identifies her first as the daughter of Bhūti Vikramakēsari, head of the Irukkuvēḷ family; and second as the wife of Arikulakēsari, son of the reigning Cōḻa king, Parāntaka I (r. 907–954). Naṅgai was clearly a woman of importance. The Cōḻas, who would come to dominate much of southern India during the eleventh and twelfth centuries,[14] had urban centers of authority at Tañjāvūr and Uṟaiyūr (within the city limits of modern Tirucirāpalli) in the early tenth century (*Fig. 2*). Their region of influence extended southward from the Kāvērī River, mostly east of the point where that river begins to branch. The Irukkuvēḷ family, which flourished from the mid-ninth century into the early tenth, ruled from the town of Koḍumbāḷūr. They claimed authority over the surrounding region of Kōnāḍu, which lay along the Kāvērī's south bank and to the west of the Cōḻas' sphere.[15]

The location of Naṅgai's temple reflected her familial situation rather closely. Tiruccenduṟai was embedded in her natal Kōnāḍu region, but it was also close to Uṟaiyūr where her husband's family was strong. It is tempting to think that she chose this location deliberately to express her dual affiliations.

The genealogies of the Irukkuvēḷs and early Cōḻas reveal, furthermore, that Naṅgai was only one of several individuals who linked these families. As Figure 3 illustrates, her father had married Parāntaka Cōḻa's sister, Naṅgai Varaguṇā; her paternal grandfather had married the Cōḻa princess Anupamā; their daughter had married Parāntaka's brother, Kaṉṉara; Naṅgai's brother married Parāntaka's sister, Cōḻapperundēviyār; and his son, Parāntakaṉ Siṟiyavēḷār, would marry the Cōḻa princess Varaguṇā.[16] With so many intermarriages joining these families, the diagram of their genealogies looks more like a braid than a tree.

Thomas Trautmann has interpreted these repeatedly linked genealogies as evidence that these families practiced "cross-cousin" marriage, a system common in southern India for centuries.[17] Trautmann points out that Irukkuvēḷs and Cōḻas each gave brides to the other, signifying that neither family was consistently in the subordinate position of giving a bride. The two families were of roughly equal status, then, at the turn of the tenth century. Trautmann also notes that this system of "perpetuated affinity" between families over generations motivated families to treat their daughters-in-law well. Families joined

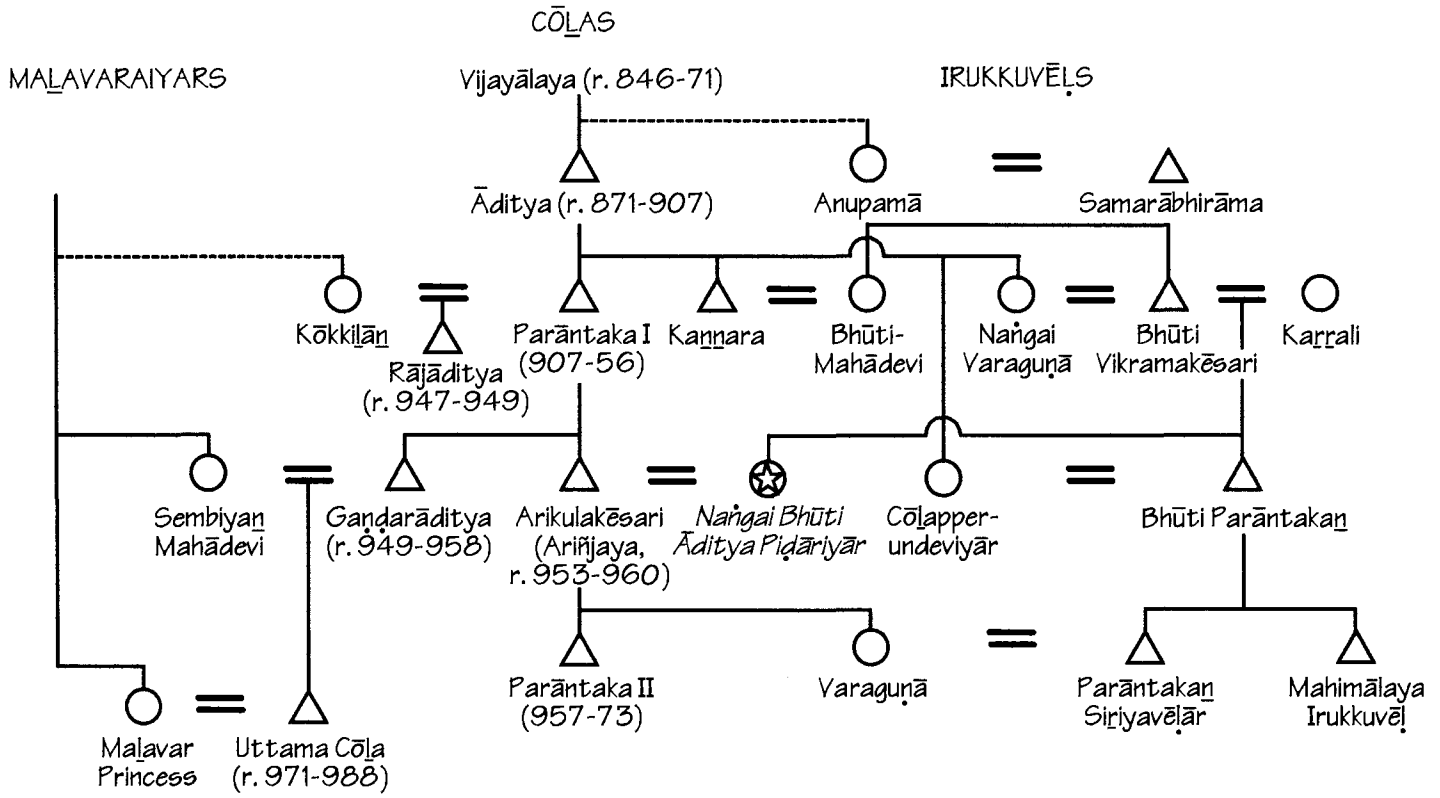

Fig. 3. Genealogy showing intermarriages among the Cōḷa, Irukkuvēḷ, and Maḷavaraiyar families (graphic design: Julia Meyerson).

by marriage, or "affines," need to maintain good relations because they depend on each other for the next generation's spouses. Efforts to maintain close relations between families would also foster frequent opportunities for brides to visit their natal families. And there could be many natal relatives already at the conjugal home: a new bride could be received in her husband's home by aunts, cousins, and sisters she had known as a girl.

In these potent ways cross-cousin marriage permitted a woman's natal support system to extend into her marital world. Naṅgai's situation was, moreover, a common one for women of her status. What we learn about associations between her family situation and her temple patronage may well apply to her peers. If her natal family gave her strength before and after marriage, and thus played a part in enabling her to patronize temple construction, the women of other prominent families must also have had the power to build temples.

NAṄGAI'S TEMPLE AND THE KĀVĒRĪ MACRO-STYLE

Naṅgai's responsibility for building the Tiruccenduṟai temple is announced in the same inscription that identifies her families, and in two other inscriptions on the same wall.[18] The earliest of these to mention a date is from 908. It uses the past tense to refer to her construction of the temple and it arranges for festival celebrations there, implying that the temple was finished enough to house ritual performance by that year.[19]

The first reference to her husband appears in 909.[20] Thus Naṅgai had built her temple by 908 and she was married no more than one year later. If Naṅgai was not yet part of the Cōḷa family when she built, it would hardly be remarkable for her to build as she did in the architectural style patronized by her natal family. And yet surely the construction of a temple and the planning of a wedding between powerful families each took some months at least. The two projects could well have overlapped, they appear in the record at such a close interval. Quite likely Naṅgai knew, before her temple was finished, that she would be marrying a Cōḷa prince. Her decision to build in the Irukkuvēḷ style probably took that knowledge into account. At any rate, her willingness to call attention to her temple by making public donations to it in 909, after her marriage, indicates that being a wife did not make her reticent about her previous agency in this matter or about the natal affiliation her temple's style displays.

Fig. 4. South wall of the *ardhamaṇḍapa*, Candraśekhara temple, Tiruccenduṟai. Note the basement moldings below the pilastered wall surfaces and the entablature above. Roughly cut stone blocks just visible at the far right are part of a later addition to the front of Naṅgai's temple.

That Naṅgai may have had access to considerable financial resources as an unmarried woman is also noteworthy: the wealth she invested in temple construction need not have come from her Cōḻa affines.[21] Youth too seems to have been no obstacle to her being a patron. She was probably quite young when she had her temple built. Her husband would have been little more than twenty-five in 908, given that he would live another fifty-two years and rule as Cōḻa king from 953 to 960. Unless she were substantially older than her husband, an unlikely event, Naṅgai would have been no more than twenty-five while her temple was under construction.

The forms of Naṅgai's temple fit easily into the early Kāvērī macro-style, but before I describe its characteristic features I shall explain my use of the term "style". Though the term has many associations and often denotes the subtle variations an individual artist plays upon a common theme, I use "style," as other studies of these monuments have done, to describe major aspects of building elevation and ground plan in which temples demonstrate patterns of visual similarity and difference. These aspects include the quantity, shape, and arrangement of superstructure components, wall niches, niche sculptures, wall facetting, and basement moldings. Since discussing niche sculptures involves their subject matter as well as their form, the temples' iconographic programs become yet another feature by which to compare these temples. Iconographic content becomes part of a discussion of style in this way.

I see these features as aspects of temple design over which patrons may have had some control, assuming the premodern Indic workshop process that scholars have lately inferred. Surely the primary responsibility for shaping temples lay with the artisans who executed them. In their memories, and perhaps in palm-leaf manuscripts, artisans would have carried with them lessons, or *śāstras*, that codified design principles for images, patterns, and formulae for temple design. Different workshops may have worked with different śāstras, which could explain why architectural style varies from region to region. Modern scholars have not identified any śāstras that guided early Kāvērī workshops, but the temples themselves suggest that such lessons offered multiple options for molding combinations, superstructure components, wall facetting, and the placement of exterior niches, among other things. Designers would thus have offered options to suit different pocketbooks, different patronage agendas, the proportions of the patron's body, and perhaps different aesthetic tastes. Even among the products of a single workshop, some design variation would be likely. Artists, furthermore, appear to have regarded śāstras as loose guides rather than binding law. In architecture as in Indian music, theater, and painting, artists probably memorized a general outline, relying on improvisation to produce the inspired refinements that finished the work and gave it brilliance.[22]

Artisans may have offered patrons some choice among those options. Patrons could have influenced the design of their monuments by making such choices and by deciding which artisan workshop to hire among the many that the prolific building activity of the ninth and tenth centuries must have sustained.

Fig. 5. West wall of the *vimāna*, Candraśekhara temple, Tiruccenduṟai.

Naṅgai's temple shares with other early temples of the Kāvērī region their intimate scale and restrained but elegant ornament (*Fig. 1*). Later generations have added large halls to the Tiruccenduṟai temple's eastern end but, like its contemporaries, this building's tenth-century core had only two rooms: a single-storied vestibule, or ardhamaṇḍapa (*Fig. 4*), and, to its west, a towered vimāna (*Fig. 5*). The ground floor of the vimāna is a cubic structure that functions as a house for Śiva in his nonanthropomorphic and cylindrical *liṅga* form. The exterior walls are smooth, windowless surfaces punctuated only by planar offsets and slender pilasters (*kal*) at regular intervals. At the center of each of the three solid vimāna walls is a tall niche framed by tiny pilasters and a lintel. Crowning the lintel is an arching cluster of foliate and animal forms (*makaratōraṇa*). The west and north niches at Naṅgai's temple are now empty, but each must once have held a figure of a deity carved almost fully in the round, as the south niche still does (*Fig. 6*). At early temples throughout the Kāvērī region, these gently animated and nearly life-sized figures stand out dramatically against the surrounding wall's clean, architectonic masses.[23]

Supporting and capping the rather austere walls of this and many Kāvērī-region temples are variously shaped basement moldings below (*Fig. 7*) and a complex entablature above (*Fig. 5*) that visually supports the heavy superstructure. The entablature recapitulates in stone the structural skeletons of older wood buildings. The elements of this entablature are, from bottom to top, cushion-shaped capitals, square platforms (*phalaka*) and corbels (*pōtikā*) leading upward to a frieze (*mālā*) of the cavorting dwarfs who are Śiva's comic foils (*bhūta*), a prominent and round-

Fig. 6. Figure of Śiva leaning on the neck of his bull (Vṛiṣabhavāhana). South niche of the *vimāna*, Candraśekhara temple, Tiruccenduṟai. In front of this figure and wrapped in white cloth is a later and smaller sculpture of Śiva Dakṣiṇāmūrti.

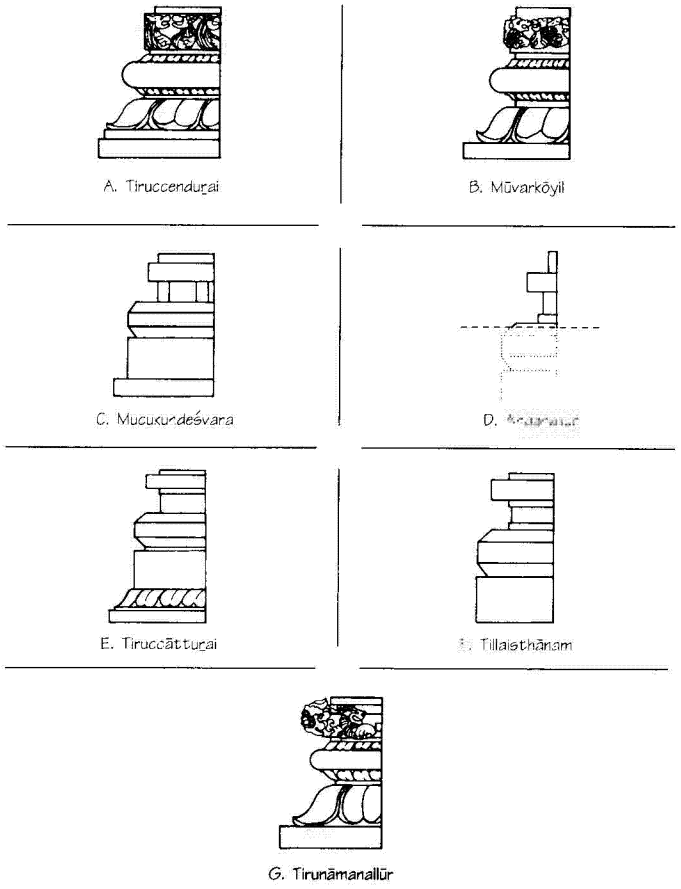

Fig. 7. Molding combinations at seven temples of the Kāvērī region, ninth-tenth c. (graphic design: Julia Meyerson). After the Encyclopaedia of Indian Temple Architecture.

ed cornice (*kapōta*), and a frieze of fantastic leonine creatures (*vyāla*).

Surmounting the vimāna is a pyramidal superstructure which at Tiruccenduṟai has two horizontal tiers and a square capstone with sides curved like the letter S (*Fig. 1*). Each tier is a string (called a *hāra*, "necklace") of miniature replicas of temples resting on a cornice that rests in turn on an entablature. These aediculae represent the many palaces that crowd together upon the hill that is, according to descriptions in puranic texts, the celestial city of Śiva's heaven.[24] On each of the tower's four faces, these aediculae are arranged in bilaterally symmetrical sequences. A viewer perceives busy entablature shapes layered horizontally between brief passages of vertical wall surface. The effect is a rich play of shadows that distinguishes the intensely decorative superstructure from the simpler main walls below. The stucco flourishes and colorful paint of later renovations at Tiruccenduṟai enhance that contrast.

Within this template of the early Kāvērī macro-style, many features vary from one temple to the next. Among the temples built by Irukkuvēḷ patrons, however, I find a very limited range of options for those variable features.

TEMPLES BUILT BY NAṄGAI'S FATHER

Naṅgai's father, Bhūti Vikramakēsari, built a temple complex in the ninth century at Koḍumbāḷūr (*Fig. 8*).[25] It is called the Mūvarkōyil, which means "triple temple" in Tamiḷ, because it originally consisted of three temples set

Fig. 8. Mūvarkōyil temple complex seen from the northwest, Koḍumbāḷūr. Built by Bhūti Vikramakēsari. In the foreground are foundations of the precinct wall and small shrines attached to its inner face. The standing structures are the central temple (left) and southernmost temple (right) of the original three shrines.

side by side, facing west.[26] Of the northernmost temple, only the foundation now remains at the site. The other two temples still stand and of these, the temple on the left, originally the central one, is slightly taller. Foundations survive of a wide platform that once extended before all three temples, and of an encircling precinct wall that had small shrines studding its inner face. The small shrines all opened toward the center of the compound.

Many of the architectural features of Naṅgai's temple closely resemble those of her father's temple. The flared capstone of each superstructure is square in plan and each tower is two tiers high. Contemporary superstructures throughout the Kāvērī region have one, two, or three tiers. Their capstones may be round, square or octagonal in plan; in profile, their sides are straight, slightly flared, or deeply undulant like the letter S.

The central shrine at Bhūti's compound (*Fig. 9*) shares with Naṅgai's temple an unusually grand variation on the lowest tier of the superstructure. The *śālā*, or oblong block at the center of each side of the tower, is shaped as a two-storied temple (*Fig. 10*). At Tiruccenduṟai these tall śālā are the elements picked out in whitewash (*Fig. 1*). Another unusual feature these temples share are the heavy half-columns, visible near the right and left edges of Figure 10 and at the right edge of Figure 11, that appear on either side of each tall śālā and further draw the viewer's eye toward that block. At Bhūti's southernmost shrine and many other Kāvērī -area temples, there are no such half-columns.

The sculptural moldings at the base of Naṅgai's temple are partially buried beneath the courtyard soil (*Fig.*

Fig. 9. Central temple seen from the northwest, Mūvarkōyil complex, Koḍumbāḷūr.

Fig. 10. Double-storied *śālā* and attached half-columns, lower tier, west face of superstructure of the central temple, Mūvarkōyil complex, Koḍumbāḷūr.

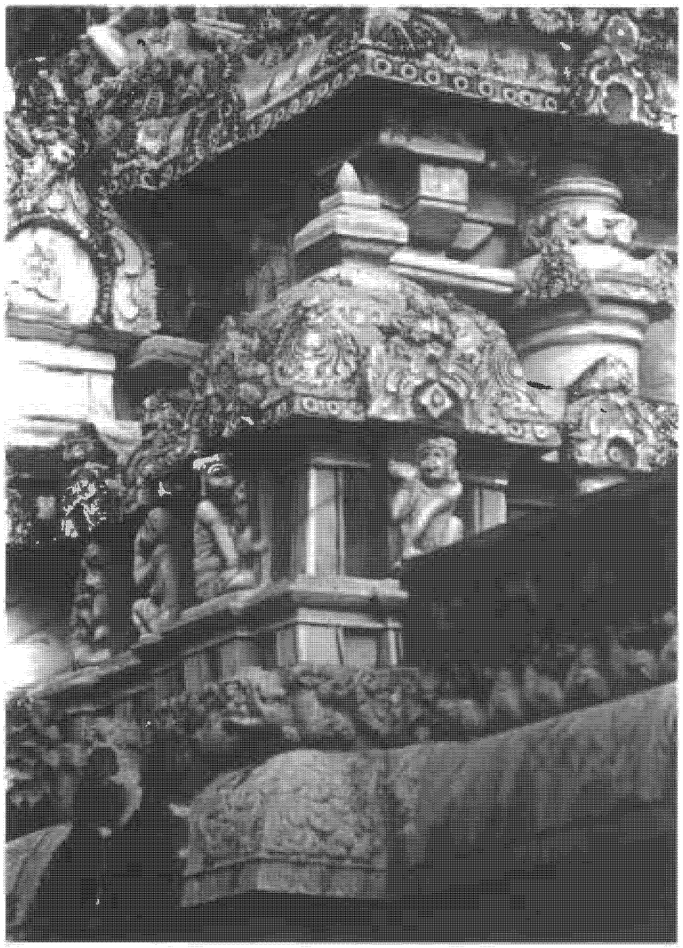

Fig. 11. Temple-shaped block and attached half-column (on the far right), lower tier, southeast corner of superstructure, Candraśekhara temple, Tiruccenduṟai.

5), but those that remain visible match the leonine and rounded forms at her father's temples (*cf. Figs. 7A, 7B*). At the Mūvarkōyil, these moldings rest upon a band of huge lotus petals that are carved as if falling softly open (*Fig. 12*). The *Encyclopaedia of Indian Temple Architecture* posits, as I would, a similar lotus-petal band at Tiruccenduṟai.[27]

At the Mūvarkōyil and at Tiruccenduṟai each temple's three unbroken vimāna walls demonstrate further similarities (*Figs. 5, 12*). A single facet projects at the center of each wall, as the vertical breaks in the basement moldings reveal. A large niche recedes into the center of each facet. One delicately ornamented pilaster frames the right and left edge of each central facet. A pair of these pilasters marks the outer edge of each vimāna wall.

The fourth wall of each vimāna opens to a small porch or ardhamaṇḍapa, though at the Mūvarkōyil only the foundations of those vestibules are now visible (*Fig. 9*). At Tiruccenduṟai the ardhamaṇḍapa is still attached to the vimāna (*Fig. 13*). There and in the foundations of each Mūvarkōyil temple, the ardhamaṇḍapa does not extend the full width of the vimāna (see *Fig. 9*) and the ardhamaṇḍapa walls join directly to the vimāna without the indentation that marks this juncture at some other temples. The ardhamaṇḍapa foundations surviving at Koḍumbāḷūr inscribe unbroken lines on the ground, indicating that these walls, like those at Tiruccenduṟai, held no niches for sculpture.[28] Most ardhamaṇḍapa walls of this region and period have a south-facing niche for Gaṇeśa, Śiva's elephant-headed son, and a north-facing niche for Durgā, the goddess who destroyed the Buffalo Demon.

Fig. 12. East wall of the *vimāna*, central temple, Mūvarkōyil complex, Koḍumbāḷūr. A figure of Śiva Ardhanārī stands in the central niche.

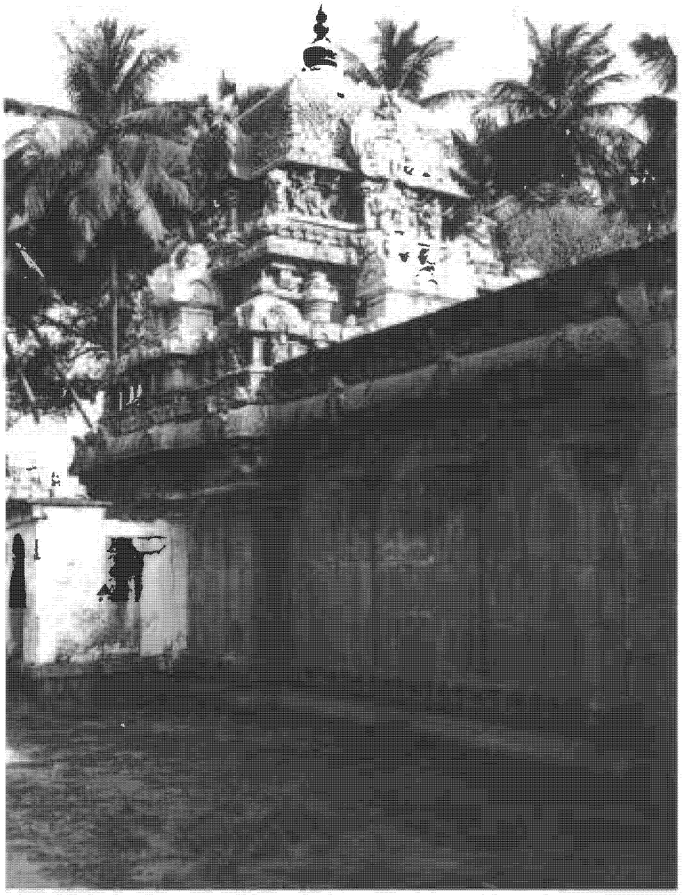

Fig. 13. The *ardhamaṇḍapa* (on the right) attaching to east face of the *vimāna*, Candraśekhara temple, seen from the southeast, Tiruccenduṟai.

Fig. 14. Figure of Śiva standing and playing the *vīṇa*. Niche in south wall of the *vimāna*, southernmost temple, Mūvarkōyil complex, Koḍumbāḷūr.

Some contemporary temples have two or three niches in each ardhamaṇḍapa wall.[29]

The only large niches at Naṅgai's and Bhūti Vikramakēsari's temples are the ones embedded in the three closed walls of each vimāna. These niches look to have held sculptures of similar subjects at both sites, and not the subjects represented at most temples in the region. On the vimānas of most early Kāvērī-area temples Śiva appears in the south-facing niche, seated as the great teacher (Dakṣiṇāmūrti); the west-facing niche houses Viṣṇu, Śiva in his half-female form (Ardhanārī), or Śiva manifest in an infinite flaming pillar (Liṅgodbhava); Brahmā, the creator god, occupies the north-facing niche. At these Irukkuvēḷ temples, by contrast, all the surviving niche figures represent manifestations of Śiva and all of them stand, including the figures in south-facing niches.

At the Mūvarkōyil the only south-facing niche figure to survive is on the southernmost temple, and it represents Śiva standing and playing the *vīṇa* (*Fig. 14*).[30] The same niche on the central temple is now empty. The Mūvarkōyil has no west-facing niches because both extant temples open, unconventionally, to the west. Their east-facing niches contain, at the central temple, Śiva as Ardhanārī (*Fig. 15*); and at the southern temple as Gaṅgādhara, catching the falling Gaṅgā River in his outstretched lock of hair (*Fig. 16*). Both east-facing figures stand, leaning one of their proper right arms on the neck of Śiva's bull, Nandi.[31] These figures are particularly svelte, and rest so lightly on their feet as to appear almost weightless. Each stands slightly hip-shot, causing the torso to tilt softly to one side and the legs to suggest a gentle forward motion.

In the north wall niches of both standing Mūvarkōyil temples, Śiva takes the form of Kaṅkāla, in which he wanders in penitence for having cut off Brahmā's fifth head (*Figs. 17, 18*).[32] Kaṅkāla's presence here may have something to do with the Kālāmukha school of Śaivism that Bhūti Vikramakēsari patronized.[33] David Lorenzen has demonstrated that Śiva's Kaṅkāla manifestation was of cen-

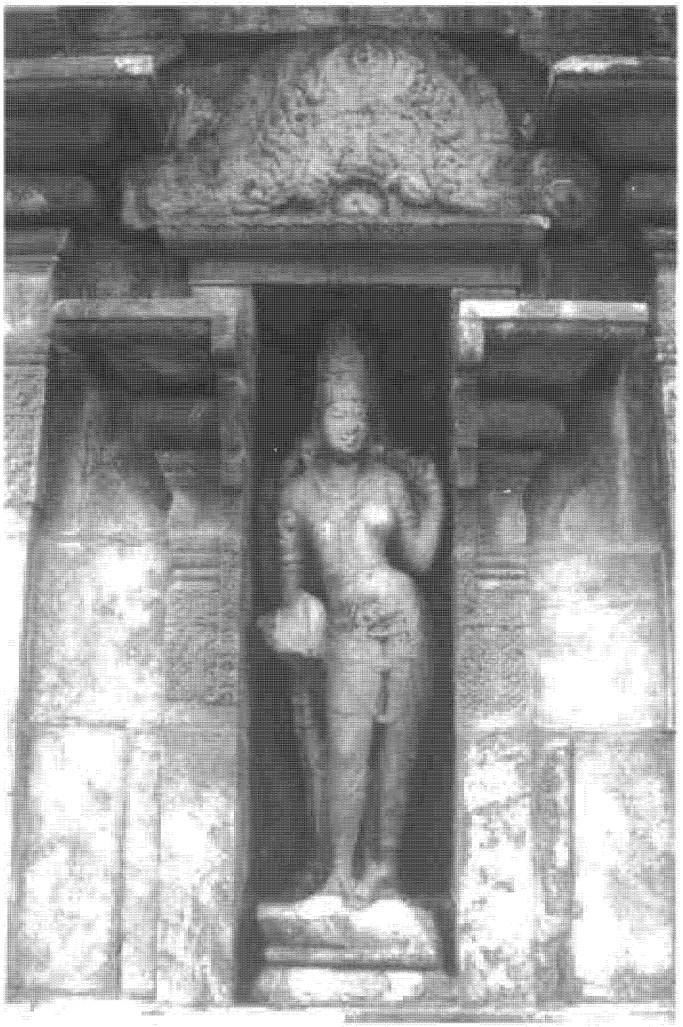

Fig. 15. Śiva as Ardhanārī. Niche in the east wall of the *vimāna*, central temple, Mūvarkōyil complex, Koḍumbāḷūr.

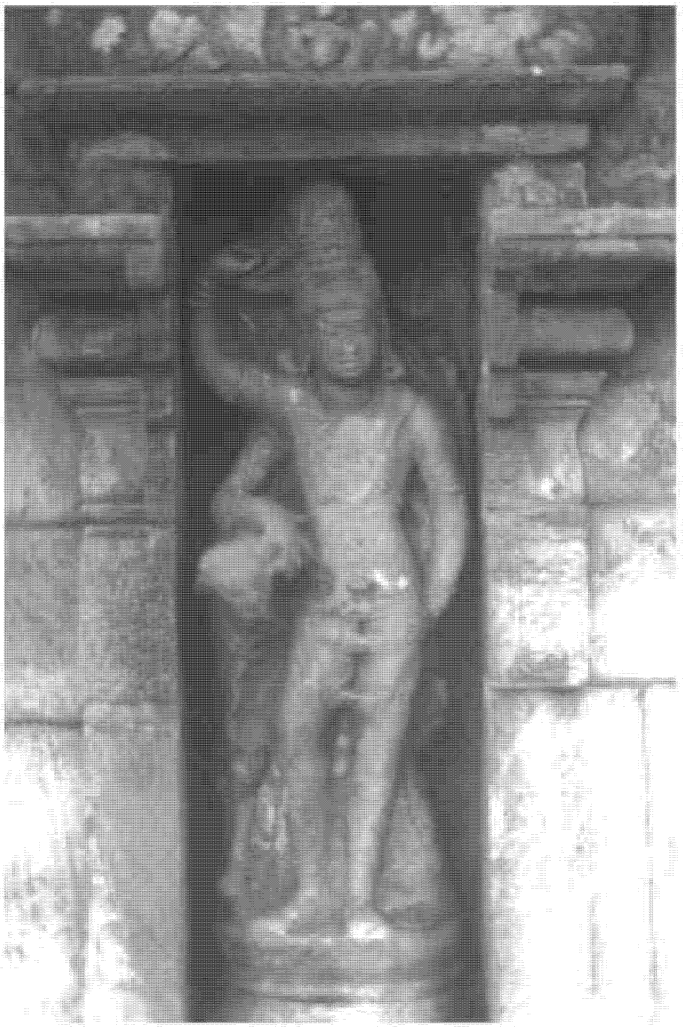

Fig. 16. Śiva as Gaṅgādhara. Niche in the east wall of the *vimāna*, southernmost temple, Mūvarkōyil complex, Koḍumbāḷūr.

tral importance to Kāpālika Śaivism, in which followers modelled their actions and bodies upon Śiva's penitent and sexual aspects; though the Kāpālikas and Kālāmukhas may have differed in their practices, contemporaries saw the two sects as similar, and both traced their lineages to the legendary ascetic Lakulīśa.[34] It is possible, then, that the two sects also shared sculptural iconographies and that Kaṅkāla was represented at the Mūvarkōyil because Kālāmukha followers, like Kāpālika followers, emulated him. The figures of Ardhanārī and Gaṅgādhara at this temple could be part of the same ideology. In those manifestations Śiva's body joins with the bodies of goddesses; Kāpālikas particularly emulated Śiva by reenacting his physical union with the goddess Parvatī.

The iconographic program of Naṅgai's temple was similar to the program at her father's temple, though in a mirror image as it faces east instead of west, and in a simpler version on one instead of three shrines. Only the south niche of her temple retains its original figure, and that is a slender, standing image of Śiva, his hips and shoulders tilted gently toward his proper right (*Fig. 6*). The languid pose and slim body recall the niche figures of the Mūvarkōyil. And he leans one elbow on the neck of his bull, as do the east-facing figures at the Mūvarkōyil (*Figs. 15, 16*). He is clearly not the seated teacher, Dakṣiṇāmūrti, who would come to occupy most south-facing niches in the region. A few centuries after the temple was built, worshippers felt Dakṣiṇāmūrti's absence keenly enough to set a small figure of him in this niche in front of the niche's original occupant.

I propose that the west vimāna niche at Tiruccenḍuṟai originally held the broken figure that now lies against the compound wall (*Fig. 19*). This fragment's dimensions fit that niche,[35] and it displays the elegant attenuation, the tilted ribcage, and the standing posture of the original fig-

Fig. 17. Śiva as Kaṅkāla. Niche in the north wall of the *vimāna*, southernmost temple, Mūvarkōyil complex, Koḍumbāḷūr.

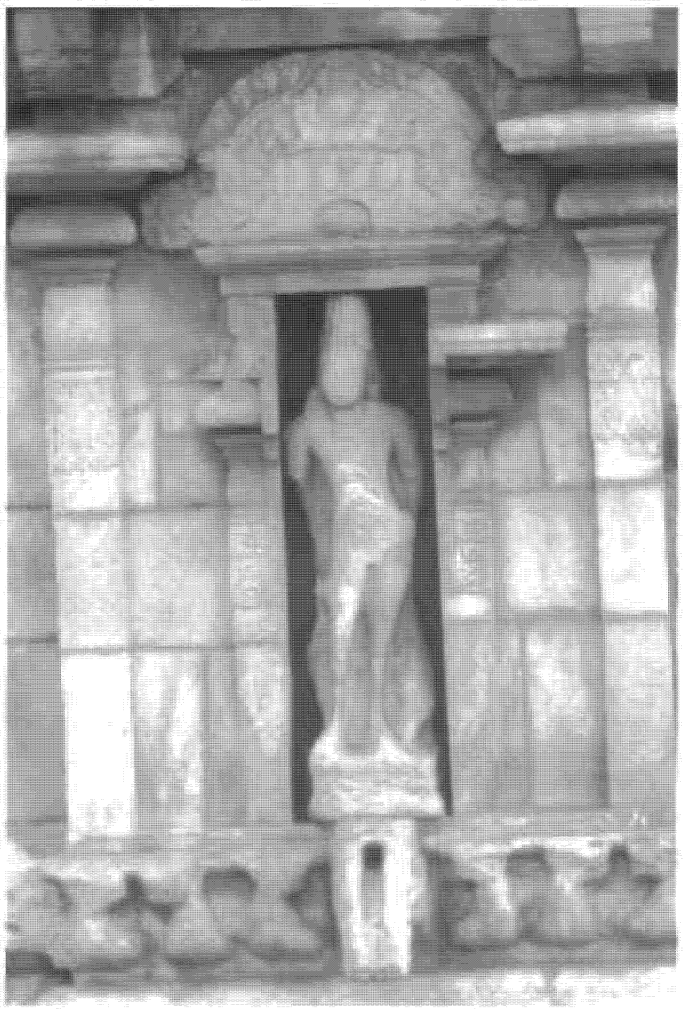

Fig. 18. Śiva as Kaṅkāla. Niche in the north wall of the *vimāna*, central temple, Mūvarkōyil complex, Kodumbālūr.

ure in the same temple's south niche. The slender proportions and relaxed quality of this fragment's pose indicate that this piece could be as early as the vimāna itself, unlike the other fragments in the yard which are more compact in their proportions and more rigid in their postures.

This piece represents Śiva as Ardhanārī, his body vertically bifurcated into a male right half and a female left half. The lower third of the body, the face, and the single breast—the most readily identifiable marker of this image type—have broken off but the figure is still legible as Ardhanārī. Note the asymmetries between the broad male shoulder (on the proper right side) and the rounded female one, the straight contours of the male torso and the sinuous contours on the female side, the double arms on the male side and the single arm on the female. Śiva's wild and matted locks expand more energetically than the coiffure on his female side.

I suggest the temple's west niche rather than its empty north niche as this figure's original home because Ardhanārī figures at other Kāvērī-region temples of this period all occupy the niche in the vimāna's back wall.[36] At most of these temples the back wall faces west, as it does at Tiruccenḍurai. At the Mūvarkōyil, where Ardhanārī faces east, the east wall is the back wall of the vimāna. If Ardhanārī occupied the west niche of the Tiruccenḍurai temple, its position on the temple would be consistent with the same figure's placement at the Mūvarkōyil.

The evidence from which I can conjecture about the north vimāna niche at Tiruccenḍurai is a pot-bellied dwarf depicted above that niche (*Fig. 20*). Such dwarfs appear as Śiva's attendants on monuments throughout Tamiḻnāḍu. This figure signifies his affiliation with Śiva through his thick, swinging locks of hair and the dance-like posture of his spread knees and arms. Similar figures appear over sev-

Fig. 19. Śiva as Ardhanārī. Loose sculpture from courtyard of the Candraśekhara temple, Tiruccenduṟai.

eral niches occupied by Śiva images at the Mūvarkōyil (*Figs. 14, 16, 17*). The figure that once stood beneath this dwarf at Tiruccenduṟai therefore most likely represented Śiva, and perhaps in the same Kaṅkāla manifestation that appears in the Mūvarkōyil's north-facing niches. Thus Naṅgai's temple held relaxed, standing figures of Śiva in at least two and perhaps all three of its vimāna niches, in keeping with the unusual iconographic program at her father's Mūvarkōyil complex.

There are admittedly differences between Naṅgai's temple and her father's, and these extend beyond later restorations such as the intense coloring and the emphatic stuccoed arches (*kuḍu*) on the capstone of the Tiruccenduṟai temple. Their temples open in opposite directions, as I have mentioned. The entry hall (ardhamaṇḍapa) of Naṅgai's temple is larger (*Figs. 4, 13*) and houses four free-standing pillars; the foundations remaining at the Mūvarkōyil trace smaller halls with no interior pillars (*Fig. 9*). On the Tiruccenduṟai superstructure, the temple-shaped ornaments are peopled with figures carved in relief (*Fig. 11*). Fewer such figures appear on the Mūvarkōyil (*Fig. 9*), although more may once have been rendered in paint. The temples built by this father and daughter were thus similar but not identical.

TEMPLES BUILT BY NAṄGAI'S BROTHER AND HIS SON

Inscriptions on the temples themselves state that Naṅgai's brother, Bhūti Parāntakaṉ, built the Vaḍatīrthanātha temple at Andanallūr (*Fig. 21*) and that his son, Mahimālaya

Fig. 20. Dancing dwarf framed by pearl festoons and *makara*. Ornament crowning niche in north wall of the *vimāna*, Candraśekhara temple, Tiruccenduṟai.

Fig. 21. Superstructure and *vimāna* walls seen from the northwest, Vaḍatīrthanātha temple, Andanallūr. Built by Bhūti Parāntakaṉ.

Irukkuvēḷ, built the Mucukundeśvara temple at Koḍumbāḷūr (*Fig. 22*).[37] These temples have several features that Naṅgai's and Bhūti Vikramakēsari's temples also shared, features that are not universal among early temples of the Kāvērī region. Their superstructures are two tiers high and their capstones are large with deeply flared sides. The Mucukundeśvara temple's capstone is also square in plan. A single niche pierces each of the vimānas' three exterior walls. Their ardhamaṇḍapa walls have no niches and they do not extend the full width of the vimānas, which they abut without extra indentations or facetting of the walls (*Figs. 23, 24*). The vimāna walls of Mahimālaya Irukkuvēḷ's temple at Koḍumbāḷūr project only in a central facet bordered by single pilasters (*Fig. 22*). Paired pilasters mark that temple's corners.[38]

In certain other features these two temples differ from Naṅgai's and Bhūti Vikramakēsari's temples and from each other. The temple at Andanallūr has a circular capstone instead of a square one and employs a more complex design for the facetting of its vimāna walls (*Fig. 21*). In addition to the wide central facet common to all four temples, two narrower facets project at the left and right edges of each closed vimāna wall at Andanallūr. These narrow facets project less prominently than the central facet, meaning that each vimāna wall at Andanallūr defines three parallel planes rather than the two planes in vimāna walls at other Irukkuvēḷ temples.

I find similar basement moldings and superstructures at the Mucukundeśvara and the Andanallūr temple, though both differ from those at Naṅgai's temple and her father's.

Fig. 22. Superstructure and *vimāna* walls seen from the south, Mucukundeśvara temple, Koḍumbāḷūr. Built by Mahimālaya Irukkuvēḷ.

The Mucukundeśvara and the Andanallūr temple rest on similar configurations of blocky, crystalline layers (*Figs. 7C, 7D*).[39] These incorporate one chamfered block among their crisp right angles. They have no undulating lotus petals or twisting lions.[40] The superstructures resemble each other and are simpler than Naṅgai's. The temple-shaped block at the center of each side of the lower tier has only one story. This creates a clear visual break between the tiers at the Mucukundeśvara (*Fig. 22*). The same configuration was present at Andanallūr until later restorations elongated the temple-shaped elements of its lower tiers (*Fig. 21*).

Neither temple retains the figures that originally occupied the three vimāna niches. Even their lintel carvings are illegible, those at Andanallūr being heavily whitewashed and those of the Mucukundeśvara having remained unfinished. The figure of Dakṣiṇāmūrti in the south niche at Andanallūr has the rigid posture and energized contours characteristic of carving done after the twelfth century.

FAMILY STYLE AND OTHER TEMPLES

Limited differences and substantial similarities are thus present among the designs of four temples built by close-

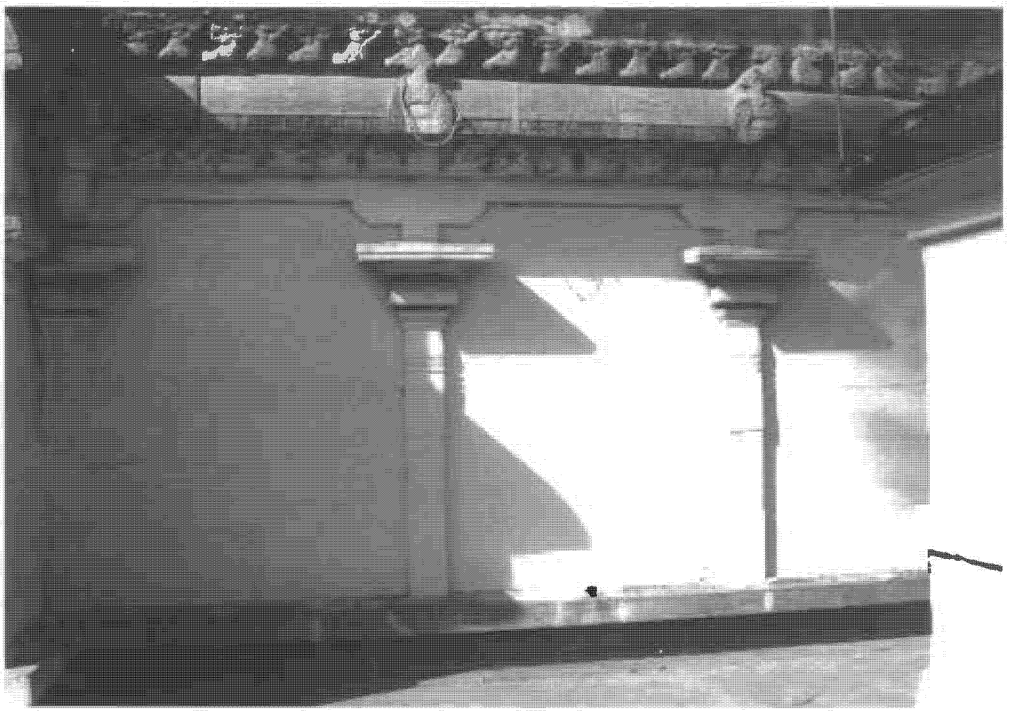

Fig. 23. South wall, *ardhamaṇḍapa*, Vaḍatīrthanātha temple, Andanallūr. *Ardhamaṇḍapa* joins the *vimāna* at the photo's left margin.

ly related members of the Irukkuvēḷ family. These temples share features that appear occasionally throughout the Kāvērī region, as well as features that are common within that region's macro-style. This considerable degree of sharing among the four temples convinces me that the Irukkuvēḷ family built in an identifiable and consistent architectural substyle. I assume that family style was produced by members of one family contracting with a single workshop. Differences among Irukkuvēḷ monuments in molding configurations and in the aediculae of the superstructures suggest that flexibility existed within this family style. That flexibility was, however, limited. No two Irukkuvēḷ temples are identical, and yet their differences are subtle. Either their favored workshop offered just a few design options for architectural ornament and groundplan, or Irukkuvēḷ patrons selected narrowly from the available range of options. In one way or another, the Irukkuvēḷs seem to have made choices that restricted the architectural variations among their temples.

The design elements that constitute an Irukkuvēḷ family style are not, however, unique to monuments built by that family. Several temples that cannot be traced to Irukkuvēḷ sponsorship also display those elements. Apparently, the workshop the Irukkuvēḷs patronized also served other patrons, or other workshops used the same śāstras that the Irukkuvēḷs' workshop used. Patronage may have helped to shape style, but style does not conversely reveal a particular family's patronage. Keeping this in mind, I have limited my sample of Irukkuvēḷ monuments to those for which inscriptions confirm the involvement of Irukkuvēḷ family members in the temple's construction.

Fig. 24. South wall, *ardhamaṇḍapa*, Mucukundeśvara temple, Koḍumbāḷūr. *Ardhamaṇḍapa* joins the *vimāna* at the photo's left margin. Structure at the right margin is a later addition.

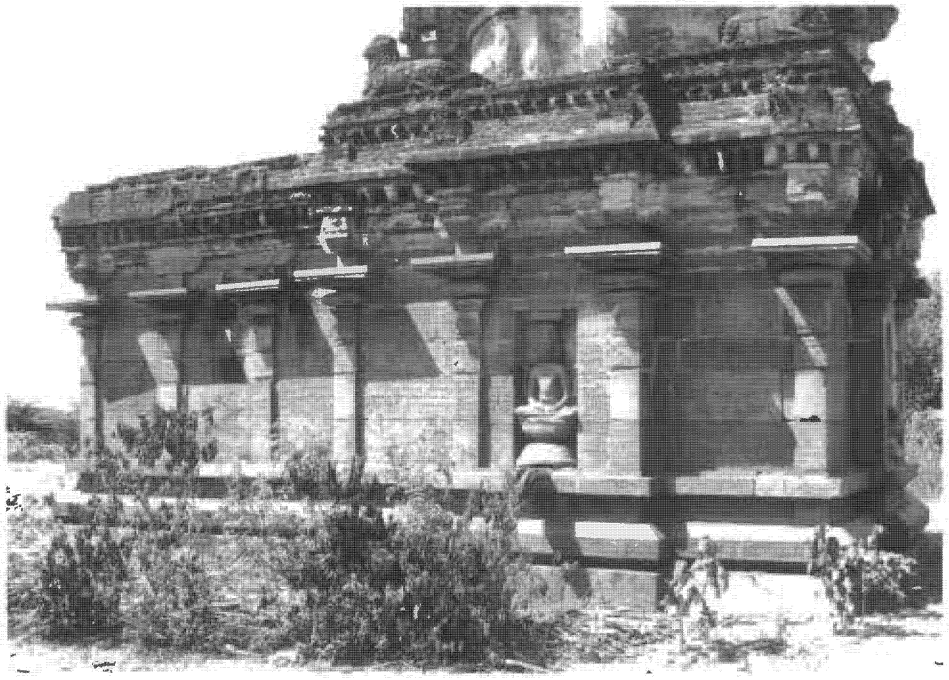

Fig. 25. Ground-level walls of the Kadambavaneśvara temple, Ērumbūr. Built by Iruṅgōlaṉ Gunavaṉ Aparājitaṉ in 935. Seen from the north. The *vimāna* is to the right and the *ardhamaṇḍapa* to the left.

Fig. 26. Figure of Śiva seated in meditation and wielding the deer and the axe. Niche on the west side of the *vimāna*, Kadambavaneśvara temple, Ērumbūr.

I have not attributed further temples to that group on the basis of style.[41]

The Kadambavaneśvara temple in Ērumbūr (*Fig. 25*), for example, displays several of the more distinctive features I have associated with the Irukkuvēḷ family style, but one of its inscriptions clearly assigns sponsorship of the temple's construction not to one of Naṅgai's natal kin but to an Iruṅgōlaṉ Gunavaṉ Aparājitaṉ.[42] Like the vimāna walls at Tiruccenduṟai, the Mūvarkōyil, and the Mucukundeśvara, each vimāna wall at Ērumbūr has a single, central projecting facet that is pierced by one niche. Slender figural carvings occupy these niches, and the one in the west is an unusual form of Śiva (*Fig. 26*), recalling the frequency and unconventionality with which the Irukkuvēḷs' temples deploy Śiva figures in niches. The ardhamaṇḍapa at Ērumbūr does not run the full width of the vimāna, and the juncture between them has no niches or indentations. The basement moldings are the same crisp forms found at the Mucukundeśvara (*Figs. 7C, 24*) and probably at Andanallūr.[43]

The Ōdaneśvara temple at Tiruccāṭṭuṟai and the Ghṛitasthāneśvara temple at Tillaisthānam (*Figs. 27, 28*) resemble Irukkuvēḷ structures even more closely than the Ērumbūr temple does, though neither is likely to have been constructed under Irukkuvēḷ sponsorship. Both lie well to the east of Kōnāḍu, the Irukkuvēḷs' region. Neither temple bears any inscription specifically mentioning temple construction. Inscriptions about other donations at the temple in Tiruccāṭṭuṟai mention no Irukkuvēḷ and they do mention a rival family, the Muttaraiyars.[44] Inscriptions at Tillaisthānam mention Irukkuvēḷs, but they also mention Cōḻas, Pāṇḍyas, and individuals outside these families.[45]

Fig. 27. Superstructure and *vimāna* walls of Ōdaneśvara temple, Tiruccāṭṭuṟai, seen from the northwest.

And yet these temples' most noticeable features closely resemble features at Irukkuvēḷ temples. The exterior walls of their ardhamaṇḍapas have no niches and join wider vimānas without niches or further indentations. Their superstructures each have two tiers and a square, flaring capstone, and the unusual attached half-columns that also flank the wide aediculae on the central shrine of the Mūvarkōyil (*Figs. 10, 29, 30*).[46] The basement moldings at Tillaisthānam are strikingly similar to those at the Mucukundeśvara (*Figs. 7C, 7F*), and the moldings at Tiruccāṭṭuṟai conflate the crisp moldings of the Mucukundeśvara with the lotus-petal molding of the Mūvarkōyil (*Fig. 7E*). Each vimāna wall at Tiruccāṭṭuṟai has a single, central projection, as do the Mūvarkōyil, the Mucukundeśvara, and Naṅgai's temple.

Perhaps the most striking features at Tiruccāṭṭuṟai and Tillaisthānam are the elegant sculptures of Śiva that stand in most of their vimāna niches (*Fig. 31*).[47] These recall the unusual preference at the Mūvarkōyil and Tiruccenduṟai for slender, standing figures of Śiva in all three vimāna niches.[48] The hands of these multilimbed figures all hold the same objects or make the same gestures.[49] These figures further recall the Śiva figures at Irukkuvēḷ temples in their lithe proportions and in the easy, fluid motion their postures imply. All look to be stepping quietly forward from their niches, their weight still resting on the proper

Fig. 28. Superstructure and *vimāna* walls of Ghṛitasthāneśvara temple, Tillaisthānam, seen from the northwest.

left foot as the upper body pivots softly to the right and the proper right leg bends slightly and points forward. The head tilts gently and gazes down toward the viewers' level.

The sculptures' pliant, relaxed forms encourage viewers to read them as approachable, living bodies. They seem divinely beautiful men stepping into these particular, local places, ready to speak to the people who stand before them. Hymns composed shortly before these stone temples were built sing of Śiva appearing miraculously in Tillaisthānam, Tiruccāttuṟai, and other villages of the Kāvērī delta.[50] Visitors to these temples in the tenth century would have understood these as places where the god's feet had touched the earth. Life-sized sculptures of Śiva that seem to step out of the temple wall may have evoked for these viewers the living deity who had walked in their own towns, and could walk there again any day.

NAṄGAI'S TEMPLE AND THE EARLY CŌḶAS

I can find no trace of Cōḷa influence on Naṅgai's temple, not surprisingly, since Cōḷa kings may have sponsored construction of no more than two temples before the late tenth century.[51] Before that the only Cōḷas who funded temple architecture substantially were other women who had married into the family. The most prodigious of these was Sembiyaṉ Mahādevi, the widow of Cōḷa king Gaṇḍarāditya. Between circa 970 and the early eleventh century she sponsored stone temples at Kōnērirājapuram,

Fig. 29. Attached half-columns between the top and bottom tiers of the superstructure, and flanking the central aedicula (detail), Ōdaneśvara temple, Tiruccāṭṭuṟai.

Fig. 30. Attached half-columns flanking the central aedicula of the superstructure (upper corners of photograph), Ghṛitasthāneśvara temple, Tillaisthānam.

Ānāṅgūr, Tirukkōḍikāval, Āḍuturai, Kuttālam, Vṛiddhācalam, and probably elsewhere as well.[52]

These projects took place far too late to have had any influence on Naṅgai, nor is there evidence of visual influences flowing in the other direction. The temples built by these two Cōḷa queens look quite different from each other. Sembiyaṉ Mahādevi's temples have three full niches cut into each of the ardhamaṇḍapa walls (*Fig. 32*); the ardhamaṇḍapa runs the full width of the vimāna, and deep wall indentations mark their juncture; the vimāna walls display many facetting patterns. Her temples employ three different combinations of basement moldings, none of which include the twisting leonine figures found at Naṅgai's temple. The iconographic programs at Sembiyaṉ

Fig. 31. Figure of Śiva. Central niche of the west wall of the *vimāna*, Ōdaneśvara temple, Tiruccāṭṭuṟai.

Fig. 32. Niches housing (from left) Agastya, Śiva Naṭarāja, and Gaṇeśa. South wall of the *ardhamaṇḍapa* seen from the west, Āpatsahāyeśvara temple, Āḍuṭuṟai. Indentation at juncture with the *vimāna* is visible at far left.

Mahādevi's temples set Brahmā in the north niche of the vimāna and Śiva Liṅgodbhava in the west (*Fig. 33*). Note the firmer stance, more powerful shoulders, tighter modelling, and harder surfaces that distinguish this figure from the lilting, soft, and slender forms at Tiruccenduṟai and the Mūvarkōyil (*Figs. 6, 14–18*).

Might the differences between Naṅgai's and Sembiyaṉ Mahādevi's temples reflect the architectural style of each woman's natal family? No surviving buildings have yet been associated with other members of Sembiyaṉ Mahādevi's natal family, the Maḻavaraiyars, but their other practices do resemble those of the Irukkuvēḷs, albeit on a less exalted scale. Sembiyaṉ Mahādevi's father is recognized as chief of Maḻanāḍu, a subregion north of the Kāvērī;[53] the family intermarried at least twice with the Cōḻas, though always in the subordinate position of giving brides (*Fig. 3*). The Maḻavaraiyars seem to me a more plausible source of inspiration than the Cōḻa kings for Sembiyaṉ Mahādevi's patronage practices and architectural preferences.

Another Cōḻa bride built a temple closer to Naṅgai's in time and form. This was Kōkkiḻāṉ, the mother of Rājāditya Cōḻa who was to become king in 947.[54] Before 935 she built the Tiruttoṇḍīśvara temple at Tirunāmanallūr (*Fig. 34*),[55] which shares with Naṅgai's temple the flared, square capstone, the single projecting facet on each vimāna wall, the arrangement of pilasters, the absence of niches on the entry hall, and the combination of leonine and floriated basement moldings (*Fig. 7G*).[56] The Tirunāmanallūr temple also retains in its southern vimāna niche a figure of Śiva standing with his body tilted and leaning calmly on the neck of his bull (*Fig. 35*), sharing thus the iconography of the similarly placed figure at Tiruccenduṟai. This figure at Tirunāmanallūr seems origi-

nal to the tenth century in its slender proportions and the ease of its implied motion.

Naṅgai's and Kōkkiḷāṉ's temples are also different in important ways. The tower at Tirunāmanallūr has one tier, not two; the leonine forms of the basement moldings there are more widely spaced than those at Tiruccenduṟai; and tall figures of women dancing depend from the cornices at a dramatic angle (*Fig. 36*). Nothing comparable to these dancing figures exists at Tiruccenduṟai or at other Irukkuvēḷ temples.

Among temples associated with the Cōḷas, the temple at Tirunāmanallūr is the only one I have found that looks at all like Naṅgai's, but I still do not take this as evidence that Naṅgai's temple reflects a Cōḷa family style. In the first place, the differences between these two temples are substantial. In the second place, the temple at Tirunāmanallār was built not by a Cōḷa king but by a woman who, like Naṅgai, had married into that family. Kōkkiḷāṉ too may have been building in a tradition brought from her natal family. Her later gifts suggest that her natal home was the subregion just north of the Kāvērī and of the Irukkuvēḷs' Kōnāḍu, and thus very near Tiruccenduṟai (*Fig. 2*).[57] Just by crossing the river, Kōkkiḷāṉ, her natal kin, and artisans they hired could have seen Naṅgai's temple and been inspired to replicate loosely its more striking features. This kind of tangential exposure to the Tiruccenduṟai temple could account for the incomplete resemblances between the temples these two queens built.

CONCLUSIONS

I suggest that, within the extended Cōḷa family, patronage of temple architecture was primarily female: women mar-

Fig. 33. Śiva Liṅgodbhava flanked by Brahmā (proper right) and Viṣṇu (proper left). West side of the *vimāna*, Uktaveḍīśvara temple, Kuttālam. Built by Sembiyaṉ Mahādevi.

Fig. 34. Main walls of Tiruttoṇḍīśvara temple, Tirunāmanallūr. Built by Queen Kōkkiḷāṉ before 935. Seen from the northwest. The *vimāna* is to the right and the *ardhamaṇḍapa* to the left.

Fig. 35. Śiva leaning on the neck of his bull. South side of the *vimāna*, Tiruttoṇḍīśvara temple, Tirunāmanallūr.

Fig. 36. Figure of a woman in a dance posture. Below the cornice at the base of the superstructure, Tiruttoṇḍīśvara temple, Tirunāmanallūr.

rying into that family brought this practice with them from their natal families. Cōḷa men had little impact on temple construction during the tenth century, even when the sponsors were their wives. It seems to have been women from other families who brought temple construction to the Cōḷas, perpetuating the practice until Cōḷa kings took it up in the eleventh century, when their finances permitted and as a strategy for constructing an imperial mode of kingship. The role Cōḷa wives played in catalyzing this practice among their affines suggests that their various natal families had, like the Irukkuvēḷs, family styles of architecture and building traditions older than the Cōḷas'.

The consistency of style among Irukkuvēḷ monuments is noteworthy because it is the strongest evidence to date of patronage having an impact on the form of temples in the Kāvērī region. The Irukkuvēḷ family style may have derived from that family's consistent patronage of a single workshop. That Tiruccāṭṭuṟai and Tillaisthānam were not built by Irukkuvēḷs, but demonstrate many of their temples' more striking features, convinces me that architectural styles were common to certain families but not unique to them. More likely, the specific formal options I have associated with the Irukkuvēḷs derived from a workshop of artisans that could work for various patrons. Many such workshops must have been active during the tenth century. The diversity of their styles and the diffusion of temple construction among many families probably account for the multiple forms and geographic dispersion of stone temples during the ninth and tenth centuries.

Kōkkiḷāṉ's and Sembiyaṉ Mahādevi's patronage of temple construction provides specific evidence that Naṅgai was not the only woman who had the agency to finance such projects during the tenth century. Many prominent women may have presented themselves through their natal identity by sponsoring construction of temples in their natal family's style. Many may have celebrated their natal identities by donating publicly to their temples after their

marriages, as Naṅgai did emphatically with an inscription that defines her first through her natal relatives and then through her marital associations.[58]

One reason to see Naṅgai's situation as typical is the prevalence of cross-cousin marriage among the powerful families of the Kāvērī region. The presence of other women from the same natal home, and the Cōḻas' deliberate perpetuation of close contacts with their natal families, would have kept these wives' sense of natal identity strong. The frequency of cross-cousin marriage among the Cōḻas is likely to have made the agency that Naṅgai demonstrates fairly common among other Cōḻa wives.[59]

The cases of Kōkkiḻāṉ and Sembiyaṉ Mahādevi also demonstrate that even marriage to a Cōḻa did not impede their agency as architectural patrons. Both women built their temples after they were married. The chronology of inscriptions implies that Naṅgai may have built before she married, but apparently Cōḻa practice would not have forbidden her from building afterward.

The Irukkuvēḷ building tradition seems to have been as open to women as to men, and in this regard too it may not have been unusual. Naṅgai appears to have enjoyed the same degree of flexibility as her male relatives in choosing among design options available through local workshops and their śāstras. Though gendered within the Cōḻa family context before the eleventh century, temple building seems to have been ungendered in a family of more established building traditions.

That Naṅgai as a married woman could present herself primarily as an offspring of the Irukkuvēḷ family might seem radical for the freedom from her husband it seems so publicly to imply. Her agency in temple construction could suggest to modern readers her defiant appropriation of empowering male prerogative. And yet Naṅgai's patronage of art may have had as little to do with her sex as it did with Cōḻa men: she is likely to have understood such building as a family practice rather than a gendered act. Natal family identity probably figured larger than gender identity in Naṅgai's perceptions of herself as a temple donor, a useful reminder of the profound extent to which culture can shape the connotations of gender, family, and individuality.

Notes

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1. The first component of her name means "lady"; the second component is her father's name; the third is her paternal grandfather's name; and the fourth component means "local goddess." For convenience, I will refer to her simply as Naṅgai.

2. Compare studies in which knowing the patrons' and artists' gender completely revises a viewer's understanding of some works of art: cf. Geraldine A. Johnson and Sara F. Matthews Greico, "Introduction," *Picturing Women in Renaissance and Baroque Italy*, ed. Geraldine A. Johnson and Sara F. Matthews Greico (New York: Cambridge Univ. Pr., 1997), pp. 5–7.

3. Katherine Mayo articulated these stereotypes in her infamous book *Mother India* (6th printing; New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1927), pp. 42–50, 90–141. On the persistence of her ideas in American thought, see Harold Isaacs, *Scratches on Our Minds: American Views of China and India* (4th printing; Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 1980), pp. 267–71.

4. On public generosity as an enduring Tamiḻ virtue, see Mattison Mines, *Public Faces, Private Voices: Community and Individuality in South India* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Pr., 1994).

On the prominence of women as donors in medieval Tamiḻnāḍu, especially in the tenth-eleventh centuries, see Leslie C. Orr, "Women's Wealth and Worship: Female Patronage of Hinduism, Jainism, and Buddhism in Medieval Tamilnadu," in *Faces of the Feminine in Ancient, Medieval, and Modern India*, ed. Mandakranta Bose (New York: Oxford Univ. Pr., forthcoming); and Orr, "Women in the Temple, the Palace and the Family: The Construction of Women's Identities in Pre-Colonial Tamilnadu," in *New Horizons in South Indian Studies: Papers in Honor of Noboru Karashima*, ed. Kenneth Hall (Delhi: Oxford Univ. Pr., forthcoming); George Spencer, "When Queens Bore Gifts: Women as Temple Donors in the Chola period," in *Śrīnidhiḥ: Perspectives on Indian Archaeology, Art and Culture* (Madras: New Era, 1983), pp. 361–73; V. Balambal, "Great Women of Chola Dynasty," *Journal of Tamil Studies*, vol. 10 (1976), pp. 71–88; and B. Venkataraman, *Temple Art Under the Chola Queens* (Faridabad: Thomson Press [India], 1976).

For more on the role of women in the temple in South Indian history, see Leslie C. Orr, *Donors, Devotees, and Daughters of God: Temple Women in Medieval Tamilnadu* (New York: Oxford Univ. Pr., 2000).

5. On wealth or class mattering more than gender in various cultural contexts, see Gerda Lerner, "Reconceptualizing differences among women," *Journal of Women's History*, vol. 1 (1990), pp. 106–22.

6. In contrast to Margaret of Austria, for example, who does seem to have employed architectural patronage as a means of resisting and appropriating male authority: see Alexandra Carpino, "Margaret of Austria's Funerary Complex at Brou: Conjugal Love, Political Ambition or Personal Glory?" in *Women and Art in Early Modern Europe: Patrons, Collectors, and Connoisseurs*, ed. Cynthia Lawrence (University Park: Pennsylvania State Univ. Pr., 1997), pp. 37–52. But many in the European Middle Ages perceived art patronage as a female activity. On men's increasing appropriation of art patronage at the beginning of the early modern era, see J. Kelly-Gadol, "Did Women Have a Renaissance?" in *Becoming Visible: Women in European History*, ed. R. Bridenthal and C. Koonz (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1977), pp. 137–64. Note also the prominence of Muslim women among patrons

of architecture and other arts: *Patronage by Women in Islamic Art, Asian Art*, vol. 6, no. 2 (1993). For a summary of the scholarly conversation about the problematic assumptions of male dominance in the production of art, see Johnson and Matthews Greico, "Introduction," *Picturing Women*, p. 3, n. 8.

7. Scholars have already demonstrated that some paradigms of twentieth-century feminist art history need adjustment before they work for ancient South Asia. See Joanna Williams, "Construction of Gender in the Paintings and Graffiti of Sigiriya," and Vidya Dehejia, "Spectatorship and Representation," both in *Representing the Body: Gender Issues in Indian Art*, ed. Vidya Dehejia (New Delhi: Kali for Women, 1997), pp. 1–21, 56–67. They note that much South Asian art was designed to receive and return the gazes of laywomen, celibates of both sexes, and amorous couples, and not to function exclusively as passive receptors of a sexually acquisitive male gaze. Note that Linda Nochlin too had urged in 1971 that feminist art history go beyond the simple study of women to question "the very way of formulating the crucial questions of the discipline as a whole": "Why have there been no great women artists?," in *Women, Art, and Power and Other Essays* (New York: Harper and Row, 1988), p. 146. Her advice is still appropriate and it applies more widely than she may have realized.

8. Padma Kaimal, "Early Cōḷa Kings and 'Early Cōḷa Temples': Art and the limits of kingship," *Artibus Asiae*, vol. LVI, 1/2 (1996), pp. 33–66. For the model that ascribes patronage almost entirely to Cōḷa kings, see S. R. Balasubrahmanyam, *Early Chola Art: Part I* (New York: Asia Publishing House, 1966); and *Early Chola Temples* (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 1971); Douglas Barrett, *Early Cola Architecture and Sculpture: 866–1014 AD* (London: Faber and Faber, 1974); M. A. Dhaky, "Coḷa Sculpture," in *Chhavi Golden Jubilee Volume*, ed. Karl Khandalavala et al. (Varanasi: Bharat Kala Bhavan, 1971), pp. 263–89; *The Encyclopaedia of Indian Temple Architecture*, vol. 1.1: *South India, Lower Drāviḍadēśa (200 BC–AD 1324)*, ed. Michael W. Meister (Delhi: Oxford Univ. Pr., 1983); Gerda Hoekveld-Meijer, *Koyils in the Coḷamaṇḍalam: Typology and Development of Early Coḷa Temples* (Amsterdam: Krips Repro Meppel, 1981); Vidya Dehejia, *Art of the Imperial Cholas* (New York: Columbia Univ. Pr., 1990); and Rama Sivaram, *Early Chōḷa Art: Origin and Emergence of Style* (New Delhi: Navrang, 1994).

The royal model of patronage derives from K. A. Nilakantha Sastri's vision of Cōḷa kings as powerful executives administering an efficient bureaucracy and controlling the construction of temples: K. A. Nilakantha Sastri, *The Colas* (Madras: Univ. of Madras, 1955). Burton Stein demonstrates that temples, justice, and taxation were administered at the locality (*nāḍu*) level rather than by Cōḷa kings: *Peasant State and Society in Medieval South India* (Delhi: Oxford Univ. Pr., 1980). On the colonialist distortions in many histories of Indic kingship, see Nicholas B. Dirks, *The Hollow Crown: Ethnohistory of an Indian Kingdom* (New York: Cambridge Univ. Pr., 1987); and Ronald Inden, *Imagining India* (Cambridge, Mass.: Basil Blackwell, 1990), p. 196.

9. The most ambitious attempts at analysis are Barrett, *Early Cola Architecture*; and Hoekveld-Meijer, *Koyils*. Barrett, however, does not discuss the charts summarizing his results and Hoekveld-Meijer's computer analysis is hampered by reliance on construction dates based on the flawed assumptions of S. R. Balasubrahmanyam and others.

10. On the problems of linear thinking in this field, see Gary Schwindler, review of *Early Cola Architecture and Sculpture*, by Douglas Barrett, *Artibus Asiae*, vol. XXXIX, 1 (1977), p. 93; and Gary Schwindler, "Sculpture in medieval South India ca. 9–11th centuries AD: Some old ideas and some new directions," in *Kalādarśana*, ed. Joanna G. Williams (New Delhi: Oxford and IBH, 1981), pp. 91–98. Stein's model of almost autonomous localities (*nāḍu*) strikes me as a better structure for explaining these temples' variety of forms and their geographic dispersion: cf. *Peasant State and Society*, chap. 3. Subbarayalu suggests that Cōḷa kings tacitly acknowledged the *nāḍu* as the supreme authority over the land, and notes the *nāḍu's* responsibility for making donations to temples: Y. Subbarayalu, *Political Geography of the Chola Country* (Madras: State Department of Archaeology, Government of Tamilnadu, 1973), pp. 39–40. James Heitzman finds that the Cōḷas did not begin to impose centralized systems of taxation and arbitration on the Kāvērī region until ca. 1000: "State formation in South India, 850–1280," *Indian Economic and Social History Review*, vol. 24, no. 1 (1987), pp. 35–61. Appadurai notes that local people managed the temple's daily affairs: Arjun Appadurai, *Worship and Conflict Under Colonial Rule: A South Indian Case* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Pr., 1981).

11. Several scholars have begun to explore the possibility that temples built by members of the Irukkuvēḷ, Muttaraiyar, and Paḷuvēṭṭaraiyar families display distinctive family substyles. On the Paḷuvēṭṭaraiyars, see Blandine LeGrand, *Kīḻaiyūr Meḻappaḷuvūr: epanouissement d'une dynastie princière en Inde, à l'époque Cōḷa, Editions Recherche sur les civilizations*, memoire no. 71 (Paris: ADPF, 1987). On the Muttaraiyars, see K. G. Krishnan, "Muttaraiyar," *Damilica*, no. 1 (1970), pp. 68–73. *The Encyclopaedia of Indian Temple Architecture* assigns separate chapters to each prominent family: vol. 1.1, chapters 5–7, 9–10. See also M. A. Dhaky, "Cola Sculpture," pp. 263–89; and K. V. Soundara Rajan, "Early Pāṇḍya, Muttarayar and Irukkveḷ Architecture," in *Studies in Indian Temple Architecture*, ed. Pramod Chandra (New Delhi: American Institute of Indian Studies, 1975), pp. 240–300. On elusive and inconsistent criteria in these studies, see Hoekveld-Meijer, *Koyils*, pp. 48–57. These studies include monuments that have no inscriptions naming their patrons, along with monuments that do have inscriptions documenting patronage. The data are in that way not differentiated. I study family styles in the early Kāvērī area only through temples that bear inscriptions explicitly identifying patrons of construction: "Muttaraiyar, Irukkuvēḷ, Paḷuvēṭṭaraiyar and the Cōḷas of Tañjāvūr," for *Art and Architecture in India*, ed. M. A. Dhaky, in *History of Indian Science, Philosophy, and Culture* (Indian Council of Philosophical Research, forthcoming).

12. I derive this from visiting many temples of the region and from studying the plates in Barrett, *Early Cola Architecture*; and *The Encyclopaedia of Indian Temple Architecture*, vol. 1.1; and from independent analysis of the charts in Barrett and in Hoekveld-Meijer, *Koyils*. Hoekveld-Meijer's brave attempt at collecting statistical evidence on individual architectural features is hampered by confusions about construction dates and inadequately published visual data.

13. The text reads: "Hail! Prosperity! In the third year of [the reign of] king Parakēsarivarman, Pūdi Ādichchapiḍāriyār, daughter of Tennavaṉ Iḷangōvēḷār [and] queen of Arikulakēsariyar [who was] the son of Śōḷa-Perumāṉaḍigaḷ, gave, in this year, sixty kaḻañju of [pure gold called] tuḻaippoṉ [weighed] by the [standard] stone veḍēlviḍugu, as capital [from which] sacred offerings at the holy shrine [have to be provided] to the lord of the stone temple constructed by her at Tiruchchenduṟai, [a hamlet] of Īśāṉamaṅgala which was a brahmadeya." *South Indian Inscriptions* (hereafter *SII*) 3.3, 228–29, #96, lines 1–6. The inscription is carved into the ardhamaṇḍapa wall.

14. For an exhaustive history of the Cōḷa dynasty, see Sastri, *The Colas*. For more precise regnal dates, see N. Sethuraman, *Early Cholas: Mathematics Reconstructs the Chronology* (Kumbakonam: the author, 1980). On the geographic regions of the Cōḷas, Irukkuvēḷs and others, see Subbarayalu, *Political Geography*, pp. 72–77, map 12.

15. On the history of the Irukkuvēḷs, see K. V. Subrahmanya Aiyar, *Historical Sketches of the Ancient Dekhan*, vol. 2 (Madras: 1917: repr., New Delhi: Cosmo Books, 1980), pp. 47–48 and chap. 4; V. Balambal, "Bhūti Vikramakēsari," *Journal of the Madras University*, vol. 51, no. 1, pt. 2 (1979), pp. 11–18. On the region under Irukkuvēḷ authority, its extent, and its ancient name "Kōnāḍu," see Subbarayalu, *Political Geography*, pp. 72–74, map 12; and Stein, *Peasant State and Society*, pp. 302–4. On Bhūti's contemporaneity with Pallava kings, see *Epigraphia Indica* (hereafter *EI*), vol. 32, pp. 99–102, #10.

16. I have synthesized this genealogy from Thomas R. Trautmann, *Dravidian Kinship* (New York: Cambridge Univ. Pr., 1981); Subrahmanya Aiyar, *Historical Sketches*; K. A. Nilakantha Sastri, "The

Koḍumbāḷūr Inscription ofVikrama-Kēsarī," *Journal of Oriental Research*, vol. 7, no. 1 (1933), pp. 1–10; and various inscriptions. In addition to the Tiruccenduṟai inscriptions and the long inscription by Bhūti Vikramakēsari at Koḍumbāḷūr, several other inscriptions demonstrate that Bhūti Parāntakaṉ was Bhūti Vikramakēsari's son by the queen Kaṟṟali and that Bhūti Parāntakaṉ in turn fathered Mahimālaya Irukkuvēḷ: *SII*, vol. 19, pp. vii–xi; *SII*, vol. 8, #233, #240, #601, #616, #627, #657, #668.

Note that Trautmann, Subrahmanya Aiyar, and Sastri disagree on which Cōḷa was the brother of Bhūti Vikramakēsari's wife, Varaguṇā, and on whom Parāntakaṉ Siṟiyavēḷār married. S. R. Balasubrahmanyam resists identifying Varaguṇā, the wife of Bhūti Vikramakēsari (*SII*, vol. 23, pp. 101–2, #129; and *SII*, vol. 3, #113), with Varaguṇā, the sister of a Cōḷa king (*EI*, vol. 20, pp. 47–54, #3.C; *SII*, vol. 13, pp. 128–29, #240): "A note on the Bhūti Vikramakēsari of Kodumbalur," *Journal of Indian Museums*, vols. 17–20 (1961–1964), pp. 11–25; and *Early Chola Temples*, pp. 106–31.

K.V. Soundara Rajan's genealogy ("Irrukuvēḷs (sic) of Kodumbalur," in *The Encyclopaedia of Indian Temple Architecture*, vol. 1.1, p. 198) is unique and inaccurate in identifying Naṅgai Varaguṇā as a sister of Āditya I and a wife of Bhūti Parāntakaṉ, rather than as the wife of Bhūti Vikramakēsari. Three of the five women Subrahmanya Aiyar, p. 204, names as Bhūti Parāntakaṉ's wives have names similar to Naṅgai Varaguṇā—Varaguṇanāṭṭi the daughter of a Muttaraiyar, Naṅgai Nandi, and Cōḷapperundēviyār alias Perunaṅgai—perhaps the source of the confusion. Subrahmanya Aiyar identifies Cōḷapperundēviyār alias Perunaṅgai, a wife of Bhūti Parāntakaṉ, as a daughter of Āditya I.

17. Despite textual prohibitions against it. Thomas R. Trautmann, "The Study of Dravidian Kinship," in *Temples, Kings and Peasants: Perceptions of South India's Past*, ed. George W. Spencer (Madras: New Era, 1987), pp. 29–51. On the Cōḷas' perpetuated affinities with the Eastern Cālukyas, Rāṣṭrakūṭas and Kalacuris, and on similar preferences among the Sātavāhana and Ikṣvāku families of the first–fourth centuries, see Trautmann, *Dravidian Kinship*, pp. 387–92 and chap. 6. Rājarāja I Cōḷa's daughter, granddaughter, and great granddaughter all married men from the Eastern Cālukya dynasty: V. Balambal, "Great Women," pp. 83–86.

18. *SII*, vol. 3, pt. 3, pp. 228–29, #96; *SII*, vol. 3, pt. 3, pp. 262–63, #126; and *SII*, vol. 8, pp. 320–21, #626.

19. The text reads: "Hail! Prosperity! In the second year of king Parakēsarivarman, I, Pūdi Āditta piḍāri, gave with libation of water these two garden [lands] as per the same terms under which I purchased [them, viz.,] the garden [land] which I purchased for 35 kaḻañju of gold in the second year [of the king's reign] from Kāchchuvaṉ [Kāśyapa] Tattanārāyaṇaṉ and the garden [land] purchased from Pāradāyaṉ [Bhāradvāja?] Īśāna Māṟaṉ, to the lord of the stone temple at Tiruchchenduṟai for maintaining festivals [tiruviḻāppuṟam] of the lord of Tiruchchenduṟai on [the day of] the solar eclipse, [stipulating that] the maintenance of the [said] festivals of the lord of [this] stone temple constructed by me Pūdi Āditta piḍāri [should be met only] from the produce of the [said] gardens. [The assembly of] all Māhēśvaras shall protect this [charity]." *SII*, vol. 3, pt. 3, pp. 262–63, #126.

Another inscription has her making a gift to the temple as early as 893, but Barrett suggests plausibly she was then giving to a brick temple that her later donations would convert to stone: *SII*, vol. 8, pp. 321–22, #629; Barrett, *Early Cola Architecture*, p. 52.

20. *SII*, vol. 3, pt. 3, pp. 228–29, #96 (see above, n. 13).

21. Her wealth was great enough to permit her to give many other gifts to the temple as well: *SII*, vol. 8, pp. 307, 319–20, #601, #624.

22. On the artisan's freedom to invoke but ignore śāstras, and on using measurements from the patron's body as the unit for temple proportions, see Samuel K. Parker, "Contemporary temple construction in South India, The Srirangam rajagopuram," *Rēs*, vol. 21 (1992), pp. 110–23. For more on the nature of śāstras and their impact on design, see John F. Mosteller, "Texts and Craftsmen at Work," in *Making Things in South Asia: The role of artist and craftsman*, ed. Michael W. Meister, Proceedings of the South Asia Seminar, 4 (Philadelphia: Department of South Asia Regional Studies, Univ. of Pennsylvania, 1988), pp. 24–33; *Shastric Traditions in Indian Arts*, ed. Anna Libera Dallapiccola (Stuttgart: Steiner Verlag Wiesbaden GMBH, 1989); *Āgama and Śilpa*, ed. K. K. A. Venkatachari, *Ananthacharya Indological Research Institute Series* no. 16 (Bombay: Ananthacharya Indological Research Institute, 1984); Bruno Dagens, *Architecture in the Ajitagama and the Rauravagama, A study of two South Indian texts* (New Delhi: Sitaram Bhartia Institute of Scientific Research, 1984).

23. Descriptions of the temple have been published in Barrett, *Early Cola Architecture*, pp. 52–53; Balasubrahmanyam, *Early Chola Art*, pp. 82, 93–97; *The Encyclopaedia of Indian Temple Architecture*, vol. 1.1, pp. 210–12. For other analyses of the general style of "early Cōḷa" architecture, see Barrett, *Early Cola Architecture*, pp. 26–41; Hoekveld-Meijer, *Koyils*, pp. 268–85; J. C. Harle, "The Early Cola Temple at Puḷḷamaṅgai," *Oriental Art*, new ser. 4, no. 3 (1958), pp. 96–108; M. A. Dhaky, "Cōḷas of Tañjāvūr: Phase I," in *The Encyclopaedia of Indian Temple Architecture*, vol. 1.1, pp. 150–96.

24. See Phyllis Granoff, "Heaven on Earth: Temples and Temple Cities of Medieval India," in *India and Beyond: Aspects of Literature, Meaning, Ritual and Thought, Essays in Honour of Frits Staal*, ed. Dick van der Meij (New York: Kegan Paul International, 1997), pp. 170–93.

25. A Sanskrit inscription on the south wall of the Mūvarkōyil's central shrine traces this king's genealogy and states that he erected the three shrines of this temple in the names of his two wives and himself. The text of this inscription is published in *SII*, vol. 23, pp. 101–2, #129; and by Sastri, "The Koḍumbālūr Inscription." See also K.V. Soundara Rajan, "Inscription at Mūvar-koil, Koḍumbālūr," in *Indian Epigraphy: Its Bearing on the History of Art*, ed. F. Asher and G. S. Gai (New Delhi: Oxford Univ. Pr. and IBH Publishing, 1985), pp. 231–34. Soundara Rajan infers the date of the temples' construction to be 892: *The Encyclopaedia of Indian Temple Architecture*, vol. 1.1, p. 202.

26. Descriptions of this temple's form are published in: Venkataranga Raju, "Cōḷa temples in Pudukkottai," *Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art*, vol. 5 (1937), p. 80–83; Soundara Rajan, in *The Encyclopaedia of Indian Temple Architecture*, vol. 1.1, pp. 202–8; Barrett, *Early Cola Architecture*, p. 86; Balasubrahmanyam, *Early Chola Temples*, pp. 131–32; Hoekveld-Meijer, *Koyils*, pp. 291–92.

27. *The Encyclopaedia of Indian Temple Architecture*, vol. 1.1, fig. 94, indicates that this layer, which it calls *Padmapuṣkala*, is also part of Tiruccenduṟai's moldings and renders it in dotted lines to indicate its submersion in the ground. The only difference from the Mūvarkōyil is that Tiruccenduṟai's lotus molding rests on two rectangular platforms; the Mūvarkōyil's rests on one.

28. For ground plans of the central temple at Koḍumbāḷūr and the Tiruccenduṟai temple, see *The Encyclopaedia of Indian Temple Architecture*, vol. 1.1, figs. 90, 95.

29. Temples with single niches in the ardhamaṇḍapa walls exist at Gaṇḍarādittam, Kōvilāḍi, Tiruvērumbūr, and Olagapuram. Temples at Tiruvarūr, Sembiyaṉ Mahādevi village, and Ānāṅgūr have three niches in each of their ardhamaṇḍapa walls. Those with two niches can be found at Puñjai and Kumbakonam. These data are tabulated in Barrett, *Early Cola Architecture*, pp. 134–37.

30. Soundara Rajan labels this as Dakṣiṇāmūrti, a teaching form of Śiva, without discussion of the figure's standing posture: *The Encyclopaedia of Indian Temple Architecture*, vol. 1.1, p. 208. Soundara Rajan's chart of the program conflicts on several points with a chart by Balasubrahmanyam (*Early Chola Temples*, p. 132). He also suggests that the triple shrines represent Śiva's Aghora, Tatpuruṣa and Vāmadeva aspects: Soundara Rajan, "Inscription at Mūvar-koil," p. 233. The iconographic program of the Mūvarkōyil deserves a full-length study of its own.

31. The bull is commonly found with Ardhanārī, but he is not a standard feature of Gaṅgādhara images in the south: see Marguerite E.

Adiceam, "Les Images de Śiva dans l'Inde du Sud, VI.—Ardhānarīśvara," *Arts Asiatiques*, vol. 13 (1966), pp. 143–72; and Adiceam, "Les Images de Śiva dans l'Inde du Sud, XV.—Gaṅgādharamūrti," *Arts Asiatiques*, vol. 32 (1976), pp. 99–138.

32. Soundara Rajan identifies these figures as Bhikṣāṭana, another mendicant form of Śiva: *The Encyclopaedia of Indian Temple Architecture*, vol. 1.1, p. 208. Adiceam notes the two have similar iconographies and that some artists' manuals did not distinguish between them: "Les Images de Śiva dans l'Inde du Sud, III et IV.—Bhikṣāṭanamūrti et Kaṅkālamūrti," *Arts Asiatiques*, vol. 12 (1965), pp. 83–112. I suspect that this temple's designers intended the figures to evoke Kaṅkāla in particular because they carved a jumping deer at Śiva's left and a dwarf at his right, features that Adiceam notes were more relevant to Kaṅkāla's story; and because signs relevant to the more erotic stories of Bhikṣāṭana, such as snakes and disrobing women, are absent on the Koḍumbāḷūr figures.

33. The inscription that tells of his building the Mūvarkōyil also tells that he gave a large monastery (*maṭha*) with many gifts and endowments to the chief of the Kālāmukhas and his fifty followers: Sastri, "The Koḍumbālūr inscription," verses 11–12. My thanks to Leslie Orr for suggesting a potential link between Bhūti's Kālāmukha support and the temples' unusual programs.

34. *The Kāpālikas and Kālāmukhas: Two Lost Śaivite Sects* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Pr., 1972). See also R. N. Nandi, "Origin and nature of Śaivite monasticism: the case of the Kālāmukhas," in *Indian Society: Historical probings: in memory of D. D. Kosambi* (New Delhi: People's Publishing House, 1974), pp. 190–201.

35. The niche measures 23 x 48 x 11 inches. The Ardhanārī figure, from which the legs have broken away, is 16 x 29 x 9 inches. Credit goes to Lorraine Kaimal for spotting this figure among the undergrowth and stone fragments of the temple yard.

36. For example, the Tiruttoṇḍīśvara temple at Uṟaiyūr, the Vēdagirīśvara temple at Tiruvēdikkuḍi, the Nāgeśvara temple at Kumbakonam, and the Saptariṣiśvara temple at Lālguḍi.

37. Two inscriptions on the Andanallūr temple document Bhūti Parāntakaṉ's responsibility for building it: *SII*, vol. 3, pt. 3, p. 285, #139; and *SII*, vol. 8, p. 337, #668. Other inscriptions there note that his consorts and his sister Naṅgai made various donations to the temple: *SII*, vol. 8, p. 334–37, #657, #665, #666. Four inscriptions found in the mid-twentieth century on the base of the Mucukundeśvara state that Mahimālaya Irukkuvēḷ built it, endowed it with lands, and appointed priests: *A Manual of the Pudukkottai State*, ed. K. R. Venkatarama Ayyar, vol. 2.2, 2nd rev. ed. (Pudukkottai: Sri Brihadamba State Press, 1938–1944), p. 1035.

38. Descriptions of the Mucukundeśvara's architectural forms are published in: *The Encyclopaedia of Indian Temple Architecture*, vol. 1.1, pp. 212–13; Barrett, *Early Cola Architecture*, p. 74; Raju, "Coḷa temples," pp. 83–84; Hoekveld-Meijer, *Koyils*, p. 291; Balasubrahmanyam, *Early Chola Temples*, pp. 27–28. On the forms of the temple at Andanallūr, see Barrett, *Early Cola Architecture*, pp. 71–72; Balasubrahmanyam, *Early Chola Temples*, pp. 15–17.

39. The lower basement moldings at Andanallūr are now embedded in the cement of the courtyard, but from the moldings still visible, I infer the buried layers to have the same shapes as those of the Mucukundeśvara.

40. *The Encyclopaedia of Indian Temple Architecture*, vol. 1.1, p. 201, labels this configuration *Pādabandha*.

41. Some studies have added monuments to the category of Irukkuvēḷ style based on their formal resemblance to inscribed monuments. Hoekveld-Meijer's is among them; her finding that there is no consistent Irukkuvēḷ family style (*Koyils*, p. 374) is therefore problematic.

42. In the year 935. The entire inscription is translated into English by S. R. Balasubrahmanyam, "Three dated Early Chola Sculptures of Erumbur," *Lalit Kalā*, no. 13 (1939), pp. 16–21; the relevant portion is published in transliterated Tamiḷ by S. R. Balasubrahmanyam and Venkataranga Raju, "Parāntaka Coḷa's Eṟumbūr Temple," *Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art*, vol. 7 (1939), pp. 113–15.

This patron's name may recall "Iruṅgōvēḷ," a variant of Irukkuvēḷ, but it is even closer to Iruṅgōḷa-Pāḍi, the name of the region just west of Ērumbūr: see Subbarayalu, *Political Geography*, p. 76, map 12. This part of the patron's name probably indicates his home town, as names of this period frequently did.

43. Further descriptions of this temple are published in Balasubrahmanyam, *Early Chola Temples*, pp. 67–70; *The Encyclopaedia of Indian Temple Architecture*, vol. 1.1, p. 172; Barrett, *Early Cola Architecture*, pp. 75–76.

44. *SII*, vol. 5, p. 246, #618, refers to Muttaraiyars. Another inscription mentions a woman named Nandi Paṅgi who patronized construction of the Apatsahayeśvara temple at Tiruppaḷanam: see *SII*, vol. 13, pp. 127–28, #237, #239. For other inscriptions from this site, see *SII*, vol. 5, pp. 243–46, #610–621; *SII*, vol. 13, pp. 9–186, #22, #78, #103, #126, #239, #252, #280, #281, #305, #316, #349–351.

45. They also indicate that the local assembly took responsibility for constructing the stone temple by redirecting a patron's gift: V. Rangacharya, *Topographical list of the inscriptions of the Madras Presidency (collected until 1915)*, vol. 2, p. 1415, #1421. For other inscriptions at this temple, see *SII*, vol. 3, pp. 221–22, #89; *SII*, vol. 13, pp. 21–144, #47, #48, #214, #233, #247, #248, #273; *SII*, vol. 5, pp. 233–43, #580–611. Note also that some donors gave to both Tiruccāṭṭuṟai and Tillaisthānam.

46. Devakunjari notes these also at Nārtthamalai, Tirupputtūr, Uḍaiyārguḍi, and Tribhuvanam: D. Devakunjari, "The Mahadeva temple of Tillaisthanam," *Damilica*, vol. 2, no. 3 (1973), pp. 42–49. For other published descriptions of this temple, see: Balasubrahmanyam, *Early Chola Art*, pp. 160–64; Barrett, *Early Cola Architecture*, pp. 56–57; *The Encyclopaedia of Indian Temple Architecture*, vol. 1.1, pp. 143–44. On Tiruccāṭṭuṟai, see Balasubrahmanyam, *Early Chola Art*, pp. 157–60; Barrett, *Early Cola Architecture*, pp. 55, 59; *The Encyclopaedia of Indian Temple Architecture*, vol. 1.1, pp. 153–57.

47. The south niche at Tiruccāṭṭuṟai holds a later, seated figure of Dakṣiṇāmūrti. Original carvings of Śiva still stand in the other niches of these temples.

48. Hoekveld-Meijer, *Koyils*, pp. 374–75, sees the use of Śiva images in all three vimāna niches an an important developmental characteristic among the *sapta sthana kṣetra*, the seven temples around which the chief of Śiva's dwarves, Nandidēvār, is understood to have processed after his wedding ceremony. She proposes that these seven temples were a kind of experimental ground for the architects building temples for Āditya I Cōḷa and thus forging the "early Cōḷa style": Hoekveld-Meijer, *Koyils*, pp. 297–98. Hoekveld-Meijer and Balasubrahmanyam understand Tillaisthānam and Tiruccāṭṭuṟai as two of these *sapta sthana*, along with Tiruvaiyāru, Tiruppaḷanam, Tiruvēdikkuḍi, Tiruppūndurutti, and Tirukkaṇḍiyūr, but Devakunjari, "The Mahadeva temple," p. 43, indicates that the list can vary. On this myth of Nandidēvār, see Balasubrahmanyam, *Early Chola Art*, p. 152, n. On distinguishing the anthropomorphic Nandin from Śiva's bull, Nandi, see Gouriswar Bhattacharya, "Nandin and Vṛṣabha," in *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1977), pp. 1545–67.

49. Hands have broken off some of these figures, but those that survive hold an *akṣamālā* (string of beads sacred to Śiva) in the upper left hand and a deer in the upper right; the lower left is in *abhayamudrā* and the lower right proffers a fruit or rests on the hip. Devakunjari, "The Mahadeva temple," pp. 44–45, points out the uniformity among Tillaisthānam's figures, though he identifies the lower right hand gesture as *varada*.

50. The *bhakti* hymns of the *Tevaram* locate Śiva in specific places across Tamiḻnāḍu. Six hymns sing of him at Tiruccāṭṭuṟai (as Cōṟṟuṭṭuṟai) and another six at Tillaisthānam (as Neyttāṉam): Indira

Viswanathan Petersen, *Poems to Śiva: The Hymns of the Tamil Saints* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Pr., 1989), pp. 12–13, apps. A, C. See also George Spencer, "The Sacred Geography of the Tamil Shaivite Hymns," *Numen*, vol. 17, no. 3 (1970), pp. 232–44.

51. I argue this case in "Early Cōḻa Kings," pp. 56–58. One of these two Cōḻa temples was the Ādityeśvara at Toṇḍaimanād, far to the north, from which only the basement moldings now survive: see Barrett, *Early Cola Architecture*, pl. 24. The other was the Gōmuktīśvara temple at Tiruvaḍuturai, which Parāntaka I Cōḻa helped to build. That temple and Naṅgai's are very different in the tone and details of their architecture. Naṅgai's temple is small, its atmosphere intimate, its ornament delicate and restrained. The Tiruvāḍuturai temple is massive and complex. Its basement moldings are a tall, elaborate combination of rectilinear rather than organic shapes; variously shaped pilasters and multiple projections stud the main walls; six niches pierce the walls of the ardhamaṇḍapa; figures in those niches are heavy and somber. The iconographic program includes Śiva in only two niches: seated as Dakṣiṇāmūrti in the south, and as Liṅgodbhava in the west. If Tiruvāḍuturai represents the architectural style of early Cōḻa kings, Naṅgai's temple had little to do with that style. For views of the Tiruvāḍuturai temple, see Barrett, *Early Cola Architecture*, pp. 131–37, pls. 25–27; and Kaimal, "Early Cōḻa Kings," figs. 44–49.

52. Though she is likely to have built many more, these six are among her surest commissions: all bear inscriptions stating that Sembiyaṉ Mahādevi built them, and all display the tenth-century phases of their construction essentially intact. On her temples and their inscriptions, see Venkataraman, *Temple Art*, pp. 16–46; Barrett, *Early Cola Architecture*, pp. 90–111, 128–30; *The Encyclopaedia of Indian Temple Architecture*, vol. 1.1, pp. 181–93, pls. 216–229.

53. On Sembiyaṉ Mahādevi as daughter of a Maḻavar chief, see *SII*, vol. 19 (1970), pp. 292, 302, #11; *SII*, vol. 2 (1892), #79; *SII*, vol. 4 (1923), #543; Balambal, "Great Women," p. 72; Trautmann, *Dravidian Kinship*, pp. 391–93. On Maḻanāḍu as the tenth-century home of the Maḻavaraiyar over whom Sembiyaṉ's father was a chief, see Subrahmanya Aiyar, *Historical Sketches*, pp. 47–48.

54. She is probably also the same Kōkkiḻāṉ who appears in the inscriptional record as Kilānāḍigaḷ of Tañjāvūr when her maid gave to the temple at Tiruccāṭṭurai (*SII*, vol. 19, p. 76, #150). Two other inscriptions may refer to the same Kōkkiḻāṉ, one at Tiruviḍaimarudūr that links her somehow (text is missing) with a queen Kundavai, a popular name for Cōḻa queens: *SII*, vol. 23, pp. 178–79, #23; and one at Vēdaranyam that records a gift by the children of Kōkkiḻāṉ's maid: *SII*, vol. 17, #530. Many thanks to Leslie Orr for finding these inscriptions for me in her database of Cōḻa inscriptions.

55. I am convinced by Hultzsch's and Mahalingam's reading, which takes Kōkkiḻāṉ (Kōkkilānaṭikal) as the subject of the verb "to have built" in inscription #335 of 1902: E. Hultzsch, "Six Inscriptions at Tirunāmanallūr," *EI*, vol. 7 (1902–3), pp. 133–34, #19.A; T. V. Mahalingam, *A Topographical List of Inscriptions in the Tamil Nadu and Kerala States*, vol. 2: South Arcot District, p. 388, #1664. The main intent of the inscription is to announce a gift in 935 from one of Kōkkiḻāṉ's maids, a donor especially likely to give to her mistress' temple and to mention her mistress' generosity in the inscription.

56. For published descriptions of this temple, see *The Encyclopaedia of Indian Temple Architecture*, vol. 1.1, p. 146; Balasubrahmanyam, *Early Chola Temples*, pp. 64–67.

57. She is associated with Maḻanāḍu through a gift she made to the temple at Lālguḍi through an agent from that region: *SII*, vol. 19, pp. 214–15, #408, and "Introduction," p. vi. This inscription also identifies her as daughter of a Cēra king, and the Cēras were present in the Koṅgu region directly west of Maḻanāḍu: see Subrahmanya Aiyar, *Historical Sketches*, pp. 43–44.

The location of her temple links her to Milāḍu, however, a different subregion over twenty-five miles northwest of Kōnāḍu and the Kāvērī delta. Balambal, "Great Women," p. 72, seems to confuse Maḻanāḍu with Milāḍu when he identifies Sembiyaṉ Mahādevi's father as a chief of the Tirukkōyilūr area. The same confusion is apparent in Rangacharya, *Topographical list*, vol. 1, p. 233, #902. On E. Hultzsch's confusion of Milāḍu with Maḻanāḍu, see Subbarayalu, *Political Geography*, pp. 75–76. On the mapping of these ancient regions, see Subbarayalu, *Political Geography*, pp. 72–77, map 12.

58. For her inscription, see above, n. 13.

59. For example, the Cōḻa princess Kundavai, elder sister of Rājarāja I Cōḻa, continued to donate to Cōḻa projects and even issued records from the Cōḻa palace at Paḻaiyāru after her marriage to Vallavaraiya Vandiyadēvār: see Spencer, "When Queens Bore Gifts," p. 367.