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V. Lefèvre

## Tukkacci, a Royal Cōla Temple at the Beginning of the 12<sup>th</sup> Century

Among the many temples built during the Cōla period (c. 850–1279), four are generally labelled “royal temples” or even “State temples”. These are the temples at Tañjāvūr, Gaṅgaikoṇḍacōlapuram, Dārāsuram and Tribhūvanam. They have in common some very specific features that set them apart from the remaining architectural production, not to speak of their specific history. But these four buildings may be divided into two groups: on the one hand, Tañjāvūr and Gaṅgai, which were erected during, roughly speaking, the first half of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, and, on the other hand, Dārāsuram and Tribhūvanam, built during, say, the second half of the 12<sup>th</sup> century. One aim of this paper is to investigate the role of the royal patronage in the meantime. As a matter of fact, some very powerful kings ruled between Rājendra I (1012–1044) and Rājarāja II (1146–1172) – Kulōttuṅga I (1070–1122) being the most famous – but they directed their attention mainly toward the very important sacred centre of Cidambaram.

Only one temple built during this span of time of nearly a century can be characterised as a “royal” or “State” temple: it is the one at Tukkacci, now called Apatsahayeśvarar, not far from Kumbakonam. Tukkacci is not completely unknown, since it has been described by S. R. Balasubrahmanyam in his survey of Cōla temples. For the above author, the temple formed the model for Dārāsuram. This view is shared by F. L’Hernault and J. Dumarçay who wrote an extant study on Dārāsuram. So, Tukkacci has been referred to in some papers, but always in reference to Dārāsuram and Tribhūvanam<sup>1</sup>. As far as I know, no specific study has been dedicated to it. This paper is only a first approach and does not intend to give firm and definitive conclusions. We will focus mainly on the very features that can set this structure into the “royal Cōla temples” group.

### PRESENTATION OF THE TUKKACCI TEMPLE

The earliest inscription (ARE 6 of 1915) of the site dates from the 4<sup>th</sup> year of king Vikrama Cōla

(AD 1122) and names the temple *Ten-Tirukkālāti Madāhevar* and the village Kulōttuṅgaśōla-nallūr. *Ten-Tirukkālāti* means “southern Kaḷahasti”, in order to distinguish it from the “true” Kaḷahasti, which is near the border between Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. The next inscription (ARE 2 of 1915) in time dates from the 35<sup>th</sup> year of Kulōttuṅga III (AD 1213): in it, the temple is called Vikramaśōliśvaram Uḍaiyar at Vikramaśōlanallūr. Evidently, from these documents, we can infer that this temple was built during Vikrama’s reign as a new complex, even though a previous structure may have existed. Or maybe Kulōttuṅga I was still on the throne when the construction started, since his son Vikrama had been appointed heir-apparent a few years before his father’s death.

The temple (fig. 1–2) faces east and is surrounded by an enclosure wall (c. 65 × 40 m.) opened in the east by a first *gopura* (fig. 3). The plan is quite similar to Dārāsuram’s: the main access to the temple is from the south through a chariot-shaped *mandapa* on which more will be said later. This structure has unfortunately been damaged. On the one hand, the ground of the courtyard has been elevated, concealing the lowest part of the temple, and, on the other hand, a new structure has been built on the western side of the *mandapa*, since it is obvious that the horse carrying the chariot has been incorporated in the new masonry (figs. 4–5). The new wall is plain (except for some reliefs apparently displaced), contrasting with the animated surface of the rest of the temple. Unfortunately, it is difficult to say when it was added. From the chariot-*mandapa*, one enters a pillared hall opening to the east through a veranda. This hall leads to the north to a small shrine dedicated to Devī (Amman), about which we will return shortly, and, to the west to another pillared hall (*śaṅkana*

<sup>1</sup> In the *Encyclopaedia of Indian Temple Architecture*, Tukkacci is briefly described but not illustrated (Meister/Dhaky 1983, 325f.).

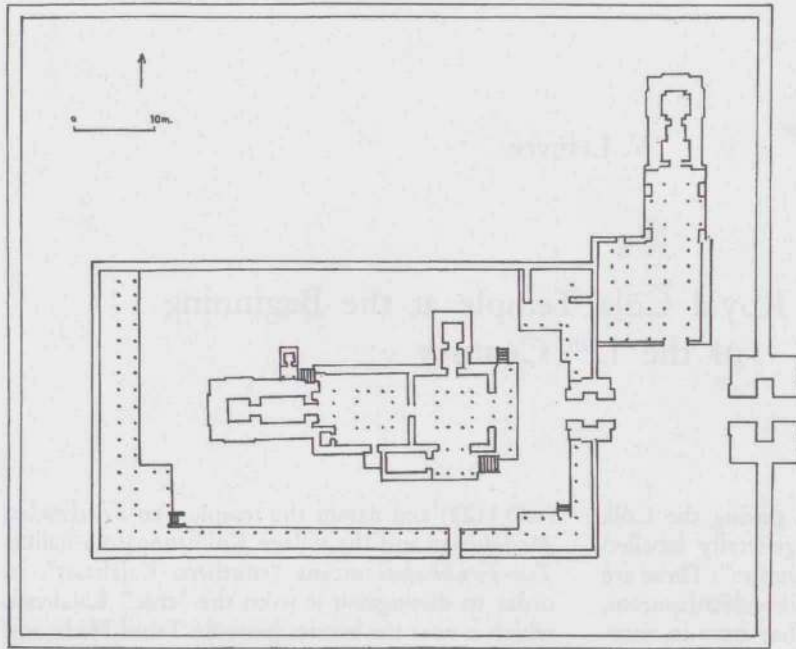


Fig. 1. Plan of Tukkacci temple (V. Lefèvre, after J. Dumarçay in L'Hernault 1987, Pl. Introd. I).



Fig. 2. Tukkacci, general view of the temple from the south-west. Photo V. Lefèvre.

*maṇḍapa*) linking the chariot-*maṇḍapa* with the sanctum (*garbhagrha*). The *vimāna* itself is typical of the 12<sup>th</sup> century Cōḷa architecture and is topped by a brick-built three-storeyed superstructure.

As is usual in the 12<sup>th</sup> century temple, there is also an Amman temple in the complex. In Tukkacci, *Devī* is now called *Sundara Nāyaki*, even though we don't know if this name is ancient or not, and her temple is in the north-eastern corner of the second enclosure. This temple faces south and is preceded by a quite big pillared hall abutting on the eastern wall of the inner enclosure. Though no inscription can give us a clue about the date of this Amman temple, I am inclined to believe that it was not part of the original layout. As a

matter of fact, this structure is so big that the outer enclosure has been extended to the north in such a way that the outer *gopura*, which is of course in the same alignment with the inner one, is not in the centre of the eastern wall but is shifted to the south. If it was planned from the beginning, this rather unusual lack of symmetry should be explained. In *Dārāsūram* either, we do not know the age of the Amman shrine, which faces east and is paralleled to the main temple, and not perpendicular like in Tukkacci; but it is possible that this situation, at *Dārāsūram*, is the result of an afterthought (L'Hernault 1987, 16 and 64) and that the temple may have been built slightly later, during *Kulōttuṅga III's* reign.

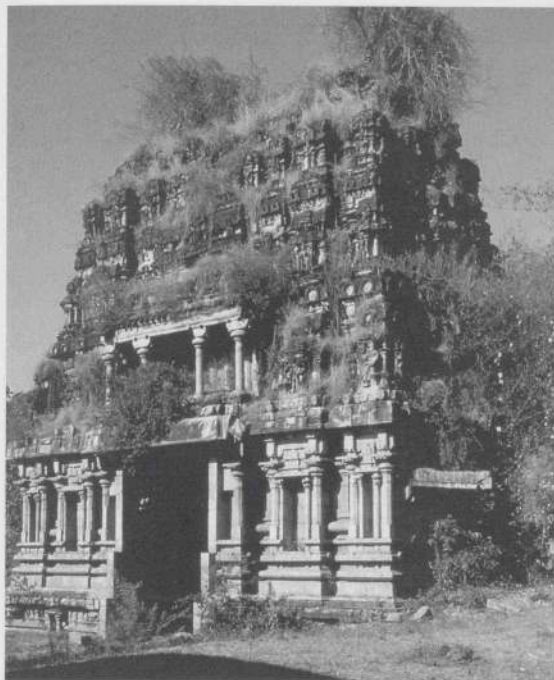


Fig. 3. Tukkacci, inner gopura. Photo V. Lefèvre.

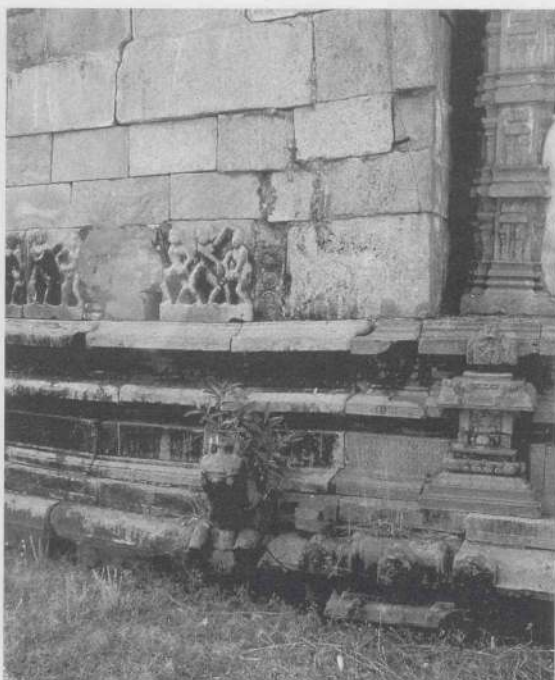


Fig. 5. Tukkacci, chariot-mandapa, western horse. Photo V. Lefèvre.

Fig. 4. Tukkacci, chariot-mandapa, eastern horse. Photo V. Lefèvre.



Besides, in Tukkacci, there is another shrine dedicated to Amman: it is the one to the north of the first *mandapa* of the main temple. That it was originally planned to be there can be inferred from the fact that there is a secondary gate in the inner enclosure exactly in the alignment of this shrine: there was then a special entrance for the Goddess (fig. 6). As far as I could observe, there is no reason to believe that this secondary entrance was not part of the original plan. But the shrine itself may not be in its original state. In fact, the two *dvārapalikā* on both sides of the entrance are

obviously not in their original location (fig. 7). They are not inserted into the wall but just lean against it. Besides, one of them has been broken. More over, an examination of this shrine from outside shows that the walls and notably the pilasters are much more simple than those of the main temple and do not fit stylistically with it, which is rather curious (fig. 8). So I feel that the shrine, in its actual state, is not contemporary with the main temple and was extended later, according to a second thought. Maybe a more careful architectural study could give us a more precise point



Fig. 6. Tukkacci, view from the south. Photo V. Lefèvre.



Fig. 7. Tukkacci, entrance of the Devi shrine, left female door-keeper. Photo V. Lefèvre.

of view. But, in the meantime, I would suggest that the first Amman shrine was a simple cell set inside the *maṇḍapa* against its northern wall, in the same axis with the chariot-like porch and the small gate in the southern surrounding wall. As a matter of fact, such a cell does exist in Dārāsūram (L'Hernault

1987, 54ff.), though one is not sure when exactly it was built. Since Dārāsūram generally follows Tukkacci's plan, it is not impossible that the inner cell at Dārāsūram was modelled on the lines of Tukkacci. We will return to this question when speaking of the royal characteristics of the temple.

Before leaving this brief architectural description, I would like to insist on the importance to restore this temple which is rather neglected. It would be particularly interesting to excavate the courtyard in order to see what it looked like before the elevation of the ground. As an example, one can have a look at the rear of the *vimāna* and compare it with Dārāsūram and Tribhūvanam. At Dārāsūram the *vimāna* is surrounded by a miniature wall with holes which were used to insert lamps. This wall was supposed to retain water in order to create a reflection of the temple and illuminate it<sup>2</sup>. At Tribhūvanam, it is most probable that such a structure existed: whereas the courtyard has been much transformed, part of this miniature wall remains on the western side of the temple. In the Nāyaka period, a "water mirror" following the same model was installed around the Subrahmanya chapel in the courtyard of the big temple in Tañjāvūr. J. Dumarçay thinks that one may have existed also in Paḷaiyārai (L'Hernault 1987, 43, footnote 6) in front of the chariot-like *maṇḍapa*, but I am not sure it existed also around the *vimāna*. As far as I know, the earliest remaining structure of this kind is the one at Dārāsūram; since, once more, this temple seems to have been inspired closely by Tukkacci, it would be very interesting to know whether it existed there also, or not. For the moment, the question will remain unsolved.

<sup>2</sup> To give just a famous example, we can have an idea of how it looked like in Angkor Vat, where the two pools in front of the temple on both side of the axial pathway serve exactly the same purpose.



Fig. 8. Tukkacci, Devi shrine, from the west. Photo V. Lefèvre.

#### CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ROYAL ARCHITECTURE

So far, Tukkacci seems to be the main foundation of king Vikrama. As such, it is a link between Gaṅgaikōṇḍacōlapuram and Dārāsūram, for which it has served as model. To be complete, along with Tukkacci, the temple at Paḷaiyārai must be cited, since it belongs to what F. L'Hernault called the "Dārāsūram school". It shares a lots of features with Tukkacci, the chariot-shaped *mandapa* and the perpendicular Amman temple being the most notable ones. But the epigraphical data from Paḷaiyārai is scarce and does not allow to establish precisely when it was founded. On merely stylistic ground, it is possible to propose a date between 1130 and 1160, perhaps during the reign of Kulōttuṅga II, Vikrama's successor (Balasubrahmanyam 1979, 200). Because of this uncertainty, and especially the lack of information about its patron, it is difficult to set Paḷaiyārai within the "State temple" group, in spite of the common architectural features.

But, before going further, if we accept the idea that Tukkacci re-established the custom for the Cōla dynasty to erect "State temples", one must raise the question to know why Kulōttuṅga I, who was a very powerful ruler and whose reign lasted for nearly fifty years, did not built a temple of his own. This fact is curious since the king was also a great builder and participated a lot in the extension of the Cidambaram temple. But here

may lie, at least in a part, the solution to this enigma. As a matter of fact, Kulōttuṅga did not belong to the main branch of the Cōla but was born as an Eastern Cālukya ruler of Veṅḡi and both his mother and his grand-mother were Cōla princesses. He ascended the Cōla throne in a troubled period and it is supposed that his claim for legitimacy could have been challenged. Even his court poet, Jayangoṇḍār, in the *Kaliṅgattupparani*, is silent about the reign of the last king of the direct line, Adhirājendra, and declared that Kulōttuṅga was chosen as heir-apparent by Virarājendra, a view made impossible by the epigraphical data. Moreover, once comfortably installed on the Cōla throne, Kulōttuṅga makes it a point to mention, in his inscriptions, that he obtained the crown by right. This in a way shows that it may not have been so simple (Nilakanta Sastri 1935, 338ff.). In this context, to patronise the Cidambaram temple was very important since this temple houses the dancing Śiva, who was the *kūladevatā*, or family-god, of the Cōlas. In increasing this temple, the king established a link between dancing Śiva and himself and thus legitimised his power. His son, Vikrama, followed his example and became Cidambaram's main patron but one assumes that after the long and powerful rule of his father, the situation was strong enough for him to re-enact the custom initiated by Rājarāja I and Rājendra I.

## THE SITE

The four "State" temples mentioned at the beginning of this paper, besides their architectural features, also have something else in common: they are all built in a place which was not specifically sacred nor linked to the famous Tamil saints, the *śaiva* Nāyanmār and the *vaiṣṇava* Ālvār. In a way, Tāñjāvūr, Gaṅgai, Dārāsuram and Tribhūvanam had no special religious meaning, whereas Cidambaram, to cite only one example, had. The purpose was then to make a distinction between some important pilgrimage places and those temples which had a more political significance. The same can be said about Tukkacci, a village which was not particularly known before Vikrama's time. On the contrary, Paḷaiyārai, which served as a second capital for the Cōlas, is mentioned in the *Tēvāram* (Champakalakshmi 1996, 345f.). This point, according to me, is another argument not to place this temple within this group under discussion. We have seen from inscriptions that Tukkacci was first called Kulōttuṅgaśōlanallūr and then was christened as Vikramaśōlanallūr: in both cases, the link with the ruling king is obvious.

## THE NAME OF THE TEMPLE

The second point is the name of the temple itself. All the royal Cōla temples associate *Īsvara* with the name, or a title, of the king who founded them: *Rājarājesvara* at Tāñjāvūr and Dārāsuram, *Gāngai-koṇḍacōlīśvara* at Gaṅgaikoṇḍacōlapuram and *Tribhūvanavīreśvara* at Tribhūvanam. The same situation prevails at Tukkacci where the temple was called *Vikramaśōlīśvara*. However, in the oldest inscription the name was *Ten-Tirukkālatti Mahādevār*. Maybe this name refers to a previous foundation; or we may suppose that when the construction began, the temple was not meant to bear a political significance and that this meaning was given a little later<sup>3</sup>. As in the other places, this political name disappeared, probably after the fall of the Cōla dynasty. The changing of a name which had political implications is to be noticed.

## THE CHARIOT-MANḌAPA

Coming back to the architectural features, one may now question the link between the chariot-shaped *maṇḍapa* and the royal foundations<sup>4</sup>. This type of architecture seems to be a creation of the 12<sup>th</sup> century in the Tamil country, in spite of a possible precursor in Karnataka at the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> century (Balasubrahmanyam 1979, 125, 171). The first example is probably the Amṛtaghaṭeśvara temple at Melakkaḍambūr, built sometime before AD 1113, but, there, it is not a *maṇḍapa* which is patterned as a chariot but the *vimāna* itself. The idea to build a *maṇḍapa* facing south in the shape

of a chariot was then a new one at Tukkacci and it was repeated at Paḷaiyārai, Dārāsuram and Tribhūvanam. Of course, another very famous building from the late Cōla period adopted this shape: it is the Nṛtta Sabhā in the Cidambaram temple. The dating of this fascinating *maṇḍapa* is a very problematic one. Some believe that it was built during Kulōttuṅga I's reign: to support this view, it is held that the Terk-kōyil, i. e. Nṛtta Sabhā (*ter* meaning "chariot" in Tamil), was praised in Vikrama's *praśasti* and that the enclosure wall built by this king (*Vikrama Cōlan Tirumaligai*) takes into account this *maṇḍapa*, closing its southern side on purpose (L'Hernault 1987, 6; Natarajan 1994, 56, 136). But it is more generally held to be a creation by Kulōttuṅga III. We shall not elaborate on this now. If we agree with the idea that it is contemporary with the second enclosure of Cidambaram, then it would mean that it is slightly older or coeval with the *maṇḍapa* at Tukkacci. But we must bear in mind that the two structures are quite different. The Nṛtta Sabhā is an independent *maṇḍapa* facing north, whereas at Tukkacci it is integrated into the temple and faces south. Even if the Nṛtta Sabhā was older, this disposition appeared then for the first time at Tukkacci.

Some years ago, G. Mevissen has very convincingly shown that the chariot-*maṇḍapa* at Dārāsuram was conceived as a representation of Tripurāntaka's chariot, with Brahmā as its charioteer (Mevissen 1993). The position of the other deities visible on the other parts of the *maṇḍapa* could also be explained that way. The same symbolism was repeated at Tribhūvanam, where we can find also Brahmā, in the central niche on the mouldings of the base, holding a noose (*pāśa*) in order to lead the horses. It is a very well-known fact that, although Naṭeśa was the *kūladevatā* of the Cōlas, Tripurāntaka had a more political meaning for them, symbolising their powerful policy. At Tāñjāvūr, Śiva as Tripurāntaka is depicted on every sides of the first storey of the *vimāna*, a sort of representation of Rājarāja's *digvijaya*. Tukkacci's *maṇḍapa*, once more, stands in the middle between the two groups of "State temples" because it is the first occurrence of the chariot-shaped *maṇḍapa* facing south and integrated in the whole temple but there is no niches housing Brahmā and other deities forming the retinue of Tripurāntaka. It would then mean that this new architectural form had not yet been linked to this mythological and political allusion. At Paḷaiyārai, niches can be seen exactly to the same place as at Dārāsuram but I must confess that I do not know which gods are

<sup>3</sup> It is possible that in his 4<sup>th</sup> year, Vikrama was still *yuvarāja*: since his father would have been still on the throne, it would have been logical not to associate his crowning name with the temple at first.

<sup>4</sup> For a general account on chariot-like structures, see Mevissen 1996.

housed in them, except Brahmā who is in the central niche; so it is a bit difficult to speculate about its exact meaning<sup>5</sup>. But it would suggest that this *maṇḍapa* has a more “advanced” iconography and, consequently, that the temple is definitely later than Tukkacci.

#### ŚARABHA

An other iconographical peculiarity of Tukkacci is the presence of an image of Śarabha. It is now placed on the northern wall inside the chariot-*maṇḍapa*, the left of the Amman shrine but, originally, it must have been placed outside, on the southern wall of the *śaṅkara maṇḍapa*, into a small chapel (now empty) probably built for that purpose (L’Hernault 1987, 7).

Śarabha is not a very common image of Śiva. The god is depicted as a fantastic bird with a lion face killing Viṣṇu as Narasiṃha whose wrath after slaying Hiraṇyakaśipu was too threatening for the gods who, therefore, asked Śiva to interfere. According to the *Śiva Purāṇa* (*Śatarudrasaṃhitā* 10–12), when implored by the gods, Śiva evoked his emanation as Virabhadra. Virabhadra approached Narasiṃha and tried to calm him, not without some irony. But Narasiṃha’s wrath could not be tamed easily, so Virabhadra transformed himself into the Śarabha, caught hold of Viṣṇu, lifted him up and then fell him to the ground. This is the scene depicted at Tukkacci. This episode showing a rivalry between Śaivas and Vaiṣṇavas<sup>6</sup> is also told in the very sectarian *Liṅga Purāṇa* (I.95), in the *śakta Kālikā Purāṇa* (31) and also in the *Kuñcitāṅghristava* (125), a poem in praise of dancing Śiva of Cidambaram, written by Umāpati Śivācārya around AD 1300 (Smith 1996)<sup>7</sup>. Śarabhamūrti is also described in some ritual treatises, like the *Uttarakāmikāgama* (54) and the *Uttarakāraṇāgama* (73). The fact that the use of this kind of image is peculiar to a specific period, namely the 12<sup>th</sup> century, could be a clue as to the date or at least part of the history of these two *āgamas*.

Śarabha images are also to be found at Dārāsura and at Tribhūvanam, where there is now a modern shrine dedicated to it and where the cult is still rather important. I have shown above the link between Śarabha and Virabhadra, and it is noticeable that the story of Virabhadra destroying Dakṣa’s sacrifice was almost considered as a *sthalapurāṇa* at Dārāsura, following an Eastern Cālukya tradition (L’Hernault 1987, 3). A fourth image is enclosed in the Nṛtta Sabhā at Cidambaram<sup>8</sup>. It raises again the question to know whether it was set up during Kulōttuṅga I’s or Kulōttuṅga III’s reign and consequently to know which one between Cidambaram’s and Tukkacci’s Śarabha is the oldest. For the moment, we may just remark that all those foundations are royal ones and, as far as I am aware of, no Śarabha image has been found in a non-royal temple dating from

the Cōla period. Accordingly, this iconography must bear a specific meaning in this context. All the Cōla kings were ardent *śaiva* but it appears that at the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> century and during the 12<sup>th</sup> century the relations between Śaivas and Vaiṣṇavas, usually peaceful, became quite tense. Kulōttuṅga II, Vikrama’s son, is mostly famous for his almost fanatical patronage to Cidambaram where he is said to have removed the image of reclining Viṣṇu and thrown it into the sea. At the same time, a new image of Śiva as Caṭṭainātar seems to have made his appearance in some Cōla temple. Caṭṭainātar is a form of Bhairava holding a mace and wearing a coat on his otherwise naked body. This coat is supposed to be the skin taken from the Vāmana *avatāra* of Viṣṇu (Ladrech 2002, 172ff.). In the same way, in the *Śiva Purāṇa*, Śarabha is said to have taken the skin from Narasiṃha (*Śatarudrasaṃhitā* 12.35–36).

The presence of Śarabha in the Cōla royal temples must be then interpreted as a representation of the royal religious thought. Besides, in the *Śiva Purāṇa* (*Śatarudrasaṃhitā* 12.44), it is said that hearing this story can destroy all the king’s enemies. In the *Uttarakāraṇāgama* (73.1cd–2ab), we are told that the setting up of this image will bring victory in battles, kill all the enemies, achieve every success and cure every disease<sup>9</sup>. Bearing this

<sup>5</sup> Besides it has perhaps been restored in the 15<sup>th</sup> century (Balasubrahmanyam 1979, 203).

<sup>6</sup> This “opposition” must nevertheless be balanced: the *Śiva Purāṇa* actually says: “O base Nṛsiṃha, you are neither creator, nor sustainer, nor annihilator. You are subservient and deluded in mind. You are not independent anywhere. O Viṣṇu, like the potter’s wheel you are forcibly induced by Śiva when you take the different incarnations. You are always dependent on him” (*Śatarudrasaṃhitā* 11.47–48), but at the end of the story, Śiva declares: “Just as water poured into water, or milk poured into milk, or ghee poured into ghee becomes one with those things, so also Viṣṇu is merged into Śiva, not otherwise. It was Viṣṇu alone in the form of the Man-lion, haughty and strong, engaged in the activity of annihilating the universe. He shall be prayed and bowed by my devotees aspiring achievements. He is the foremost of my devotees and the granter of boons” (*Śatarudrasaṃhitā* 12.31–33).

We may add that the Vaiṣṇavas created a response to Śarabha, where Viṣṇu defeats Śiva’s emanation, in the *Kāncimāhātmya* (Porcher 1985, 33).

<sup>7</sup> *bhītyā santrāsamāne naraharivapuṣo devatānām samūhel dhātrā saṃstūyamānaḥ śarabhavaratanuḥ sāluvaḥ pakṣirājah // vegāt tam chedayivā svapadanakhamukhais tattvacālanṅkṛto ’bhūd / daṃṣṭrāsamdiptalokas tam abhilavaradaḥ kuñcitāṅghriḥ bhaje ’ham //*

<sup>8</sup> In the Nṛtta Sabhā, Śarabha is associated with Kālī (who witnesses Śiva dancing in *ūrdhvatāṇḍava*). In the *Kuñcitāṅghristava* 126 Kālī is created from Śarabha’s forehead eye in order to destroy Narasiṃha.

<sup>9</sup> *sarvasatruvināśārtham kalasiddhipradāyakaḥ / sarvayuddhajayastaiḥ sarvapīḍānivāraṇam /*





Fig. 9. Tukkacci, Śarabha. Photo V. Lefèvre.

in mind, the presence of Śarabha image at Tukkacci would seem rather logical: it was an auspicious image capable of bringing all successes to the king, as could also the image of Tripurāntaka.

#### DEVĪ' SHRINE

The last point I would like to discuss in relation to the royal status of the temple is the uncertainty concerning the shrine dedicated to Devī. I have already explained why I think this shrine is not in its original shape and that the Sundara Nāyaki temple must have been added later. In the meantime, it is a well-known fact that from the 12<sup>th</sup> century on, Amman temples were added almost in every Śiva temples (as in Viṣṇu temples). The most famous is surely the Śivakāmi Amman temple, or Tirukkamakottam, at Cidambaram. It is interesting for our purpose to note that it was not built by Kulōttuṅga I but by his famous minister Naralokaviraṅ. When one looks closely at the epigraphical data from the late Cōla period, one

can see that all Amman shrines or temples were founded by non-royal persons. For example in AD 1102, at Tiruveṅkāṭu, which had been an important temple patronised by the royal family in the 11<sup>th</sup> century, the Amman shrine was added by a local chief, Candraśekaraṅ Pañcanedivāṅaṅ (ARE, 530 of 1918). At Dārāsuraṅ, the Devī temple bears no inscription at all. Of course, one has to be cautious when using such an argument *a silentio*. I am not saying that the Cōla kings did have no implications at all in those shrines, but obviously their link with the Devī cult was weak (or, at least, they did not want to insist on it in their documents), whereas a lot of non-royal persons showed their devotion to the Goddess.

#### CONCLUSION

To sum up, Tukkacci was built at the end of Kulōttuṅga I's reign or a little later by his son Vikrama. As it is a "royal" or "State" temple, a site without main religious connections was chosen and the king gave his name to the *liṅga* enshrined in it. The building seems to have been rather unitary, except for the small shrine and the temple dedicated to the Goddess which seem to me not to have been planned originally. It inaugurated also new features: the most notable one is the chariot-shaped *maṅḍapa* which would attain a much greater achievement and symbolism at Dārāsuraṅ. The figure of Śarabha appeared there for the first time, most probably.

Compared to Tukkacci, the status of Paḷaiyārai is not evident to determine. It is not impossible that it was Kulōttuṅga II's "State temple" but for some reasons we may doubt it. I would suggest that it was in fact the chapel of the royal palace, since Paḷaiyārai acted as a capital for the Cōla dynasty in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. But this suggestion would need further research.

As it is, Tukkacci is not the main architectural achievement of the Cōlas. Its importance is more obvious from an historical point of view because it is a landmark in the history of royal patronage. It has sometimes been claimed that Dārāsuraṅ had been partly influenced by Cālukya architecture: the main feature of this kind is probably the empty space in the middle of the *maṅḍapa* (Champakalakshmi 1979, 347; L'Hernault 1987, 10). This could be said also about its model, Tukkacci. Since in his youth, Vikrama Cōla had been sent by his father as viceroy in Veṅḡi, it could imply that he brought back with him some foreign ideas or even some architects and sculptors from the Cālukya country. From a more artistic perspective, Tukkacci was a gateway to Dārāsuraṅ, which, in many ways is much more a masterpiece. So, it is indeed for its significance that this temple was briefly analysed here. But, once again, all this must be seen only as tentative and needs to be researched further.

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