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The Archaeology of Bhakti II
Royal Bhakti, Local Bhakti

edited by
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Introduction: King and Place

Emmanuel Francis & Charlotte Schmid

> *(…) mahārājabhuluṇḍena bhagavataḥ surāsuranaroragaguroḥ (…) vviṣṇoḥ paramena* [i.e. *parameṇa*] *bhaktisnehānurāgena* [i.e. *bhaktisnehānurāgeṇa*] *śirasā praṇipatya (…)*
>
> The great king Bhuluṇḍa having bowed with his head out of great devotion (*bhakti*), love (*sneha*) and affection (*anurāga*) for Viṣṇu, the Lord (*bhagavant*), the master of gods, demons, men and snakes (...)
>
> Grant of Bhuluṇḍa, year 47,[1] lines 1 and 5, from the Bagh hoard. See Ramesh & Tewari (1990: 1). Our translation.

The first edition of "The Archaeology of Bhakti" workshop-cum-conference in August 2011 was dedicated to the infancy of Bhakti. With a special focus on the two child deities that are Kṛṣṇa and Skanda, it was an attempt to grasp the Bhakti phenomenon from North to South, from Mathurā to Madurai. "Royal Bhakti, Local Bhakti" was the theme of the second edition of this scholarly event, which took place in August 2013, and it is the central theme of this volume. In the presentations made during the workshop (*in situ* and in-door in the EFEO centre at Pondicherry) as well as in the conference papers, the effort was to define as precisely as

[1] According to most scholars, this inscription is dated to the Gupta era (see Ramesh & Tewari 1990: vii–viii). If so, it dates to the middle of fourth century.

possible the roles of kings, local elites and devotional communities in the development of Bhakti. Many of these presentations and papers have now become the chapters of the present book, or have inspired them as with the chapters by Emmanuel Francis and Valérie Gillet and the afterword by Richard Davis.

In the introduction to *The Archaeology of Bhakti I: Mathurā and Maturai, Back and Forth* (Francis & Schmid eds. 2014), we have argued for an incorporative and multi-layered approach to Bhakti. Bhakti is the origin of archaeological material as much as of written texts. The latter, however—as Richard Davis highlights in his afterword (pp. 567–584)—have provided the main basis for the study of Bhakti. To correct this imbalance, besides the verbal dimension, equal attention should be paid to the material side of the picture. Whereas Bhakti is usually considered as inner and personal, it has however been publicly recorded in inscriptions, sculptures, monuments, and places. In those places where it has been practised, Bhakti has shaped, for instance, the ritual and cultic life through the endowments it inspired.

Bhakti can be approached from different sources: textual, epigraphical, iconographical or architectural. It can also be considered from different angles: its foundational texts; its sects, i.e. Vaiṣṇava, Śaiva; its practice outside Hinduism, with which it is usually associated; its various types of patrons, i.e. dynasties, individual kings, queens, palace women, local assemblies; its saints and performers, i.e. the Āḻvār and Nāyaṉmār saint-poets, dancers, singers, etc.; its sites of devotion. Philology and history of art, to mention the two major disciplines which, along with the history of religions, are mainly represented by the participants in "The Archaeology of Bhakti," complement each other. Inscriptions, that is words engraved on stone, metal, brick, etc., are at the intersection between the categories of text and artefact. This is reflected in the present volume, which deals, from such sources and angles, with the interplay between the local and the royal.

The starting point of this introduction will thus be working definitions of three notions: Bhakti, royal Bhakti and local Bhakti. Informed by the contributions published in this volume as well as by the unpublished presentations made during the workshop, these definitions are meant as the opening perspectives of an "archaeology of Bhakti."

Bhakti, Royal and Local

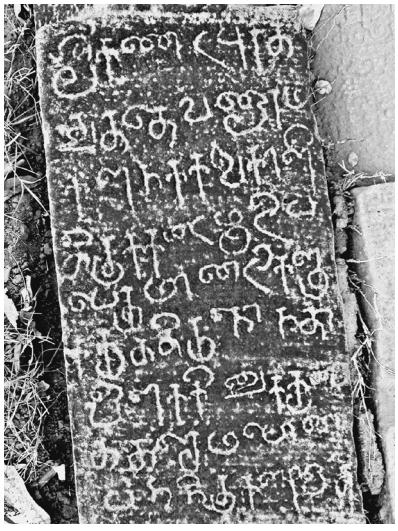

Fig. 1. Pillar inscription at Tirucceṉṉampūṇṭi, lines 5–13 (photo by C. Schmid, 2007).

svasti śrī *nirupatoṅkavarmmaṟku yāṇṭu 10 8 āvatu* ***śrī****kaṇṭapurattut t[ē*]vaṉār makaḷ nakkaṅ kāḷi tirukkaṭaimuṭip perumāṉaṭikaḷukkut tirunontā viḷakkuṇukku vaitta cempoṉ panniru kaḻaiñcu* [i.e. *kaḻañcu*] *(...)*

Hail, Prosperity! In the 18th year of the king Nṛpatuṅgavarman, Nakkaṅ Kāḷi, daughter of god (*tēvaṉār makaḷ*) at/of Śrīkaṇṭapuram, for a perpetual lamp to the great god (*perumāṉaṭikaḷ*) at/of Tirukkaṭaimuṭi, the superior gold she has deposited: twelve *kaḻañcu*s (...)

Pillar inscription at Tirucceṉṉampūṇṭi, second half of the ninth century (Grantha characters in bold).[2] See SII 7, No. 526. Our translation.

Bhakti is at the heart of so many studies and debates that it seems audacious to try to define it. Referring the reader to the previous volume for an attempt at a necessary preliminary investigation of the notion (Francis & Schmid 2014), we will just recall here that this Sanskrit term is commonly translated as "devotion" like in the above epigraph from the Bagh hoard, but sometimes also as "love" when it is not cautiously left untranslated. In this grant of Bhuluṇḍa—one of the very first inscriptions where Bhakti is associated with a king whose name evinces his tribal extraction—the word *bhakti* is compounded with two other words which mean "love" (*sneha*) and "affection" (*anurāga*).[3] These two words might be considered as synonyms of or comments on the notion of Bhakti. Still, at this time and in this area, they may have been necessary precisions

[2] On the same pillar is the epigraph of a "local queen." For a translation of the whole inscription see Orr (2000: 18), Schmid (2014a: 305–306).

[3] The king Bhuluṇḍa is referred to in 13 out of the 27 copper plates that mention the rulers of Valkhā. Most of them belong to the Bagh hoard discovered near Bhopal (Madhya Pradesh). As the unspecified era of these records is believed to be the Gupta era, the Valkhā kings, although *mahārāja*s, appear as subordinates to the "imperial" Guptas.

about what a "great king" (*mahārāja*) wanted to express with the grant he was making for the performance of the rites called *bali*, *caru* and *satra*.[4] Bhakti indeed has different shades of meaning as it is attested throughout a very long period, in various religious and geographical contexts.

In fact, although the etymology links it to the notions of "sharing" and "partaking," Bhakti came to have many more meanings and uses. It has been defined as a strategy by Karen Pechilis Prentiss in her work on the Tamil saint-poets (*The Embodiment of Bhakti*, 1999). The present volume draws on this suggestion, manoeuvering it into the political arena through the analysis of a wide range of royal figures (kings and queens), performers and other individuals. John Cort, a specialist of Jainism, sees Bhakti as a style of worship (2002a: 24). And since Friedhelm Hardy wrote on the Bhakti in South India, a distinction is often drawn between an intellectual Bhakti—the most famous exposition of which is found in the *Bhagavadgītā*—and an emotional Bhakti, at play, for instance in the Tamil poetry of the Vaiṣṇava saint-poets (Āḻvārs) of Tamil Nadu or in the Sanskrit *Bhāgavatapurāṇa*.

Whether a strategy or a style, Bhakti thus appears as a trans-sectarian approach to the divine—which can take forms as contrasting as quiet reverence and frenzied possession—common to various types of devotees who participate, experience, and long for a personal god or an absolute divine. The source of such an approach is debated by scholars. It has long been assumed that it originated in lay or popular trends of religiosity, which would have been responsible for a shift from the ritualistic Vedic religion to the Bhakti movements. But far from being incompatible with asceticism, devotion and reverence appear to have been a common practice for mendicants and monks of the early Jain and Buddhist tradition (see Cort 2002a, 2002b, 2005; Schopen 1997, especially, pp. 99-113 and 238-257). It has also been stressed that the distinction between emotional and intellectual Bhakti is not as clear-cut as sometimes stated. An emotional element seems indeed already at play in the *Bhagavadgītā* or even in the *Śvetāśvataropaniṣad* if one turns toward the early textual testimonies of Bhakti.

As far as material traces of Bhakti—or perhaps "visible" Bhakti—are concerned, that is traces left by those who had the means to commission

[4] For the mention of these rites, see line 5 of the epigraph (Ramesh & Tewari 1990: 1 and 3); for a discussion, see Willis (2009: 94ff.).

and pay for an enterprise such as the founding of a temple, kings and their immediate relatives are expected to be in the forefront. In contradistinction to commonly held views, however, temples commissioned by ruling kings were not the majority and several groups or individuals fostered or patronized Bhakti sites. In many sacred sites, Bhakti resonates with the voices—recorded in inscriptions—of many different patrons who commissioned the building of sacred architecture or supported the worship conducted in these shrines, whether established by themselves or not. Queens, princes, palace women and men, elite circles, local Brahmin assemblies, merchant communities, local individuals—identified by name, but also, often, by a place-name, just like deities themselves sometimes are—were rather dynamic patrons or agencies of Bhakti. Our contention is that the role of these various agents—regarding the building of temples, endowments, patronage of rituals, composition and commissioning of texts such as devotional hymns or inscriptions—has been generally understated and should now be emphasized. Most desirable is an assessment of the variety of patrons as well as of the types of relationship that tied some of these one to another (king and vassals; king and subjects; husband and wife; mother and daughter; mother and son).

Far from downplaying the importance of kings as patrons, we want to explore the connection between the different forms of Bhakti agencies. Do these represent independent and separate streams of Bhakti? Is there a continuum from grand-scale royal temples to locally designed ones? What is the link between the eighth-century Pallava king who proclaims, in the foundation Sanskrit inscription from the Kailāsanātha temple in Kāñcīpuram, that he is Upendra (Kṛṣṇa) in valour, that he follows the doctrine of Śaiva Siddhānta and that the temple he has built is similar to his own fame *and* to the smile of Hara (see epigraph below, p. 13), and the *tēvaṉār makaḷ*, "daughter of the god," of Śrīkaṇṭapuram, "the city of the venerable Kaṇṭaṉ"—that is a place called after an anthroponym, a rather common practice in the oldest known Tamil literature and epigraphical records—whose endowment for burning a lamp in front of the Mahādeva of Tirukkaṭaimuṭi is recorded in a Tamil inscription (see epigraph above, p. 3)? What is the royal share in the development of a Bhakti deeply rooted in a specific place? What is the local share? How did royal Bhakti respond to local Bhakti, and vice-versa? Is the patronage by members of royal courts, especially women, equivalent to that of ruling kings? Is it personal Bhakti or dynastic Bhakti?

To address such questions, textual foundations will be considered first. Then we will reflect upon several categories of agencies of Bhakti. Starting with the figures of the kings, we will gradually turn towards some performers of Bhakti and other figures as the hinge between local and royal. This will bring us, finally, to the "Bhakti of place," to sites where the gamut of devotees and deities of many horizons meet in a localised devotional context.

Textual Foundations

tato rāmahradān gacchet tīrthasevī narādhipa |
yatra rāmeṇa rājendra tarasā dīptatejasā |
kṣatram utsādya vīryeṇa hradāḥ pañca niveśitāḥ ||

pūrayitvā naravyāghra rudhireṇeti naḥ śrutam |
pitaras tarpitāḥ sarve tathaiva ca pitāmahāḥ |
tatas te pitaraḥ prītā rāmam ūcur mahīpate ||

rāma rāma mahābhāga prītāḥ sma tava bhārgava |
anayā pitṛbhaktyā ca vikrameṇa ca te vibho |
varaṃ vṛṇīṣva bhadraṃ te kim icchasi mahādyute ||

From there the pilgrim should proceed to the lakes of Rāma, where Rāma of blazing splendor, after his eradication of the baronage, energetically and powerfully created five lakes, filling them, so we have heard, with blood. Thus he satiated his fathers and grandfathers: whereupon those pleased ascetics said to Rāma, "Rāma, lordly Rāma, we are pleased, Bhārgava, with this your devotion to your ancestors [*pitṛbhaktyā*] and with your bravery, O lord. Be blessed, choose a boon! What do you wish, magnificent man?"

Mbh 3.81.22–33. van Buitenen transl. (1975: 379). See *infra*, p. 45.

Presentations by Alf Hiltebeitel, Thennilapuram Mahadevan, Vishwa Adluri, and Joydeep Bagchee during the course of a whole day devoted to Bhakti in the *Mahābhārata* allowed us to trace Bhakti through its primary textual sources by exploring its relation to Vedic and Upaniṣadic models of salvation and highlighting the innovations of the epic that first made Bhakti possible as a cult phenomenon and a popular movement. The two papers which are the outcome of these presentations walk on the textual side by examining what they consider as the earliest textual monument of Bhakti: the *Mahābhārata*.

In "*Tīrtha*s, Temples, *Āśrama*s and Royal Courts: Towards a *Mahābhārata* Ethnography of Early Bhakti" (pp. 33–78) A. Hiltebeitel looks at the *tīrtha*s mentioned in the *Mahābhārata* in order to consider the association of royal figures with these pilgrimage networks. Two orientations of the epic are identified. One pertains to its prehistory, prior to its first writing, while the other is determined by its written transmission. From the perspective of Bhakti, sectarianism has intervened between these two orientations, and is expressed through a developed vocabulary of degrees of proximity to and union with the deity that works both for Viṣṇu and Śiva. For A. Hiltebeitel "the *Mahābhārata* generates its Brahmanical model as a waiting game for there to be big Kṣatriya kings, while *āśrama*s and *tīrtha*s remained more prominent than temples as long as mostly non-Kṣatriya 'little kings' ruled in the period during or shortly following the Brahmin Śuṅgas or Kāṅvas when the epic was probably composed." The review of Pulastya's *tīrthayātrā*—or the "matrix text" of the pilgrimage pattern in the Mbh, in which the most important of the four *tīrtha*s associated with Bhakti is Rāmahrada, "the Lakes of Rāma," mentioned in the epigraph above—prove *tīrtha*s to be the central focus of early Bhakti. Approached with *prasāda*, "grace," and gestures like *pūjā,* "worship," that may make them "minicamps of Bhakti," the *tīrtha*s of Pulastya's *tīrthayātrā* are linked to *loka*s, that is the Vedic destination as soteriological world at a time before the life of Kṛṣṇa and thus before there could have been Kṛṣṇabhakti. To *tīrtha*s are associated *āśrama*s, royal courts, and, eventually, temples—mentioned only in Mārkaṇḍeya's future-tense Kaliyuga prophesy. A. Hiltebeitel proposes thus to rethink Biardeau's idea of the *Mahābhārata* as a "monument to non-sectarian Bhakti organized around Viṣṇu-Kṛṣṇa." He confronts his study of the *tīrtha*s in the *Mahābhārata* with the pattern found in the original *Skandapurāṇa* to argue that the epic should be considered as a non-sectarian text *because* it draws from an older Bhakti for Rudra-Śiva. The workshop presentation by T.P. Mahadevan ("Royal Bhakti and Āḻvār Vaiṣṇavism") about the reciprocal influences of the Āḻvārs' corpus and the Southern recension of the *Mahābhārata* considered the other end of such a development of Vaiṣṇava Bhakti, as Kṛṣṇa takes the shape of a god of Bhakti in a long insertion in the Southern recension of the epic. The dots of Kṛṣṇabhakti that still wait to be connected in the matrix of the *Mahābhārata* appear to come together here.

In "Bloß Glaube? Understanding Academic Constructions of Bhakti in the Past Century" (pp. 79–126) V. Adluri & J. Bagchee claim that the

Mahābhārata evinces a Bhakti of an intellectual type, in which the king is acknowledged as the paradigmatic *bhakta*. By following his duty (*dharma*), as if it were a sacrifice, the king is enabled to move from *pravṛtti* ("turning outwards") onto the path of *nivṛtti* ("turning inwards"). The authors adopt a kind of structuralist approach, on the lines of the work of Madeleine Biardeau, in order to clarify the notion of Bhakti by reviewing earlier scholarship. They argue that Bhakti is integral to the *Mahābhārata*, which is in fact "the principal monument to Bhakti." Then they examine what salvation is for the king according to the *Mahābhārata*, focussing on the narrative of King Vasu and the notions of *pravṛtti* and *nivṛtti*. They conclude that Bhakti is "first and foremost an intellectual project that appears in the *Mahābhārata* and whose details are worked out in key texts such as the *Bhagavadgītā* and the *Nārāyaṇīya*."

The Buddhist textual foundations are dealt with by G. Bailey. He introduces his paper "Devotional Elements in the *Sakkapañhasutta* of the *Dīghanikāya*" (pp. 127–157) by stating that "[i]n scholarship on the origins of Bhakti, and consequential devotional traditions, in ancient Indian religion, emphasis is placed primarily on tracing these origins back to the earliest Hindu sources." G. Bailey contributes to restore the balance by demonstrating that many technical terms associated with Bhakti found in later Hindu devotional texts occur in Pāli Buddhist texts, which may date back to 300 BCE. Moreover, together with the development of the *stūpa* cult from the first century BCE onwards, the elevation of the Buddha to an object of devotion, the consistent rise in image construction along with, later, the veneration of Bodhisattvas, confirm the devotional tendency which appears in these early Pāli texts. Furthering the works of Gregory Schopen on Buddhism as well as Tracy Coleman's contribution in the *Archaeology of Bhakti I* (2014), G. Bailey identifies elements of devotion in the *Sakkapañhasutta* and wonders about their link with the growing testimonies of Buddhist cultic places. Charting the transformation of Sakka—i.e. Indra, the earliest royal figure in Indic texts—until he becomes a full-fledged devotee able to reach the Buddha, the *Sakkapañhasutta* certainly represents a devotional approach. The personal relationship between devotee and object of devotion is stressed, especially the intimacy that should apply. Even if such a relationship appears rather clearly as a rule governed in Purāṇic texts, there are anyhow clear devotional elements in some Pāli texts. For G. Bailey, these may be considered as independent developments from Hindu sources, as their foundations, or as variants of a common devotional background.

G. Bailey concludes that it remains difficult to conduct an in-depth investigation into the behaviour of individual monks and to find textual justifications for financial support, not only from established sources such as kings, but also from the lower classes or from monks and nuns. The *Sakkapañhasutta* provides a kind of model enabling an individual to approach a prominent monk or a Buddha image. Akira Shimada's presentation ("Evolution of Buddhist Devotional Worship in Andhra: Art-historical, Archaeological and Epigraphic Data") complemented G. Bailey's contribution by assessing the material data that help tracing the evolution of "aniconic" and "iconic" worship in early Buddhism at the local level in Andhra Pradesh. In both approaches, textual and archaeological, the issue of agencies proves to be crucial. Assessing archaeological documents opens routes to further research on the whole range of individuals who expressed their devotion. The kings are at one end of the Bhakti agency gamut considered here, with places, where kings are only one among various types of *bhakta*s, at the other.

Agencies of Bhakti

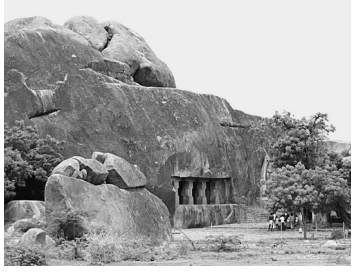

Fig. 2. The cave at Maṇṭakappaṭṭu (photo by E. Francis, 2009).

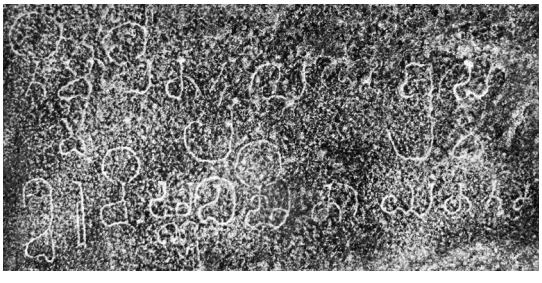

Fig. 3. The last two *pāda*s of the foundation inscription verse at Maṇṭakappaṭṭu (photo by E. Francis, 2009).

etad aniṣṭakam adrumam aloham asudhaṃ vicitracittena
nirmmāpitan nṛpeṇa brahmeśvaraviṣṇulakṣitāyatanam

This, without brick, wood, metal or mortar, the king Vicitracitta (i.e. Mahendravarman I Pallava) had it made: the temple marked by Brahmā, Īśvara (i.e. Śiva) and Viṣṇu.

Verse (*gīti*) inscribed on a pillar in the rock-cut cave-temple at Maṇṭakappaṭṭu (circa 600–630). See EI 17, No. 5. Our translation.

Fig. 4. The *prākāra* of the Vīraṭṭāṉeśvara temple at Tiruttaṇi (photo by V. Gillet, 2013).

Fig. 5. The beginning of the foundation inscription verse of the Vīraṭṭāṉeśvara temple at Tiruttaṇi (photo by C. Schmid, 2011).

tiruntu tiruttaṇiyil ceñcaṭai īcarkku
karuṅkallāl kaṟṟaḷiyā niṟka — virumpiyē
naṟkalaikaḷ ellām naviṉṟa cīr nampi appi
poṟp' amaiya ceytāṉ purintu

So that (it) stands as a stone temple (made) with black stones for the Lord with red matted hairs (i.e. Śiva) in beautiful Tiruttaṇi, the glorious Nampi Appi, who has learned all good arts, lovingly made it beautifully.

Verse (*veṇpā*) inscribed on the base of the Vīraṭṭāṉeśvara at Tiruttaṇi (circa 900). See SII 12, No. 94. Our translation. See *infra*, p. 448.

The above epigraphs, both inscriptions of the foundation of a temple, are testimonies of the devotion of a Pallava king active in the beginning of the seventh century and of a local well-of, who lived around 900 CE, at a time when the Pallava dynasty was nearing its end. As such, in their chronological succession, they illustrate, in the particular case of Tamil Nadu, how different types of patrons played a role in temple building. We also see that what is most important to the king is the novelty of the temple associated with his name, while the Tamil verse begins with mentioning the place, the god and then the patron.

How did kings accommodate Bhakti? What was their role into its development? Had they specific devotional practices? These issues are particularly relevant in the case of Tamil Nadu where the *in situ* sessions of the workshop were conducted. A close connection between royal Bhakti and local Bhakti is very often assumed in the secondary literature: poems of the Tamil devotional corpora praising the Lord of such or such a place—collected into anthologies,

the Śaiva *Tēvāram* and the Vaiṣṇava *Tiviyappirapantam* (seventh to ninth centuries)—are associated with royal figures, whether as putative patrons of the temples to which the hymns are attached or as interacting with the saint-poets. In fact this association is explicitly made mostly in the later hagiographical literature.

The earliest extant Hindu sacred shrines of the Tamil country were commissioned by Pallava kings, in the north of Tamil Nadu, as their Sanskrit foundation inscriptions attest. The shift of the Pallava dominion towards the northern part of Tamil Nadu in the sixth and seventh centuries broadly matches the accepted dates of the earliest poems of the Tamil saint-poets. Linking these early foundations (all royal) and the Tamil hymns, which are local in the sense that each concerns a deity of a specific place, raises many difficulties as demonstrated elsewhere (Francis 2014). There is virtually no concordance, on the Śaiva side of the picture, between the sites sung in the Tamil Bhakti anthologies and the royal Pallava temples. As regards Vaiṣṇava sites, the correspondences are even more elusive.

In temples raised when the Cōḻa dynasty ruled a large part of Tamil Nadu, the issue of the royal impact proves no less problematical. From the ninth century and, even more clearly, from the tenth century, onwards, the Tamil country, especially the Kāvēri delta, has been covered by a kind of web of temple foundations, but royal involvement is hardly noticeable.[5] Most of these temples attest in fact to a local Bhakti as they were erected, used, endowed, repaired, and enlarged by local communities of *bhakta*s for centuries. Very rarely do we know when and by whom they were founded. Apparently it was not important to record this, probably because such temples were the results of a collective, long-term enterprise. These temples mark spots which were sacred much before the brick or stone architecture became prevalent and affordable to patrons other than royal. In contradistinction to the Pallava royal foundations, many of these temples are identified—correctly or falsely[6]—with places sung in the *Tēvāram* and the *Tiviyappirapantam*. The direct involvement of kings however remains elusive, whether as patrons or founders. Nonetheless there are temples which are royal foundations of Cōḻa kings at Tanjore (Tañcāvūr), Gangaikondacholapuram (Kaṅkaikoṇṭacōḻapuram),

[5] On this issue, see Kaimal (1996).

[6] See Chevillard (2000), Schmid (2014b).

Darasuram (Tārācuram) and Tribhuvanam (Tiruppuvaṉam). Few but impressive in scale, they do not occupy places of ancient sacredness and, unlike the royal Pallava temples, are not provided with foundation inscriptions.

To sum up, in the temples they founded, the Pallava kings had Sanskrit inscriptions engraved while, in their realm, local *bhakta*s started to leave traces of their devotion in places that had long been sacred, the deities of which were praised in the Tamil hymns. The pattern is rather different, as the audience is different: Pallava kings were addressing the Sanskrit cosmopolis; local devotees, when inscribing their donations in Tamil on the walls of temples, were speaking to the local. The local foundations of the Cōḻa period, increasing in number compared to the Pallava period and outnumbering the royal foundations, attest, at least partly, to a continuation of the religious pattern established during the Pallava period. And in both Pallava and Cōḻa periods we rarely find a royal temple the god of which is also praised in a Tamil hymn.

This is not to say that "royal" and "local" Bhakti do not share a great deal. The distinction between royal and local sites becomes less and less obvious with the multiplication of Bhakti sites during the ninth and tenth centuries, as we enter the Cōḻa period. When a ruling kings' endowment to a local temple (that is not a royal foundation) is recorded in a Tamil inscription (whether commissioned by the king or not), this is in fact an instance of royal Bhakti. Whether the king really ever visited the site (or even ever made the said endowment) remains questionable. But in one way or in another the king's *persona* is associated with the local deity, through the collocation of their names in the epigraphs.

Royal Figures

Fig. 6. The original name of the temple (*śrīrājasiṃhapallaveśvare*) in stanza 10 of foundation inscription at the Kailāsanātha, Kāñcīpuram (photos by E. Francis, 2008; photomontage by E. Francis).

> *nayorjjitaparākramārjjitam anena sarvvañ jagat* [i.e. *jagan*] *nṛpeṇa hatakaṇṭakaṃ praṇatarājakaṃ bhuñjatā* |
>
> *yaśaḥsadṛśam ānmano* [i.e. *ātmano*] *bhavanam etad utthāpitaṃ harasya harahāsarūpam atimānam atyatbhutam* [i.e. *atyadbhutam*] ||
>
> At the order of this king who rules the entire world—which he acquired by his valour and fortified by his political savvy, in which he killed his enemies and humbled the kings—this haughty and wonderful residence of Hara (i.e. Śiva) has been erected, worthy of (or: resembling) his own glory, resembling the smile of Śiva.
>
> Inscription of Narasiṃhavarman II Pallava at the Kailāsanātha, Kāñcīpuram, stanza 9. E. Francis & P. Kaimal transl. See *infra*, p. 202.

Rather than purely hagiographical figures, some kings are definitely historical characters. With the papers of Padma Kaimal, Caleb Simmons and S.A.S. Sarma, we meet clear instances of royal—one would even say imperial—patronage of places of devotion. An important issue raised here is the correspondence between a royal agenda and the geography of Bhakti, between politics and devotion. To what extent is royal Bhakti a strategy, a political stance? Although a religious foundation or a donation to a temple by a king can certainly be attributed to a sincere act of devotion, it often appears to have been also motivated by a political aim as well.

In "Word-Image Tango: Telling Stories with Words and Sculptures at the Kailāsanātha Temple Complex in Kāñcīpuram" (pp. 159–207) P. Kaimal shows how the founder king is equated with the god through the iconography and the epigraphy of a particular temple. The depiction of deities is an act of devotion of the royal commissioner, but at the same time, since these images can also refer metaphorically to the king and, most of all, to the royal family through the double lecture of the Somāskanda imagery (see also Schmid 2014b), such a manifestation of royal Bhakti also serves as praise of the royal patron. Here may be seen very precisely how visual and verbal interact in narrative praise of divine beings through which gods and kings become so much intertwined that the question of their distinction is rendered meaningless. P. Kaimal demonstrates thus how, through the interplay between a text (the foundation inscription of the temple) and images (the whole iconographic programme of the *vimāna* of the temple on which the foundation epigraph is engraved) god and king fuse

together. Many sculptures on the *vimāna* of the Kailāsanātha seem simply to tell stories of Shiva's triumphs and adventures, but was storytelling the main reason to have them there? For P. Kaimal the relation with the text is of primary importance and it clearly shapes the devotion to a god into the devotion to a king.

Concerning a much later period, and farther north, in Karnataka, the question of the specificity of royal Bhakti is addressed by C. Simmons in "Creating Royalty: Identity-Making Devotional Images of the Woḍeyars of Mysore" (pp. 209–235). To highlight the political usage of Bhakti made by kingship the author concentrates on the devotional images (*bhaktivigrahas*) of three Woḍeyar rulers from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century. Rāja Woḍeyar, Ranadhīra Kaṇṭhīrava Narasarāja Woḍeyar, and Mummaḍi Kṛṣṇarāja Woḍeyar installed images of themselves in temples under their purview. C. Simmons explores the differences between the rhetoric of Purāṇic kingship in the epigraphic eulogistic material and the textual histories of the dynasty, which remain relatively consistent, and the wide dissonance in the location and style of the images of the kings. He argues that their presence in the temples demonstrates the shifting devotional alliances that the Woḍeyars made during their ascent from local chieftains to kings vying for regional supremacy during the seventeenth century and again after the reinstatement of Mummaḍi Kṛṣṇarāja by the British in 1799. C. Simmons proposes that the identification of these images as portraits of the Mysorean kings was a later attribution made during the reign of Mummaḍi Kṛṣṇarāja Woḍeyar. He suggests that the traditional dating of these images was part of a conscious process of identity-making through the construction of royal devotional patterns, which took place in the nineteenth century after the Woḍeyar family regained the Mysore throne. These images would then have been part of a royal project to elevate the status of the Woḍeyar family in the region by emphasizing their royal history and patterns of devotion and by making the kings of the lineage sites of ritual practice.

In "The Servitude of the Travancore Royal Family to Śrīpadmanābhasvāmin" (pp. 237–256) S.A.S. Sarma shows how the Kings of Travancore (known as *padmanābhadāsa*s, "servants of the Lord Padmanābha") not only managed the administration of the Padmanābhasvāmin Temple in Trivandrum, but also took particular interest in the temple rituals. In this way he documents the deep involvement of reigning kings in rituals which evince the peculiar link between a personal deity and a whole kingdom.

Performing Bhakti

Fig. 7. The *vimāna* of the "Bṛhadīśvara" temple at Tanjore (photo by E. Francis, 2013).

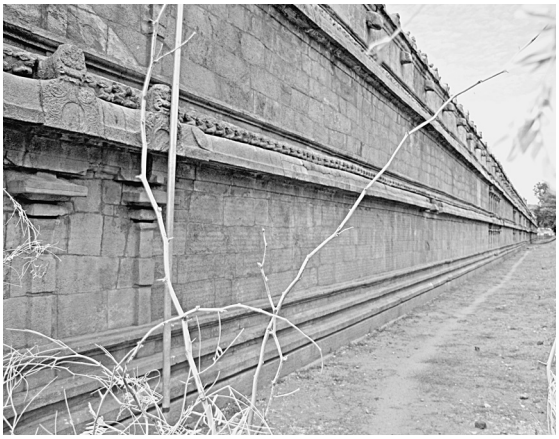

Fig. 8. The north wall of the *prākāra* of the "Bṛhadīśvara" temple at Tanjore (photos by E. Francis, 2013).

(…) k[ō]**rājake[sa]rivarmma**rāṉa **śrīrājarājade**[var]kku yā[ṇ]ṭu iruppattoṉpatāvatu [va]r[ai] uṭai[yā]r **śrīrājarājīśvaram** uṭaiyārkku nivan[takkā]ṟarāka uṭaiyār **śrīrājarājade**var kuṭutta nivantakkāṟa[r*]kkum u[ṭ]aiyār **śrīrājarā[jī]śvaram** uṭai[yār] taḷicc[ē*]rippeṇṭu[kaḷ]āka c[ō*]lamaṇṭalattut taḷicc[ē*]rikaḷi[l niṉ]ṟu[ṅ] k[o]ṇṭu vantu [ē*]ṟṟiṉa taḷicc[ē*]ippeṇṭukaḷukkum nīvantamāka[p]* [i.e. *nivantamākap*] *[pa]ṅku ceyta paṭi paṇku vaḷi [pa]ṅku o[ṉ]ṟiṇāl [ni]laṉ v[ē*]liyiṇāl **rājakesari**y [ō*][ṭ]okkum āṭavallaṉ eṉ[ṉu]m marakkālāl nellu nūṟṟuk[kala]mā[ka]vum*

(...) up to the twenty-ninth year of Śrīrājarājadeva alias the king Rājakesarivarman, to the owners of *nibandha*s (*nivantakkāṟar*, i.e. owners of assignments of property) whom the Lord Śrīrājarājadeva donated as owners of *nibandha*s to the Lord of the Śrīrājarājīśvaram (i.e. the temple) of the Lord (*uṭaiyār śrīrājarājīśvaram uṭaiyārkku*) and to the *taḷiccērippeṇṭukaḷ* (i.e. women of the temple quarter) whom (he) ascribed, having gone and taken them from *taḷiccēri*s of the *cōḷamaṇṭalam*, as *taḷiccērippeṇṭukaḷ* (for) the Lord of the Śrīrājarājīśvaram of the Lord (*utaiyār śrīrājarājīśvaram uṭaiyār*), in accordance to the manner the shares as *nibandha*s were made, let it be, one share after share, per *vēli* of land, 1000 *kalam*s of paddy according to the measure (*marakkāl*) named Āṭavallaṉ, which is equal with a Rājakesari (measure).

Inscription on the north wall of the *prākāra* of the "Bṛhadīśvara" at Tanjore. See SII 2, No. 66, lines 3–6. Our translation. See *infra*, p. 270 and Orr (2000: 33–34).

With the next contributions we shift from royal figures to people entering into relation with kings (or kingly figures) and enacting Bhakti, not as patrons, but as saints and performers. Therefore they are more or less local, more or less royal. When we turn towards the hymns of the *Tēvāram*, which relate mostly to village temples and in which various aspects of Śiva are praised—sometimes wild when he dances in the cremation ground, sometimes quiet when he stands as an Ardhanārīśvara—Bhakti seems to smooth out the traditional barriers of caste, privilege and status by involving every strata of the society in the worship at these places. The epigraphical reality however suggests the predominance of the Brahmin community in the temple administration. Tiziana Leucci and Sudalaimuthu Palaniappan consider hierarchy in Bhakti in terms of royal and local by examining the role and status of dancers and bards. This issue of hierarchy is addressed in these two papers about the Bhakti performance.

In "Royal and Local Patronage of Bhakti Cult: The Case of Temple and Court Dancers" (pp. 257–301) T. Leucci focusses on the *rājadāsī*s and *devadāsī*s, mentions of them in European travelogues, their genealogical myth (their *apsaras*' ascendance), and their conception of duty, which she equates with a *dharma*. Literary sources in Sanskrit and Tamil as well as ethnographic data attest that those artists-and-courtesans—as T. Leucci defines them—played an important role in the local and royal patronage of Bhakti cults, by performing and transmitting the repertoire of compositions attributed to Tamil *bhakta* saints in the daily liturgy and seasonal religious festivals in temples as well as in royal courts. T. Leucci proposes that *rājadāsī*s and *devadāsī*s had a particular status and related code of conduct, conceived as specific, opposite and complementary to those of the married women. Their affinity with the goddess Śrī/Lakṣmī, which is acknowledged both in individual contemporary interviews and in a whole range of ancient texts and images, associates them with the pre-colonial figures of kingship. Those artists-and-courtesans represented both the goddess and themselves, as embodied figures of wealth and prosperity for valorous monarchs and other people of high status.

Some of these artists-and-courtesans may have been trained by Pāṇars, who are the main figures in S. Palaniappan's paper "Hagiography Versus History: The Tamil Pāṇar in Bhakti-Oriented Hagiographic Texts and Inscriptions" (pp. 303–346). This study suggests that the Pāṇars or bards were the object of a peculiar treatment in hagiographic literature that resulted in erasing their original connection with royalty. Through this change of social status assumed

in Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava hagiographies, bards became more local, as S. Palaniappan considers that "the term 'local' can serve as a surrogate for the low social status of devotees." Whereas the very names by which Tamil Bhakti saints are designated—Nāyaṉmārs and Āḻvārs—imply a high status, since both terms were also used in reference to royal personages and deities, hagiographic literature projected Pāṇars as untouchables who were emancipated by their devotion. In so doing, these texts enhance the power of Bhakti as it uplifted the Pāṇars from their supposedly low status of pre-medieval times. However, the Tamil Pāṇars had an early connection with royalty as attested already in Caṅkam literature. Furthermore, according to S. Palaniappan, the songs of the Pāṇars may have served as a model for some of the Classical Tamil poems which in turn influenced the later Tamil Bhakti poetry such as that found in the *Tēvāram* and the *Tiwviyappirapantam*. As a matter of fact, medieval epigraphic data present—S. Palaniappan argues—a drastically different picture of the Pāṇars than the one projected in hagiographic texts. The author explores how and why this difference between hagiography and epigraphy came to be, highlighting the role played by the *Periyapurāṇam* of Cēkkiḻār. From Cēkkiḻār to contemporary times he traces the transformation of the Pāṇar from a figure close to a king to a low status devotee who, thanks to his Bhakti, comes close to god.

The issue of hierarchy in Bhakti is not the only one raised here. In terms of performance and expressions of devotion, the much debated question of emotional and intellectual Bhakti is also at stake. Can we locate kings on one side more than on the other? The Pallava founder of the Kailāsanātha claims in the foundation inscription that he was a follower of the Śaiva Siddhānta (*infra*, p. 199) and Dominic Goodall has shown in his workshop presentation ("Tantric Śaivism and Bhakti: How are they Related?") that expressions of religious devotion play only a minor role in the Śaiva Siddhānta doctrine. Liberation (*mokṣa*) was primarily achieved by means of Śaiva initiation (*dīkṣā*) and Bhakti was considered only in exceptional cases. The self-control and knowledge of the Śaiva Siddhāntin does not seem to draw him into an emotional Bhakti. Still, representations of gods in the company of musician and dancer devotees are numerous in royal foundations, as in the Pallava Kailāsanātha at Kāñcīpuram, or in the Rājarājeśvara (the present-day Bṛhadīśvara) at Tanjore, commented on *in situ* by T. Leucci during the workshop. From this point of view, performers appear as intermediate figures between intellectual and emotional Bhakti: in full control of their art, they nonetheless arouse emotion in the viewers.

The patronage of Bhakti performers by kings, attested in epigraphical and ethnographical data, reveals another aspect of the continuity and interaction between royal and local Bhakti. The *mahotsava*s, "big temple festivals," when a community of *bhakta*s, both large and various, gathers and performers intervene, are instances of such interplay. During the workshop, Richard Davis and Leslie C. Orr ("The South Indian Mahotsava in History") tracked the origin and development of such festivals in Tamil Nadu, while Ute Huesken ("Bhakti and the Brahmotsava Festival in Kāñcīpuram") talked about the local involvement in temple affairs at the Vaiṣṇava Varadarājaperumāḷ temple in Kāñcīpuram, paralleling the pooling of resources and the pooling of Bhakti.

With the next contributions we leave figures intermediate between the local (where they performed or acted) and the royal (as royal figures often patronised performers) and we turn to figures even more difficult to define as belonging exclusively to the local or royal side of Bhakti. These are royal women who were active as patrons of local temples (that is temples not founded by kings) or founders of local temples with a possibly dynastic/family importance. It is here that the pair of opposites "local" and "royal" reaches its limits.

At The Hinge

Fig. 9. Panel and inscription in the Umāmaheśvarar temple, Kōṉērirājapuram (photo by C. Schmid, 2011).

*(…) **śrī**kaṇṭarā**di**tta**de**var t[ē*]viyār māt[ē*]vaṭikaḷārāṉa **śrī**cempiyaṉ māt[ē*]viyār tammuṭaiya tirumakaṇār **śrīmadhu**rāntakat[ē*]varāṉa **śrī**uttamac[ō*]ḻar tiru**rājya**ñ ceytaruḷāniṟkat tammuṭaiyār **śrī**kaṇṭarā**di**tta**de**var tirunāmattāl tirunallamuṭaiyārkkut tirukkaṟṟaḷi eḻuntaruḷuvittu (…)*

(...) when her son the glorious Uttama Cōḻa, alias the glorious Madhurāntaka, was exerting his rule, the glorious Cempiyaṉ Mahādevī, who is the great queen and spouse of the glorious Gaṇḍarādityadeva, had a sacred stone temple graciously made to rise for the Lord of Tirunallam in the glorious name of her Lord, the glorious Gaṇḍarādityadeva (...)

Inscription at Kōṉērirājapuram (Grantha characters in bold). See SII 3, No. 146, SII 32, Part 2, No. 218, lines 1–4. Our translation. See *infra*, p. 365.

In the Tamil country, the implication of the royal into the local under the Cōḻas seems to be something other than the direct association of a ruling king with a specific place of worship. This was mediated by queens, among whom several categories have then to be differentiated, according to the language (Sanskrit or Tamil) and type (royally commissioned or locally produced; stone or copper plate) of the inscriptions referring to them, to the status of the men they were associated with, and to the places where these documents are found. In this respect, L. Orr distinguishes three categories of queens (*infra*, p. 385). "Dynastic queens" are "the daughters and wives of men belonging to great dynasties" (notably, in the Tamil country, the Pallavas, the Pāṇḍyas and the Cōḻas). "Chiefly queens" are "women belonging to the families of local rulers, commonly referred to in the scholarly literature as 'chiefs.'" "Country queens" are queens "who in their own inscriptions describe themselves as the wives of great kings, but who are not met with in the 'official' records and genealogies of those kings."

Queens of those various types seem to have played a pivotal role as hinges between the royal and the local, in imprinting a touch of royal in places dear to them—sometimes removed from the centres of power—where local deities were worshipped. This queenly practice had already started at the end of the Pallava dominance. This was illustrated twice during the workshop, first, when we visited in Kāñcīpuram a ninth-century

temple named after a Pallava queen (the present-day Mukteśvara, of which the original name is Dharmmamahādev[i/ī]śvaragṛham; SII 4, No. 827, line 1), and, second, with the survey of the temples endowed by Māṟampāvai—probably a Muttaraiyar princess, who claims in Tamil epigraphs from the Kāvēri delta that she is the spouse of Nandivarman III Pallava—in the area she hailed from, where she sponsored annual festivals for localised forms of Śiva (Schmid 2014a; 2014b).

Some of these female "royal" patrons appear in Sanskrit inscriptions, as for instance a Bāṇa queen at Taccūr (see Francis, Gillet & Schmid 2006: 444), and/or in Tamil inscriptions that can be defined as local in a number of ways. Being women, the queens are donated as wives to their royal husbands, and in their turn become donors in temples, playing a considerable role in the building of a Bhakti relation between gods and humans. As such they spread and project royal Bhakti into the local. These royal women or queens are intermediate figures between dynastic reference and local expressions of Bhakti. On the political level they may represent the alliance of the kings with a given territory. On a Bhakti level, deeply rooted as they are in a specific territory they may embody the devotion of a particular minor dynasty to local deities. As such they stand "at the hinge" between the local and royal as L. Orr puts it.

In "Queen Cempiyaṉ Mahādevī's Religious Patronage in Tenth-Century South India: The 'Missing Link' between Local and Royal Bhakti?" (pp. 347–383) the patronage of performers by a royal figure is a main concern for Nicolas Cane. His contribution focusses on Cempiyaṉ Mahādevī, who was the spouse of a Cōḻa king and the mother of another one, but was active even when neither of them was ruling. With her foundations and endowments the name Cōḻa came to be associated with temple building for the first time. N. Cane summarises what we know from epigraphical records about this very specific donor queen. Then he draws attention to another feature of Bhakti style: the recitation of hymns. In a deployment of royal Bhakti, which includes her endowments for having Tamil hymns of devotion recited in the temples, Cempiyaṉ Mahādevī appears as a forerunner to Rājarāja I Cōḻa himself, often identified by scholars as the king responsible for the recovery of the *Tēvāram*

hymns. This queen thus stands midway between the king (and his court) and the performers studied by T. Leucci and S. Palaniappan, active in temples to which it is difficult to attribute the label of "local" without further analysis.

In "Chiefly Queens: Local Royal Women as Temple Patrons in the Late Cōḻa Period" (pp. 385–421) L. Orr provides such an analysis by scrutinising the epigraphical mentions of what she calls "chiefly queens." L. Orr proposes to untangle the familial, political, and religious significance of the involvement of these chiefly queens in the temples where inscriptions mention them (or were reported to have mentioned them). She wonders about the "audience" for such displays of religious patronage. What political advantages would gifts to temples bring? What need would chiefly queens have for legitimation? She concludes that the acts of patronage of this specific category of queens were expressions of power. As such they appear close to the strategy at work in the royal patronage delineated in their papers by P. Kaimal, C. Simmons and S.A.S. Sarma. Still, the gifts by "chiefly queens" were undertaken for their own merit. Their aim was not to enhance the reputations of their husband chiefs. On the other hand, there is no evidence that these donations were used to establish or strengthen links with local authorities, nor to support Bhakti sites of early fame. Their peers appear as their main audience as the author puts the accent on the autonomy of chiefly queens from their familial, political and religious networks. For Leslie Orr "Chiefly queens" seem to have constituted a thread across a region, creating a "web" among families and temples in the early thirteenth century—in a zone precisely called *naṭuvil nāṭu* (the intermediate country).

In the contributions of N. Cane and L. Orr queens appear as intermediate figures that propped up royal dynasties to localise their devotion in different places in the territory under their control. Seen however from another angle, the existence of a variegated range of queens, from imperial to local, highlights the role played by the local into which the royal was drawn. Deepening this insight, the last four articles in the volume focus on the gravitational power of specific places to which royal figures may be attracted and which came to belong to specific religious networks or webs.

The Power of Place

> Place sets the idiosyncratic and indigenous on par with the translocal and universal, the here and there with the everywhere.
>
> Cohen (1998: 361)

> *śikharaṃ vai mahādevyā gauryās trailokyaviśrutam |*
> *samāruhya naraḥ śrāddhaḥ stanakuṇḍeṣu saṃviśet ||*
>
> *tatrābhiṣekaṃ kurvāṇaḥ pitṛdevārcane rataḥ |*
> *hayamedham avāpnoti śakralokaṃ ca gacchati ||*
>
> After climbing the Peak-of-the-Great-Goddess-Gaurī, renowned in the three worlds, a man of faith should enter the Wells of the Breasts: bathing there, intent on the worship of Ancestors and Gods, he obtains a Horse Sacrifice and goes to the world of Śakra.
>
> Mbh 3.82.131–3; van Buitenen transl. 1975: 392; see *infra*, p. 67.

Place, and web of places, linked to a pilgrimage circuit, play a primary role in the unfolding of Bhakti, as they are sites of localization and particularization of devotion, drawing on the specific "power" of locations.

In "Local Bhakti or Monastic Advertising? The Functions of Medieval Jain Rock-Reliefs in Tamil Nadu" (pp. 423–442) L. Owen examines medieval Jain carvings circa ninth and tenth centuries that are found in association with more ancient rock-cut sites (*paḷḷi*s) in and around the city of Madurai (Maturai). She challenges the "standard narrative" of Jain and Hindu interactions in Tamil Nadu in the early medieval period, according to which the "seventh and eighth centuries ushered in a period of Hindu dominance over other communities and thus presented a rupture from the harmonious coexistence of religions during the early historical period." L. Owen's approach is innovative in several ways. Firstly, while these carvings are generally considered in isolation from their setting, she demonstrates how they form part of a larger physical environment to create what she calls "power of place." Her contention gives rise to a series of questions. Why were images added to sites which were already in existence when they were carved? What purpose(s) did they serve? Was the installation of these supplementary images linked to the transformation of residences of Jain ascetics into places of devotion, and if so, how might these images

have been worshipped? If these images were not used in local Bhakti, how shall their inclusion in the rocky landscape under scrutiny be interpreted? Secondly, L. Owen argues that the donative inscriptions connect the sites here selected as the main basis of the research through the figure of a prominent monastic teacher. She thus proposes that these places and their images were implementing a form of "monastic advertising" that marks and promotes a particular ascetic lineage.

Moving back to Hinduism, the next three papers in the volume enhance in a similar manner what may, following L. Owen, be called the "power of place," where royal and local Bhakti meet: kings, queens, notables, individuals and several types of devotional communities gather to worship, but modalities of worship sometimes differ as well as do the forms taken by the object of adoration.

Such a place was explored during the workshop when we surveyed the site of Centalai. Located in the heart of the Kāvēri delta, not far from Trichy and Tanjore, in what was in the ninth century the territory of the minor dynasty of the Muttaraiyar, Centalai stands at the cross-roads of many devotional trends, attracting local as well as royal support. In the Sundareśvara of Centalai an inscription of the eighth century mentions that a Muttaraiyar king founded a temple dedicated to the goddess Paṭāri (EI 13, No. 10; Subrahmanya Aiyer 1916: 139). This epigraph is engraved on a pillar which is just one of a set of four, beautifully engraved. These were seemingly brought from the nearby village of Niyamam and built in the later *maṇḍapa* added in front of the Centalai temple dedicated to a Śiva of the place, itself datable to the end of the ninth or the beginning of the tenth century. These four pillars bear one of the first known instances of Tamil inscriptional poetry. The calligraphic refinement of these inscriptions enhances the poetic content of the records, which praise the Muttaraiyar king, notably presented as an ally of the Pallavas. And indeed a Pallava king, Nandivarman III and his wife, Māṟampāvai, also endowed this same goddess, that they call the Piṭāri/Paṭāri of the Mākāḷam of Niyamam (SII 6, No. 447 and 449: *niyamamākāḷattu*). In the same Sundareśvara temple are recorded donations by local bodies or individuals without any king's or queen's direct intervention. These inscriptions are dated to regnal years of Cōḻa and Pāṇḍya kings and addressed to the God of "Peruntuṟai," that is the

god of the "big ghat" or "big place," "capital city," the latter option being plausible given the importance of this area for the Muttaraiyar kings. This Sundareśvara of Centalai appears as a Śiva of the place like the numerous ones encountered in the *Tēvāram*. Interestingly a donation to Brahmā has also been recorded there (SII 19, No. 210).

Centalai thus appears as a "meeting place" not only of different streams of devotion but also of deities themselves. No *Tēvāram* hymn, however, is attached to that place. Was the Goddess the first inhabitant of the sacred spot? One wonders. But the pillars engraved with records of donation for her (SII 6, No. 447 and 449) also seem to have been brought from Niyamam, while they are now parts of the late *maṇḍapa* of this temple dedicated to the Śiva of Peruntuṟai, in which no other trace of a specific goddess' cult are perceptible. While in Pallava royal temples the deity is, most of the time, named after the particular king who had him installed, a local foundation usually defines the god by the name of the place where he resides. Such is the case of the god of Peruntuṟai. As for the goddess Piṭāri/Paṭāri, she is not connected to any particular place in the earliest inscription (EI 13, No. 10) while in later inscriptions (SII 6, No. 447 and 449) she is said to be the goddess of the mysterious Mākāḷam of Niyamam. She seems to have been a dynastic deity of the Muttaraiyar. The mention of a gift to Brahmā and the presence of a grand statue of Śiva represented with the four heads commonly attributed to Brahmā add to the complexity of the site of Centalai. The place of origin of this statue is not surely known but its size indicates that it comes from the vicinity of the site. How did Brahmā interact with Śiva and the Goddess? Tracking the traces of the deities and their *bhaktas* in Centalai during the workshop, we ended up at a place where gods themselves meet in Bhakti.

In a way that recalls the administrative and political structures of kingdoms, different places of Bhakti came to be inter-related via one particular form of deity, connected into the regional frame of a pilgrimage network. Such is the well-known case of Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava places of worship and is also the case for a set a major places—the *āṟupaṭaivīṭu*s, "the six encampments"—associated with Murukaṉ. One of the earliest extant literary piece attesting the devotion for Murukaṉ is the *Tirumurukāṟṟuppaṭai* ("Showing the way towards Murukaṉ"), which belongs to the Caṅkam corpus and is possibly dated to the seventh century. It contains a description of six abodes

and one immediately draws a parallel between the present-day *āṟupaṭaivīṭu*s and the early abodes mentioned in the *Tirumurukāṟṟuppaṭai*. Valérie Gillet and Emmanuel Francis look at the antiquity of the present-day pilgrimage centres and examine the validity of the correspondence drawn with the abodes of the *Tirumurukāṟṟuppaṭai*.

V. Gillet goes on with her review of the archaeological remains found in the *āṟupaṭaivīṭu*s of Murukaṉ in "Gods and Devotees in Medieval Tiruttaṇi" (pp. 443–493). After Tirupparaṅkuṉṟam (Gillet 2014a) and Tiruccentūr (*The Archaeology of Bhakti I,* Gillet 2014b), she now looks at Tiruttaṇi, located in the north of the Tamil country, in what was then the Pallava kingdom. The ninth-century Pallava copper plates of Vēḷañcēri (Nagaswamy 1979) attest that there was already at that time a temple of Subrahmaṇya/Ṣaṇmukha on a hill on that site, presumably where the temple known as Ceṅkaḻunīrpiḷḷaiyār stands today. However, V. Gillet finds no proof that this Pallava-period temple or the present-day Ceṅkaḻunīrpiḷḷaiyār is the "Kuṉṟutōṟāṭal" of the *Tirumurukāṟṟuppaṭai*, with which it is nowadays identified. Around the same time, Nampi Appi, a local dignitary, sponsored the building of a temple dedicated to Śiva in Tiruttaṇi. From different perspectives, this temple still known under its ancient name of Vīraṭṭāṉeśvara, as engraved on its walls, appears as a precursor of the Early Cōḻa-period monuments patronised by individuals or local/Brahmanical communities.

In the survey of the Vīraṭṭāṉeśvara during the workshop, Charlotte Schmid showed how this temple exhibits an intermediate iconographic programme between that of the few imperial temples of the Pallavas and that of the numerous local foundations of the Cōḻa period: on the northern façade, a form of Śiva is substituted by Brahmā, while a specific façade, the western one, is assigned to Viṣṇu. In this way a *trimūrti* principle infuses the programme and this raises the issue of the transmission of a royal model to a local temple. The importance of Brahmā is recorded in many material testimonies during the Cōḻa period—hundreds of refined carvings, with specific locations and functions, in Śiva temples for instance. This prominent place of Brahmā in the archaeological landscape is not mirrored on the same scale in the world of texts, nor in contemporary ethnographical documents. If this god was first given a prominent place in Tiruttaṇi, today one of the six abodes of a Skanda/Murukaṉ to whom a Pallava king had already made a gift in the ninth century,

as attested by a copper plate, is this mere coincidence? Skanda/Murukaṉ is very present in the royal temples of the Pallavas where he embodies an ideal son or the king-to-be. But he is entirely absent from the temple dedicated by the local notable to Śiva, where Brahmā is given much more importance than in royal Pallava foundations. Is this importance linked to a specific local context? Was it part of the local strategy of a distinct community of *bhakta*s? Did it mark the importance taken by the Brahmins?

In "Found in Paratexts: Murukaṉ's Places in Manuscripts of the *Tirumurukāṟṟuppaṭai*" (pp. 495–532) E. Francis searched for the *āṟupaṭaivīṭu*s like V. Gillet, but in another place as he examines the paratexts—titles, intertitles, additional stanzas, etc.—of the manuscripts of the *Tirumurukāṟṟuppaṭai*, most of which are dated to the nineteenth century only. E. Francis compares the names of the abodes of the god which are available in the manuscripts with the present-day major temples referred to as *āṟupaṭaivīṭu*s by the devotees. From the manuscripts' paratexts it seems that almost none of the present-day major temples of Murukaṉ can boast of an antique correspondence with any of the six abodes of Murukaṉ mentioned in the *Tirumurukāṟṟuppaṭai*. Such an assessment suggests that these six present-day holy places, originally places of local devotion, were only relatively recently integrated into a pilgrimage network that today spans the whole territory of Tamil Nadu. Similarly, it is noticeable that in the epigraphical record, Murukaṉ, most often met under his name Subrahmaṇya, is rarely the recipient of royal grants. Thus it seems that with the early devotion to Murukaṉ, we are somewhat remote from the royal sphere. The Vēḷañcēri copper plates appear, however, as a very rare instance of early royal patronage of a Murukaṉ temple.

This royal grant provides an answer to the initial question asked by U. Veluppillai in her contribution "Where are the Kings? Sites of Birth and Death of Campantar" (pp. 533–566). With this final chapter of the volume, we are back into the core territory of the Cōḻas, in the Kāvēri delta as the author examines the epigraphical corpora of two Śaiva temples (Cīrkāḻi and Āccāḷpuram). The later hagiographical literature (*Periyapurāṇam*) links these two places with Campantar, one of the three poets of the *Tēvāram*. Along with many other places sung by Campantar it is believed to delineate a pilgrimage circuit. Contrary to the *communis opinio* which sees the early and middle Cōḻa kings deeply involved in patronising *Tēvāram* places, the

inscriptions at Cīrkāḻi and Āccāḻpuram show that patronage was mainly due to local initiative. An inscription from Cīrkāḻi further attests to the restoration of the *Tirumuṟai* manuscript kept in the temple and demonstrates the importance of local patrons in the transmission and preservation of these canonical Śaiva scriptures in Tamil of which the *Tēvāram* constitutes the first seven parts.

Perspectives

Richard H. Davis concludes this volume (pp. 567–584) by offering us his reflexions on the concept of the archaeology of Bhakti from his reading of the present chapters. He and Vasudha Narayanan were our pair of invited guests of honour. During the workshop and at the conference V. Narayanan explored similarities and differences between select Vaiṣṇava temples of Cambodia and India ("Reclining, Standing, and Abiding: Viṣṇu in Temple Arts and in Devotees' Hearts in Kāñcīpuram Temples;" "Carving Viṣṇu, Creating Vaikuṇṭha: Continuities and Ruptures between Kāñcīpuram and Kambuja"). She found continuities but also emphasised the agency exercised by the Khmer people in the adoption and adaptation of specific features of Viṣṇu devotion.

As a conclusion to this introduction, we would like to summarize the main perspectives offered by the integrative approach we pursue when surveying Bhakti, and the many questions it raises. In order to establish the existence of both streams of Bhakti, local and royal, and to determine if and how they interacted, one has to scrutinize texts—in this volume: royal and local inscriptions, the *Mahābhārata*, Buddhist texts, *Tēvāram* and *Tiviyappirapantam* hymns—and also to examine them in relation to the archaeology of the royal and local sites to which they are connected.

In the field of history of art, more than in that of iconography, style is a debated issue. Defined as a style by some, may Bhakti be characterised as royal under a specific form? It has often been assumed that royal foundations exhibit a style which set up a model then adopted in local foundations. From the point of view of history of art, the reality of such a model has been questioned, notably in Tamil Nadu by P. Kaimal (2003) and C. Schmid (2014a), who have put the accent on the autonomy of the local as creator of style. And indeed royal Pallava structural temples of the

eight century, mostly in sandstone with their walls completely covered by sculptures, can be contrasted to the local foundations that start to appear at the turn of the ninth century that, like the Vīraṭṭāṉeśvara of Tiruttaṇi, are built in granite and accommodate one niche per wall.

But what about Bhakti itself? Was royal Bhakti a specific style of devotion, able to set a model for places of worship to a localised god where the king is a distant figure? Is it, on the contrary, sometimes possible to spot a specific local trend in the expression of a royal Bhakti? In the Tamil country, in the late Pallava or early Cōḻa site of Tiruceṉṉampūṇṭi and in the sites associated with the most active of the Cōḻa queens as patron, Cempiyaṉ Mahādevī, who started to be active in the second half of the tenth century, the growing correspondence between *Tēvāram* sites and places of devotion illustrates the process through which, after the independent Sanskrit royal Bhakti of the Pallavas, a local form of Bhakti initiated by saintly Tamil poets encountered the royal Bhakti of the Cōḻas.

We are here, with respect to the personality of these royal female patrons, at the intersection of royal and local, but the patronage of performers attested in the epigraphs of Cempiyaṉ Mahādevī seems to presage the grand one by the Cōḻa Rājarāja I, who recruited hundreds of performers, including many women, and settled them in the immediate surroundings of the temple he had founded for Śiva in Tanjore.

The small temples patronized by communities, who are mainly or purely local, seems at first sight rather different: the way the king appears in the inscriptions is often ambiguous—in that he might be mentioned there as a purely local initiative, without having ever been directly involved in the cultic life of the place—while the images, increasingly cultic/iconic (like in the Jain sites around Madurai) rather than narrative in type, do not seem to imply the double-entendre they clearly had in the Pallava royal foundations. On the epigraphical side, the way the figure of the king is introduced in the epigraphical record is of particular importance as shown in many contributions to the present volume. From the ninth century onwards, in what seem to be local foundations, the king often appears as a computational reference: epigraphs are dated in his regnal years. He is mentioned as a donor more rarely. Still his name was sometimes engraved alongside that of the god. Which role did the king play in this matter? Who took

the initiative not only of building a temple but also of inscribing it and having it adorned with sculptures? Was the king a distant figure used by local *bhakta*s to derive prestige by association and project their own importance? What audience was addressed by local *bhakta*s? By whom did they want to be seen as *bhakta*s? By the god? Or (also) by other human viewers? Shall we distinguish different layers of audience in the material testimonies of Bhakti? An utmost expression of the autonomy of local Bhakti may be seen in the site of Tiruttaṇi where, at the end of the ninth century, the pilgrimage to the Viṣṇu temple at Tirupati is mentioned in some of the inscriptions of the Vīraṭṭāṉeśvara. And we know, from its unusual foundation epigraph, that this temple was established by a local notable, without the regnal year of a ruling king even being stated.

Finally the question of the roots of emotional Bhakti is raised. The influence of the mostly profane Caṅkam poetry in what is considered a typical South-Indian emotionalism evinced first in Tamil Bhakti hymns, has been largely acknowledged. The kings are prominent figures in the *puṟam* side (heroic poetry) of the Caṅkam corpus, where they are presented as both generous donors and heroes. On the one hand, many of these royal features were passed on to the new "heroes" of Bhakti literature, the kingly figures that Śiva and Viṣṇu are. On the other hand, as Bhakti deities were given the place of the kings of Caṅkam poems, another role has to be attributed to the sovereigns. Some of them at least are presented, in royal inscriptions or in hagiographic literature, as ideal *bhakta*s. Modern historians might have overestimated the role of kings in the spread of Bhakti. But in doing so they "just" blindly trusted their partial sources, in which kings occupy a prominent place, mistaking self-projecting kings and narrative personae for historical figures. If, in order to consider the importance the king is given, we ponder on these sources where history and mythology constantly overlap the emotional aspect of the South-Indian Bhakti knocks even more loudly. Through hymns, epigraphs, donations, temples, iconography, the king is first a human devotee, establishing an individual relation with a personal god. In doing so, he is sometimes just one among various devotees, attracted by the power of places, that of *tīrtha*s appearing in the background of the *Mahābhārata*, of countless toponyms associated with the Bhakti Tamil corpus, or of Jain sites where the name of a prominent teacher sits alongside icons of Tīrthaṅkaras.

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Abbreviations

EI	*Epigraphia Indica*. Followed by volume number and inscription number.
Mbh	*Mahābhārata*.
SII	*South Indian Inscriptions*. Followed by volume number and inscription number.

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