

now housed in a small modern brick and cement cubicle in an inconspicuous portion of the courtyard near the well in the southern *prakara*. The Bhairavar image, now placed loosely in the *mukhamandapa* of the temple, might be the original *ashta-parivara-devata*. The Subrahmanyar idol is again not in its proper place, nor does it appear to be the original one; it is in the north-western section of the *prakara* and is housed in a structure of florid style built by one of the Nayak kings in the seventeenth century A.D. The only shrine standing as originally built is that of Chandesarar, which is north of and close to the *srivimana*; it contains some valuable inscriptions of Rajaraja I. None of the other shrines can be traced now.

THE TEMPLE, A COMPOSITE PLAN:

Thus, the Rajarajan plan for the temple of Rajarajesvaram* contained the central shrine with the *ardhamandapa*, the *mahamandapa* and the *mukhamandapa*, the eight shrines for the *parivara*-

* On the name of the temple at Tanjavur, we have the authority of Rajaraja I himself, the founder of the temple. In the foundation inscription, he refers to it thus:

"Pandyakulasani nattu Tanjavur kurrattu Tanjavur nam edppichcha tirukkarrali Sri Rajarajesvaram..." (SII, II, 1).

The temple was Sri Rajarajesvaram in Tanjavur in the subdivision of Tanjavur in the district of Pandyakulasani. The deity was referred to as Paramasvamin or Rajarajesvaram Udaiyar. Karuvur Devar, a contemporary of Rajaraja I and his son, in his hymn called *Tiruvisaippa* has sung of Rajarajesvaram and Gangaikondasolisvaram. Even during the Pandyan period when the Amman temple was built in the courtyard of the main temple, the foundation inscription refers to the Amman shrine in the following words,

"Tanjavur Udaiyar Sri Rajarajesvaram Udaiyar Koyilil... nam elundarulivitta Ulagamuludum mudaiya Nachchiraarkku ..." (SII, II, 61).

Even here the main temple is called *Sri Rajarajesvaram* and the Amman is named after the Pandyan queen.

Nearly 600 years after the temple came into being, a certain Mallappa Nayakar refers to the deity in the central shrine as *Periya Udaiyar Nayanar*, 'the great Lord', evidently in recognition of the size and greatness of the main deity. *Tiru Peruvudaiyar* is a variant that has come into vogue in the subsequent period, with *Brihat-Isvavar* as its Sanskrit equivalent. The Amman has been given the corresponding Sanskrit name of *Brihat Nayaki* or *Brihan-nayaki*, which means 'the great lady'. But in none of the epigraphs in this temple or which refer to it do we get these names. Therefore there does not seem to be any justification for the name of *Brihadesvarar* for the deity of the main shrine and *Brihannayaki* for the Amman of the temple of *Rajarajesvaram* at Tanjavur. It seems only fair to call this temple by the name its builder gave it.

On the same grounds there is no reason for the use of the term *Brihadisvarar* being applied to the deity of the temple at Gangaikondasolapuram. Epigraphs give the temple the name of *Gangaikonda-solisvaram* only.