

Uchchangi Pandya's Drift and its Impact on South Indian History

V. RAJU

Assistant Professor

Department of History, Bharathidasan University, Thiruchirappalli (T.N.) India

Key Words : Uchchangi Pandya's drift, Indian history, Alupas

INTRODUCTION

In the annals of Indian history, we often find ambitious soldiers, leaving their homes with their families, and migrating to far off provinces to seek their fortunes. The family of Alupas (Scion of the Pandyas) of Hayve region in Karnataka left their place and went to far off Davangere (Uchchangi province) in order to found a new kingdom. Likewise the Senas left Karnataka, reached the distant Bengal and founded a dynasty there. Several Maratha families also left their homes in Maharastra and settled down in places like Thanjavur, Indore and Gwalior where they were able to carve out new kingdoms for themselves.

The Alupas who came to be known as the Uchchangi Pandyas, ruled the Nolambavadi province with their headquarters at Uchchangi or Uchchasringi,¹ near the northern border of the Karnataka state. They belonged to the lunar race were originally the rulers of the Hayve country,² one of the seven Konkans, and their capital was sisugali.³

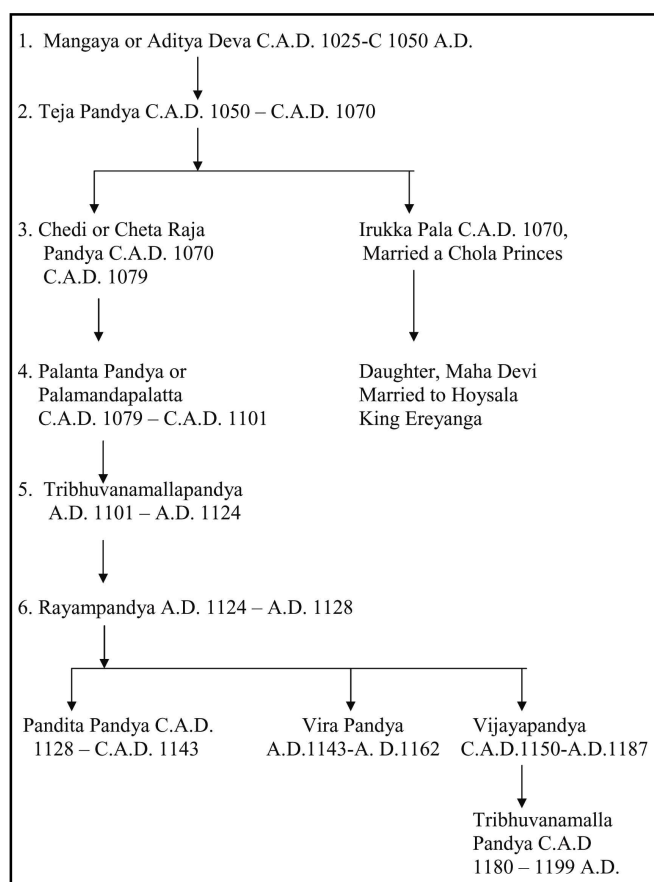
The probable cause of their migration was the chola inroads into the Alupa kingdom during the region of Jayasimha I. In the year 985 A.D., the Chola throne came to be occupied by Rajaraja I, whose reign inaugurated a period of unprecedented greatness in the history of South India. In the course of his conquests, Rajaraja did not spare the Alupa kingdom too. One of his inscriptions⁴ dated Saka 934 (= 1012-13 A.D) describes the achievements of his general, Panchamaharaya as follows. "When the Ko-Viraja Raja-Kesarivarma Rajaraja, marched across, the bee at his lotus feet

Panchamaharaya, having obtained the rank of Mahadandanayaka, for Bengimandala and Ganga mandala displayed He seized Tuluva and Konkana, pursued Maleya, pushed aside and passed over Chera, Tuluga and Rattiga, as if in sport⁵

The famous Larger Leiden Plates⁶ of Rajaraja also confirms this fact in the following manner, "conquering the kings of the Pandya, Tulu and Kerala, (Countries and) Simhalendra and Satyasraya and others by the power of his arm and taking possession of their elephants, horses, gems and kingdoms, he caused all the ten quartefs to glow with his fame".

This Chola invasion was not a mere raid but resulted in the occupation, not only of the Tulu country but also of many other adjacent principlities. In addition, the Chalukyas who wanted to end the Chola Supremacy, helped the Alupas (Hayve Pandyas) to settle at Uchchangi, so that they could take their help in fulfilling their objective. Probably with their aid, the Pandyas of Hayve came into view as governors of the Nolambavadi province.⁷ This drift might have started after the conquest of the Seven Konkans by the Chalukya prince, Jagadekamalla Jayasimha II (1015 A.D. – 1042 A.D.) in 1024 A.D. and ended during the region of Vikramaditya VI. The Pandya chieftains of Uchchangi ruled the Nolambavadi province continuously from 1024 A.D. to 1200 A.D. Their position and titled clearly indicate their alliance with the Western Chalukyas.

A revised genealogical table of the Uchchangi pandyas on the basis of inscriptional evidence now available is given below, which enlarges the one given by B.L. Rice.⁸



The common titles and epithets assumed by the Uchchangi Pandyas are, Mahamandaleswara, lord of Kanchipura, 'Champion in cutting on both sides, defeater of the designs of Rajiga Chola etc.

Mangaya C.A.D. 1025 – C.A.D. 1050 :

Mangaya or Aditya was the first ruler of this line, who belonged to the chandravamsa or lunar race. About this ruler we have no historical details, except the fact that he was the king of Nolambavadi.⁹

Teja Pandya C.A.D. 1050 – C.A.D. 1070 :

Teja Pandya, son of Aditya Pandya, seems to have helped Chalukya Vikramaditya VI by driving out his treacherous brother somesvara II, and by supporting his accession to the throne,¹⁰ Chediraja, son of Teja Pandya, was the next ruler of Nolambavadi.¹¹

Chedi Raja C.A.D. 1070 – C.A.D. 1079 :

The first historical person to whom a lot of reference is made in inscriptions was Chedi Raja. Inscriptions describe him as a king who ruled over the whole circle

of earth. Since he was always partial to the Pandya country, he came to be known as 'Pandya'. He was a popular king. 'The blows from his bracelets had resounded on the conch shell on the top of Purandara's head and his fish, crest was set up on great rocks of the chief mountains',¹² The names ending with the suffix Pandya and their fish crest indicates the country of their origin. Further the race (lunar) that they belonged to makes it certain that these Pandyas were in some way connected with the Pandyas of Madurai. Chedi Raja was so called because he subdued the Chedi kings.¹³

Irukkapala :

Irukkapala was one of the sons of Teja Raja or Teja Pandya.¹⁴ But he never ruled Nolambavadi. Probably to secure the friendship and support of the Uchchangi Pandyas for the Imperial Cholas, the Nidugal Cholas who were their allies, gave one of their princesses in marriage to Irukkapala. Irukkapala's daughter Maha Devi born of this marriage became the wife of Ereyanga, the Hoysala king. She is reputed to have constructed a tank at Tereyur located in Tumkur.¹⁵

Like the Irukkuvels of Kodumbalur, Irukkapala also served loyally to the Imperial Cholas and Participated in the battle of Kudalsangamam against Somesvara I, the Western Chalukya ruler. Though the exact nature of the relationship between the Nidugal Cholas and Uchchangi Pandyas with the Irukkuvels of Kodumbalur is not clear, it may be safely guessed that matrimonial alliances must have cemented their friendship. The name Irukkapala itself perhaps, indicates the Irukkuvel connection.

Palamanda Palata or Palanta Pandya C.A.D. 1075-C.A.D. 1101 :

Of the Pandyas of Uchchangi, Palanta Pandya, mentioned in an inscription from Bagali, of 1079 A.D. as Nigalankamalla Pandya, appears to have been a popular king. His period witnessed the rise of the Kalachuri king Biggana.¹⁶ The Uchchangi province was divided between the Cholas and the Chalukyas during his rule. Palanta continued to be an ally of Vikramaditya VI.¹⁷

In the course of his career, he assumed the biruda, 'the defeate' of the designs of Rajiga Chola' (*i.e.*, Chalukya Chola King Kulottunga I). According to Venkayya, this boast is probably based on some service which he rendered to Vikramaditya against his Chola enemy. The Vikramamakadeva Charita states that the Chalukya king overcame Rajiga, while the Tamil

inscriptions of the latter report that he defeated the former.¹⁸ That Vikramaditya should have won some notable victory against the Chola is clear from the oft repeated references in his inscriptions. In an inscription¹⁹ from Channagiri, of Pandya Deva, assigned to 1083 A.D. he is described as 'the defeater of the designs of Rajiga Chola' and 'the breaker of the mind of Rajiga Chola' (Rajiga Chola manabhanga).²⁰

During his rule, the capital of the kingdom was transferred to Beltur²¹ near Davangere. He maintained friendly relations with the Chalukyas of Kalyani.

Tribhuvanamalla Pandya A.D. 1101 – 1124 A.D. :

Mahamandaleswara Tribhuvanamalla Pandya was the next ruler of Nolambavadi and Ballakunde Three Hundred. He was a feudatory of the Chalukya emperor, Tribhuvanamalla.²² He is said to have been the right hand of the Chalukya emperor. An inscription²³ of his period states that "he was sufficient by himself to break the pride of Chola, harass Andhra, upset Kalinga, frighten and attack the Anga, Vanga, and Magadha kings, to conquer Malava in battle and to trample up the famous Gurjara and by his valour he brought the whole earth, encompassed by the four oceans, into subjection to king Vikrama".

He also bore the title, 'Lord of Kanchipura', which indicates his role in the conquest of that city.²⁴ along with Vikramaditya VI. Another epigraph²⁵ discloses the usual titles he assumed *viz.* 'mahamandaleswara' 'boon lord of Kanchipura', with the other epithets such as 'champion in cutting on both sides', 'defeater of the designs of Rajigachola' etc.

The king suffered a defeat at the hands of the Hoysalas in 1116 A.D.²⁶ The battle between the Hoysals and the Pandyas took place at Dumme, which B.L. Rice identifies with a hill in the Shimoga District.²⁷ In 1116 A.D. perhaps, immediately after the conquest of Talakad, Vishnuvardana marched towards Uchchangi and met at Dumme the troops of the Pandya,²⁸ Vishnu vardana was assisted in this battle by his general Chama Deva. After this conquest, Vishnuvardana assumed the title Nolvambavadigonda and made Uchchangi one of his royal cities.²⁹ But this conquest of Nolambavadi was transitory and his grandson had to do it over again. The battle of Dumme seems to have been an indirect hit on the Chalukyan emperor, for the Uchchangi Pandyas of the time were the powerful supporters of the Chalukya emperors, and hence, a decisive defeat of the former

would have evidently led to the disruption of the Chalukyan empire.

We have a record of 1124 A.D.³⁰ which states "that Tribhuvanamalla Pandya was ruling Santalige Thousand and Various agraharas in Banavasinasadu as well as Nolambavadi. He was called Tribhuvanamalla vira Nolamba Pallava Permanadi Deva's Younger brother Jayasimha".

How he came to be described as Western Chalukya Jayasimha's brother is not evident. Perhaps, as Rice Suggests, the designation is intended as a compliment, indicating the intimacy between the Chalukya prince Jayasimha and the Pandya Chief. In an inscription of his son, he is described as, "the confounder of the Chola King". Apparently, he was one of those connected with the final expulsion of the Cholas from Nolambavadi Thirty two Thousand, during the reign of Vikramaditya VI.³¹

Some time before 1124 A.D. this Pandya Deva chased the king of Ratanpur, Jagalla Deva I, at the command of his Chalukya overlord.³² He remained faithful to his Chalukyan overlord till the end.

Raya Pandya A.D. 1124 A.D. – 1128 :

Tribhuvanamalla Pandya was succeeded, Probably towards the end of 1124 A.D. by his son Raya Pandya.³³ He was also known as Tribhuvanamalla. the earliest known date of his region as gleaned from the inscriptions is 1124 A.D. Raya Pandya is described as the right hand of Vikramaditya I and as having brought, by his valour, the whole earth encompassed by the four oceans into subjection to the king, Vikrama.

During his reign, again, there was a confrontation between the Pandyas and the Hoysalas. Vishnuvardana had driven Raya Pandya to Beltur or Bettur, north east of Davangere. He continued to rule Nolambavadi and Santalige from Beltur. But Raya Pandya's successor, vira Pandya, gained control over Uchchangi, immediately after Vishnuvardana's death in 1143 A.D. He was ruling Uchchangi as a feudatory of the Chalukyas.³⁴

A grant, made by his subordinate ruler of Kurungudi to Lord Vasudeva of Rayarajabannalur also makes a reference to him. Another inscription³⁵ from Holekere states that, a Gangarasa Konganivarmadharma maharajadiraja (with numerous other epithets) was ruling the Kukkuvadi Three Hundred as a feudatory of the ruler of Uchchangi, Yet another epigraph from Davangere describes the mighty achievements of his two ministers as well as his generals, surya and Aditya, who were the

sons of one Senavara.

An event which took place during Raya Pandya's reign strengthened his relations with the Tamil country. Vikramaditya VI invited a large number of Brahmins from Tamil country to settle down in his kingdom. He granted them several villages so that they could live in comfort. The Nirgund Copper Plate grant³⁶ states that the Brahmins received the village of Nirgunda in 1087 A.D. Still later *i.e.* in 1123 A.D. the same group received yet another village, by the efforts of one Dravidaditya, an officer of Raya Pandya. These grants of villages were made to the Brahmins by vikramaditya VI at the request of two Uchchangi Pandyas viz. Palata Pandya and Raya Pandya. Their deep-rooted affection for their original home, the Pandya country was, perhaps responsible for their role in the settlement of the Tamil Brahmins in the Nolambavadi Kingdom.

Pandia Pandya C.A.D. 1128 – C.A.D. 1143 :

The information we gain from inscriptions about this ruler is scanty. He bore the biruda Pandita Pandya which was similar to the title Pandia Chola borne by Rajendra I and Kulottunga I.

Vira Pandya A.D. 1143 – A.D. 1162 :

Virapandya's reign commenced in 1143 A.D. and lasted till 1162 A.D. From the beginning he was ruling Nolambavadi with Uchchangi as capital.³⁷ He captured Male from the Kalachuris and handed it over to the Chalukyas.³⁸ Later Vira Pandya transferred his allegiance to the Kalachuris.³⁹

He was lavish in the distribution of gifts to the poor at the confluence of the rivers, Tungabhadra and Haridra, during the Solar eclipse in 1148 A.D. He seems to have passed away around 1162 A.D. and was succeeded by his brother, Vijaya Pandya.

Vijaya Pandya A.D. 1162 – A.D. 1187 :

During his period, the Chalukya power was declining and the Kalachuris were gaining the upper hand. Vijaya Pandya, according to inscriptional records ruled over Nolambavadi Thirty two Thousand as a feudatory of Bijjala.⁴⁰ The transfer of Nolambavadi from the hands of the Chalukyas to the Kalachuris, facilitated Hoysala Narasimha's plan to regain his lost possessions. In 1157 A.D. he styled himself as "an elephant to the lotus garden, the Pandya Kula"⁴¹ and in 1163 A.D. the Brahmins of Kollinaghata agrahara in the Uchchangi Pandyanadu,

near the Tungabhadra river acknowledged the supremacy of Narasimha.⁴² The conquest of the Pandyas by Narasimha was transitory. His power in the north was declining. In 1167 A.D. he had only Gangavadi Ninety Six Thousand and Kongu country under his control.⁴³ But an inscription of 1167 A.D. mentions Nolambavadi Thirty Two Thousand as a part of his kingdom.⁴⁴ That Nolambavadi was under Narasimha during 1162 A.D. seems probable from the testimony we have in the inscription of the Kallinaghata Brahmins mentioned above. But since, it (Nolambavadi Thirtytwo Thousand) is omitted in the inscription of 1167 A.D., it may be safely assumed that the Kalachuris, who were contesting the possessions of the Uchchangi Pandyas, had by now successfully repulsed the Hoysalas.

Vijaya Pandya, in the meantime, seems to have taken advantage of the religious feuds in Bijjala's Kingdom, to assert his independence in 1169 A.D.⁴⁵ But Ballala II, immediately after his conquest of the Chandalvas, turned his attention to Nolambavadi. A large number of inscriptions, after the year 1180 A.D., mention Ballala's capture of Uchchangi. But the earliest inscription, dated 1177 A.D. found in Chikkanayakanahalli, mentions that Ballala II proceeded on a tour of conquests, defeated the Pandya king, made Uchchangi his capital and was residing there.⁴⁶ Therefore his conquest must have taken place before the date of the inscription. This defeat of the Pandyas brought them closer to Kalachuris and together, they struggled for dominance in Deccan.

An inscription of Sravana Belgola, contains the following account regarding a battle that took place in this struggle. "When in the pride of his arm, Odeyasa was with great fury determined to fight, king Ballala marched forth, and surrounding and besieging Uchchangi", whose peaks had been reduced to powder, by the blows from the tusks of the groups of lordly elephants of his army, captured king Pandya together with his beautiful women, country, treasures, and groups of horses laying siege to uchchangi, which was for a long time, considered impregnable to enemies, king Ballala, a treasury to irresistible prowess, took the fort with ease and seized the king, Kama Deva and the famous Odeya and their treasury, women and troops of horses".⁴⁷ Kama Deva of his inscription is none other than Vijaya Pandya, the younger brother of vira Pandya and the son of Raya Pandya. Odeya is identified with Udayaditya, the son of Kama Deva.⁴⁸

After this battle, Vijaya Pandya supplicated to

Ballala and the latter restored the Pandya throne to him. But subsequently Vijaya Pandya turned rebellious.⁴⁹ The Pandyas reverted to their old suzerains, the Chalukyas, paid them homage and turned faithless to Ballala. Vijaya Pandya's acknowledgement of the supremacy of the Chalukya Somesvara is borne out by his new titles Srimaj – Jagadekamalla – dava – padabjabringa (1184 A.D) (follower of the Western Chalukya Jagadeka-malla)⁵⁰ and Tribhuvanamalla – deva – padabjabhringa (1187 A.D.) follower of Thirubhuvanamalla *i.e.* Somesvara IV.

Vijaya Pandya's change of loyalty led Ballala to attempt the destruction of the Pandyas. An inscription of 1220 A.D.⁵¹ informs us that the Hoysala king Vira Ballala, "the crest jewel of the righteous rulers thrashing the line of Pandya kings on the field of battle, terrifying and putting to flight hostile Kings, by the might of his arm", ruled the celebrated Nolambavadi. Another inscription from Belur, dated 1198 A.D. states that the king Ballala, "Moistening his valiant sword with the blood of his enemy, the Pandya king, he whets it on the grind stone, the head of Billama and sheathes it in the lotus mouth of Jaitugi. All these evidences lead one to the supposition that Kama Deva alias Vijaya Pandya was killed in the field of battle by Ballala.

He was a powerful warrior. An inscription⁵² of the third regnal year of Vijaya Pandya mentions his war-like qualities and achievements. It further states that the points of Vijaya Pandya's crown were formed of separate large sapphires and his arms adorned with golden bracelets that he subdued the seven Konkanas, set up in the Kanaka mountains a pillar of victory with the fish crest, had a treasury filled with jewels set with pearls from the Tamraparani, and had a pleasure house among the sandal trees on the slopes of the Malaya mountains". The mention of fish crest and the river Tamraparani, probably indicate the country of their origin.

Several inscriptions of his reign prove that he was liberal in endowments. His chief minister, Kumara Vijaya Permadi, made a grant in 1168 A.D. of Kudalur to the 104 Brahmanas to serve Lord Harihara.⁵³ He received the title of Kumara (or prince) from his master in recognition of his unbounded fidelity.⁵⁴

Vijaya Pandya had many titles and epithets like "Maamandaleswara", "Lord of Kanchipura", "Sun to the lotus of the Pandya Kula" and "Champion over the smiters of their enemies".⁵⁵

Tribhuvanamalla Pandya or Kamayya C.A.D.

(190)

1187-C.A.D. 1199 :

After Vijaya Pandya's death, his son Udayaditya allied with Kalachuris and tried to reestablish his power at Uchchangi but in vain. He and his ally were defeated by Ballala II. Udayaditya's son, Kamayya was also driven out of his capital Uchchangi. The repeated attacks of Ballala II on the Pandyas of Uchchangi made them drift towards Haduvanagere Five Hundred. Bemmattanur became their capital. The Pandya power in Bemmattanur came to an end in 1214 A.D.

To conclude the Pandyas of Uchchangi could be considered as a branch of the Pandyas of Madurai. First, they had their settlement in South Kanara and later migrated to Uchchangi, due to the pressure of the Imperial Cholas. Their migration probably weakened the power of the Imperial Cholas in Karnataka and balanced the power of the Chalukyas in Western Deccan.

In the heyday of their rule the Uchchangi Pandyas adopted titles, similar to those of the Chalukyas. They had a staff of officials similar to that of the Paramount power. Some of the high officers of the State were designated as dandanayaka (general) and dharmadhikarin (Superintendent of religious affairs). Their local administration was somewhat complex. We hear of administrative divisions with numerical endings, varying from Three Thousand to Three Hundred. The word nadu was applied to the larger territorial divisions, with numbers attached to their names. The towns and villages often enjoyed a corporate constitution. The village assembly had recourse to its own revenues and owned lands. The urodeya was perhaps the village headman, the link between the government and villagers.

Under the patronage of the Uchchangi Pandyas and Chalukyas, Jainism maintained for long, its position in the Karnataka, but with the growing influence of Vaishnavism and Saivism, began to lose its importance. This period was remarkable the revival of Saivism in the form of Vira-Saivism. The construction of Saiva and Vaishnava temples and donation of lands for their upkeep constitute an important feature in the religious history of this period. The mention of Karaikal Ammaiyar, one of the Nayanmars, in an inscription⁵⁶ of Davangere is an evidence of the presence of Tamil elements in the Karnataka during the days of the Uchchangi Pandyas.

REFERENCES

1. This place has been identified with Uchchangidurga situated about three miles to the east of Malakalmuru
Internat. J. Appl. Soc. Sci. | Jan. & Feb., 2019 | 6(1&2)

- (M.A.R. 1910-11, p.31). In one of the Halsi Grants, the place is called Uchchangi (I.A. Vol. VI, p.30).
2. Hayve is the same as Havyaga, a division comprising the southern parts of the North Kanara District. In view of this, Konkana proper in those ancient times maybe defined so as to have included, besides the southern coastal districts of Maharashtra, Goa and also the northern parts of the North Kanara District. The southern part of that District came to be called the Hayve division in later historical periods. (J.M. Fleet, *Dynasties of the Kanarese Districts*, p. 566).
 3. B.L.Rice, *Mysore and Coorg from Inscriptions*, p.149.
 4. E.C.Vol. III, Sr. 140.
 5. E.C. Vol. III, Sr. 140.
 6. E.I. Vol. XXII, pp.213 ff.
 7. This territory, once ruled by the Nolambas, was known as Nolambas, was known as Nolambavadi Thirty two Thousand even after their fall.
 8. E.C. Vol. XI, p.16.
 9. E.C.Vol. XI, Dg. 5, 39, 40, 41 and HK 56.
 10. C.H. Rao (Ed.) *Mysore Gazetteer*, Vol.II, Part II, p.1320.
 11. E.C. Vol. XI, Dg. 39.
 12. The fish crest is an emblem of the Pandyas of Madurai in the South.
 13. The Kalachuris were rulers of Chedi and their inscription in the north are dated in the chedi era, which began in 249 A.D.
 14. Q.J.M.S. Vol. II, p.115.
 15. E.C. Vol. V, AK, 1209.
 16. E.C. Vol. XI, Hk, 56.
 17. *Ibid.*, Dg. 139.
 18. M.E.R. 1904, Para, 18.
 19. E.C. Vol. VII, C1, 33.
 20. E.C. Vol. XI, Dg. 139.
 21. Beltur or Bettur lies between Harihar and Anaji in the Chitaldrug District.
 22. E.C. Vol. VI, Dg. 151.
 23. *Ibid.*, Dg. 3.
 24. According to Venkayya, this boast is probably based on some service which he rendered to Vikramaditya against his Chola enemy. It is to be remembered, however, that Nolambavadi was the battle ground of the Chalukyas and the Cholas and that it was in Vikramaditya's time that the final expulsion of the Cholas from that area had taken place, with the aid apparently of the Uchchangi Pandyas under the leadership of Tribhuvanamalla Pandya Deva, who held the titles "the punisher of the Parichchedins" and "the vanquisher of the hopes of the chola king Rajiga-Chola".
 25. E.C. Vol. VI, Hk. 68.
 26. *Ibid.*, VII, Ci, 33.
 27. *Ibid.*, Intro, p.15.
 28. E.C. Vol. VII, Cm. 99.
 29. *Ibid.*, XII, Tp. 14.
 30. *Ibid.*, Dg. 155.
 31. C.H. Rao, *Op. Cit.*, p.810.
 32. E.C. Vol. XI, p.17.
 33. *Ibid.*, Dg.2.
 34. E.C. Vol. XI, Dg. 4
 35. *Ibid.*, Hk, 68.
 36. E.I. Vol. XII, p.154.
 37. E.C. Vol. XI, Dg.4.
 38. *Ibid.*, Dg. 168.
 39. S.I.I. Vol. IX, Nos. 267 and 293.
 40. M.E.R. 1906, Para 40, A.R.E. No. 459 of 1905.
 41. E.C. Vol. V, Ak, 135.
 42. *Ibid.*, VIII, Hi. 87.
 43. *Ibid.*, IV, Hs. 3.
 44. *Ibid.*, XII, TP. 61.
 45. L.Rice, *Mysore Inscriptions*, p.71.
 46. E.C. Vol. XII, Ck. 36.
 47. E.C. Vol. II, SB. 327.
 48. *Ibid.*, XII, CK. 36.
 49. J.M. Fleet, *Op. Cit.*, p.505.
 50. E.C. Vol. XI, Cd. 13.
 51. *Ibid.*
 52. E.C. Vol. XI, Dg. 5.
 53. *Ibid.*, 39.
 54. *Ibid.*, 32.
 55. L. Rice, *Op. Cit.*, p.52.
 56. E.C. Vol. XI, Dg. 155.
