

Sri:
Srimathey Ramanujaya Nama:

THE ORIGIN AND GROWTH OF AHOBILA MUTT
(A study based on inscriptions)
by
T.A.RAJAGOPALAN



Archa Vighraha of Adhi Van Satakopa Jeeyar at Melkote

8-8-2005 - 23rd Aadi - Parthiva - Thiruvadi Pooram.

Published by:

DIVYA DESA PARAMPARIYA PADHUKAPPU PERAVAI
214, East Uthara Street, Srirangam, Trichy - 620 006

Rs.20/-

Postage Extra

Title : The Origin and Growth of Ahobila Mutt
(A study based on inscriptions)

No. of copies : 500

First Published : 8-8-2005

Printed at : Sri Ranganachiyar Achagam
214, East Uthara Street
Srirangam, Trichy-620 006

Copies can be had from :

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Cell: 98842 89887
3. T.A.Rajagopalan
Plot No.2C, Gajalakshmi Nagar,
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FOREWORD

Sri Vaishna shrines of South India have been the most prominent institutions down the centuries. The credit goes to Sri Ramanuja who revolutionised and revitalised the temple administration. He nominated Jeeyars to guide and conduct the religious affairs of various temples. Koil Ozhugu, Tirumalai Ozhugu and Iympathiruvar Thittam (ஐம்பத்திருவர் திட்டம்) at Melkote etc. speak volumes of his administrative ability. Most of the sacred shrines called Divyadesams were under the control of Jeeyars who were also the religious heads. Accordingly a Jeeyar was installed to oversee the religious activities at Ahobilam sanctified by the hymns of Tirumangai Alwar, by the Vijayanagara King Sri Krishnadevaraya in the year 1513 AD. There are a number of misgivings amongst the scholars as regards the essential character of Ahobila mutt.

The character of this mutt at Ahobilam was essentially Thenkalai. There was no division among the Sri Vaishnavites as Thenkalai and Vadakalai till 17th century, eventhough there were some ideological differences existed. The Divyadesas of south where Sri Pancharatra or Sri Vaikanasa was the governing agama, were under the control of Thenkalai sect only till the dawn of 19th century. When the Aravidu dynasty kings were ruling, few temples were usurped by Thathacharyars and in the process, temples at Ahobilam, Tiruvallore, Kumbakonam were taken over by Vadakalai sect. Sri T.A.Rajagopalan in this book has strung into various facts together by notes of highest value to the historians. His conclusion is striking. He has analysed and interpreted a considerable number of inscriptions. The details given in this book make a fascinating reading.

Sri T.A.Rajagopalan, the author of this book had earlier published a book titled "திருமலை அனந்தாழ்வானும் அவரது வழித்தோன்றல்களும்" in the year 2003 - an indepth study based on TTD inscriptions, Epigraphia Indica and Epigraphia Carnatica volumes. The present book is an extension of that research work. The author has quoted many inscriptional references to establish the fact that the character of Ahobila mutt was Thenkalai till the year 1800 AD. Sometimes truth is a bitterpill to swallow. A research work based on inscriptions result in better understanding of a fact as compared to Guruparampara tales.

One should not be dogmatic but analyse and examine, every available record in which the expression occur and derive a well founded conclusion. The readers of this book should remember this and can give their feedback accordingly to the author.

Srirangam
4-8-2005

Sri Vaishnava Sri A.Krishnamachari

Sri:

**THE ORIGIN AND GROWTH
OF AHOBILA MUTT**
(A study based on inscriptions)

INTRODUCTION

I was in the Archeological Department library collecting particulars useful for my research work on the life and works of my Acharya and Mulapurusha Sri Thirumalai Anandalwan, an immediate and one of the prime disciples of Sri Ramanuja and his descendants. A friend of an officer in the Archeological department who came to know that I was going through the T.T.D. inscriptions requested me to take particulars about Parakala mutt if any, at Thirumala.

Hence as requested by him I tried for such particulars also. To my surprise I did not come across even a single inscription about Parakala mutt or its Jeeyar in the TTD inscriptions. While going through Epigraphia Carnatika, Mysore Gazetteer, History of Vijayanagar etc. also I did not find any reference to Parakala Mutt till the year 1800 A.D. Contrary to it I found Ananthan Pillai family members being the Raja guru as well as Diwans to Mysore Maharaja continuously upto 1800 AD. I have

elaborated this point in my book “Thirumalai Ananthawan and his descendants”, published in the year 2003, May .

The Queen mother of Mysore Maharaja was confined to prison along with Diwan and their relatives and other faithful officers by Hyder Ali and Tippu Sultan in the year 1783 A.D. But Diwan Thirumalai Anantham Pillai Thirumalachariar could not be caught by Tippu as he was taking shelter at Tanjore. It is due to the effort of this Thirumalarya the Hindu Dynasty was re-established in Mysore with Lakshmi Ammani as Queen. Reference to Parakala Jeeyar and his Mutt could be traced only after her adopted son took over the kingdom.

The next mutt about which I tried to collect particulars was that of Ahobila Mutt. It is a well known fact that first few Jeeyars and the mutt itself belonged to Thenkalai sect. I took interest in doing research about that mutt also. The T.T.D. inscriptions speak about Van-Satakopa Mutt only from the period 1493 AD. It is inferred that the mutt belonged Thenkalai sect atleast upto year 1800 AD and hold of the mutt by Vadakalai sect could have come into picture only after that period.

Further research revealed the following: In the Vijayanagar dynasty during the period of Sri Ranga-I (1570 AD) it is said that one Thathachariar became his

guru who performed the coronation of the king. This Thathachariar and his son had a good influence with the King. Earlier to this one Thathacharyar was appointed by King Krishna Devaraya as the Manager of South Indian Temples, (*when Thirumalai Ananthan Pillai Govinda (Desika) Chariar was the King's Guru*) for their orderly conduct of festivals without any deviation or omission. But he was not given any power to decide and carryout routine conduct of temple rituals and administration. (*Ref. Madras Ephigraphical Reports, 1918, para 10*)

Among Thathachariars Kotikanyadanam Thathachariar was famous and wielded more influence. This name Kotikanyadanam is a misnomer in the sense that no one can conduct one crore marriages in his lifetime. It is said that he conducted one hundred marriages each day. Even if it is so in one hundred years one can ($100 \times 31 \times 12 \times 100$) conduct only 37,20,000 marriages. Hence to conduct one crore marriages one should live for about three hundred years and hundred marriages every day! However, we can take it in good sense though much exaggerated that he conducted so many.

An inscription in the year 1582 AD which indicates that Ettur Kumara Thirumala Thathachariar and Dalavoi of Vijayanagar empire provided funds for food offering to Alwars and Acharyars which include Sri Nathamunigal, Sri Ramanuja and Sri Manavala Mamunigal. It specifies

that Janma Nakshtra (*birth star*) Mulam of Manavala Mamunigal on his annual birthday should be offered with prasadam which shows his devotion to this Acharya. Normally no person of Vadakalai sect accepts Sri Manavala Mamunigal as his Acharya. His son Immidi Kumara Thirumala Thathachariar figures in two inscriptions at Thenneri, which is eleven miles from Kancheepuram. He built many sluices on the Thenneri Lake while repairing it after a damage by floods. This also bears Thenkalai Thiruman and usual Hanuman statue also is erected on one side and Garuda on the other side. Thiruman on the face of Garuda and at the top of Hanuman statue have been mutilated at a later period to look like Vadakalai. But Thenkalai Thiruman can be seen and



Thenkalai Thiruman on the sluice at Thenneri lake



Thenkalai Thiruman at the top of the Hanuman statue at Thenneri.



Statue of Garuda opposite to Hanuman with mutilated Thenkalai Thiruman at Thenneri.

recognised eventhough the base called padam is mutilated to a great extent.

The above pictures reveal that the Thathachariar who built these sluices was only Thenkalai.

Though Thathachariars claim to be the descendants of Peria Thirumalai Nambi the actual position is a different one. Peria Thirumalai Nambi had only one son who died at his early years even before marriage.

Thirumalai Nambi was without heir then. He expressed this position categorically at the time just before leaving this world. Speaking to his personal deity whose name was “Vennaikkadum Pillai” (*one who will dance for getting butter*), Periya Thirumalai Nambi says “Swamin, I am at a stage to leave this world to attain the feet of my Acharya (*Guru*). Hence you may select a person who will continue to offer you butter and perform Thiruvvaradhana to you”. (*Ref.Eedu commentary on Thiruvoimozhi 1-5-8*)

“சாயலொடுமணிமாமை தளர்ந்தேன்நான் ✱ இனிஉனது
வாயலகில்இன்னடிகில் வைப்பாரை நாடாயே.”

(Also refer to the explanatory notes under Sl.443 of ‘*Vakkum Vazhvum*’, edited by Sri M.A.Venkatakrishnan). From the above it can be understood that Thathachariars cannot be descendants of Thirumalai Nambi.

History and Epigraphical details say that Thatha Samudram a tank, now called Ayyankulam near Kancheepuram was excavated by this Kotikanyadanam Thathachariar which has Thenkalai Thiruman flanked by Sanka and Chakra on either side of it. He has also constructed one Hanuman temple there and said to have composed “Hanumath Panchasath”. Information about this is given in “Arulalaperumal Temple” inscription and Vadakalai sect people say that he belonged to their sect. Perhaps his son or grand son became Vadakalai during

sometime in about 1700 AD or later, but not this Thathachariar.

At the tail end of Vijayanagar power some Thatha chariars moved towards Mysore and from there some of them moved to Kancheepuram.

At this period some miracle seems to have happened and a section of Thathachariars family became Vadakalai due to coercion and returned to Kancheepuram from Mysore.

Actually original Thathachariars were descendants of Thirumalai Nambi family and not of Thirumalai Nambi, uncle of Sri Ramanuja. Their descendants are even now living in Addanki, Edur, Owuku etc. places at Andhra as Thenkalai. One of them by name Edur Singarachariar became direct disciple of Sri Manavala Mamunigal in about 1420 AD. These Thenkalai Thathachariars are even now living at Thirukkoyalur, Srimushnam, Srivilliputhur, Kancheepuram and Triplicane. Sri T.A.Gopinatha Rao, M.A., while explaining Triplicane plate of Panta Mailara of Saka year 1350 (1428 AD) in the reign of Devaraya-II gives details about this which can be found in Epigraphia Indica volumes.

During the period 1658-59 Venkatadri of Gomatam family was the Manager of Sri Varadaraja Swamy temple, Kancheepuram and he transferred the

Honors of Parivattam, Theertha and Sri Satakopan given in preference to others to his Acharya who belonged to Gomatam Thirumalachariar family - Thenkalai sect.

Prathivathi Bayankaram family, another distinguished Thenkalai Acharya purusha family of preceptors who were enjoying first theertham, prasadam, honour and Arulappadu rights during, 1687 AD were pushed to third place for some reasons, but enjoy them even today. An inscription dated 1687 AD on the south wall of second prakara, the wall of Narasimhaswamy shrine of Varadarajaswamy temple gives details which is inscribed with Thenkalai Thiruman with Sanku and Chakkaram. (*Ref.ARE 1919 SI.398 and ARE 1919 SI.423*).

In 1700 AD there was some sudden activity erupted in Divyadesams by the newly formed sect Vadakalai which tried to usurp powers in conduct of rituals in temples. A sect which was not seen in temples during earlier times and which did not have much respect for Alvars on a plea that there are members in it belonging to lower castes. They were averse towards Tamil language also and favoured the use of Sanskrit only. Though not all of them know Sanskrit, living in Tamilnadu and speaking only Tamil in their day to day life, they favoured Sanskrit and called themselves Vadakalais. On seeing Tamil speaking Thenkalai sect having rights in temples and its

activities they also wanted to enjoy these honours. So even without having regard to Alwars and Divyapraban dams they tried to enter temples to do kaikaryam to start with for reciting Vedam. It was during this period one Kousika Kavithrkika Simha (*Paravasthu*) wrote "Acharya-champoo" a life history of Vedantha Desika, perhaps induced by some one.

An important point to be noted here is that there was no separate literature for Vadakalai Sect, till 1700 AD explaining their difference with Thenkalai Sect. It is only in the 18th century Thirumazhisai Annavappayangar wrote Pazhanadai Vilakkam explaining the difference between the two sects. He also wrote in his book "Thrimisath Prasnotharam", a question and answer portion to establish Thenkalai system was not only an old one but also correct and supreme in all respects. The very fact that a situation arose to explain reveals that the new sect came into being only very recently i.e. in 18th century. It may also be noted that Doddachar of Sholingar or Panchamatha Banjanam Thathachariar of 17th century have not mentioned any difference among Sri Vaishnavas.

This author has not included all sorts of stories saying that Thenkalai Acharyas insulted Desika on many ways. So references to this book was not encouraged by the Vadakalai sect.

It is in this period in about 1711 AD Thathachariars came to Kancheepuram and claimed some rights in Varadarajaswamy temple using the influence of Lakshmi kumara Thathachariar of Kotikanyadanam family had with Vijayanagar Empire.

Sri.U.Ve.P.B.Annagarachariar Swamy of Kanchee in his monthly journal "Ramanujan" (No.356) wrote an article titled "Sri Varadaraja Swamy Temple". In that article he states as follows: "The nature of wave of fanaticism and conversion started by Periya Parakala Jeeyar to



which Thathachariars of that place should have succumbed and became Vadakalais". He also quotes references from "Pazhanadai Vilakkam" in support of his argument.

With a fond hope that the temple can derive much help from the Vijaya nagar Kingdom, the then Administrator and the Right holder Sri Athan Jeeyar, (*Guru of Raja Thodarmal, who was instrumental in bringing back the image of Lord Varadaraja (idol) from Udayar palayam after muslim invasion*), agreed to give first theertham and

certain privileges to Thathachariars. The Chakkarakal stone inscriptions stands proof of this at the right side of entrance steps to Thayar shrine there.

This is also inscribed at the Eastern Gopura door. However this was done with an agreement affirming that Thathachariars would honour the Thenkalai mamool and venerate the great Thenkalai Acharya Sri Manavala Mamunigal by reciting his Manthra or Thanian (*the invoking verse*) "Sri Sailesa Dayapathram" not only in the temple but also in their houses and in the houses of temple servants. Sri Lakshmikumara Thathachariar was made a Theerthakar only and in no other capacity. The Jeeyar continued to be the trustee. There were many Theerthakars with miras belonging to Thenkalai sect for centuries.

I am giving these details about Thathachariars simply because they are the main party responsible, in their capacity as Honorary Trustees during later periods, for having created many bogus inscriptions one among it being about Brahmathathraswathanthra Jeeyar in Arulalaperumal temple, Kancheepuram. It is this Brahmathathra Jeeyar whom Parakala mutt is claiming to be the first Jeeyar of this mutt. Actually, it is proved to be otherwise as explained in the book "Origin and growth of Parakala Mutt" to be published soon. The interpreter of the said inscription Sri.A.S. Ramanatha Iyer of the Archeological Department himself raised objections to the

contents of it while explaining the inscription in Epigraphia Indica volume itself.

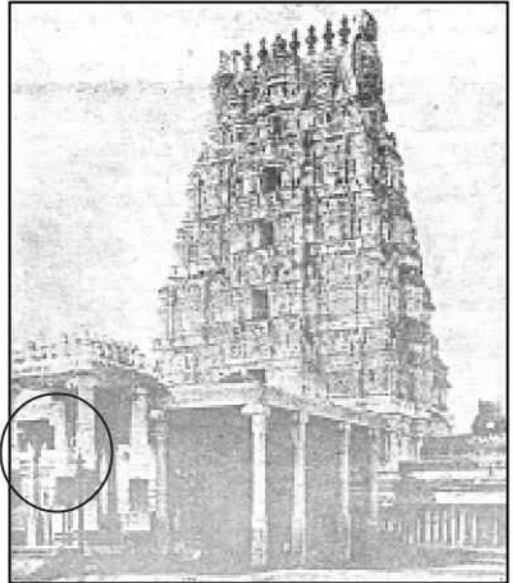
It is this time, the Ahobila mutt seem to have been converted in to Vadakalai. The way it was converted is a peculiar one as told by our elders. Since there was no enmity among Srivaishnavas following Sri Bhashya Parampara and Bhagavath Vishaya Parampara and both were calling themselves as Ubaya Vedanthacharyas, following same traditions after Sri Ramanuja, a person from Vadakalai sect was made the pontiff of Ahobila mutt. Since they were also following same customs and reciting Thanian (*the invoking verse*) "Sri Sailesa Dayapathram" in their mutt, temples and in private houses they were not barred from holding the Pontiffical seat. Till a very recent period they were following same customs as that of Then kalai and even today perform Krishna Jayanti, Sandhya vandam, reciting of Thiruvoimozhi and giving lectures on Eedu etc., on a similar manner. But unexpectedly the pontiff converted his mutt, Ahobilam temple and Veeraraghava swamy Temple at Tiruvallore which were under their control into Vadakalai.

The photo of Veeraraghava swamy temple as given in a book "South Indian Shrines" by Sri Jagadesa Iyer which is available in Major libraries show that it had Thenkalai Thiruman. Actually Ahobilam Jeeyar was punished by court for having recited "Ramanuja Daya

Pathram” Thanian in 1835 AD at Tiruvallore Veerara gha Swamy temple.

Two mutts in the name of Parakala Mutt and Aho-

Pillar at the Tiruvallore Temple entrance having Thenkalai Tiruman



bila mutt were constructed in the Mysore Palace only in about 1816 AD and other provisions likes vattils, cradle, satari, etc. were given to Parakal Mutt duly engraved. They were donated with some villages also for the maintenance of above mutts and temples. These particulars are explained in the book “Origin and growth of Parakala Mutt” to be published soon.

Even this Parakala Jeeyar of Mysore used to attend the Festivals of Sri Manavala Mamunigal during the reign of Krishnaraya Wodeyar, a fact mentioned in Epigraphia Carnatika volumes.

I have given all the above details just to show the background as to how the above mutts stand today.

A wonderful similarity can be noticed in the episodes propagated or published by Vadakalai Sect about pronouncement of Brahma Thanthra Jeeyar (*claimed to be the predecessor of present Parakala Jeeyar mutt*) Ahobilam Jeeyar, Parakala Jeeyar, Srimathandavan. These details are given below as written by them in journals for readers to know how cheap publicity is made. This is similar to Saivaites fabricating stories about Sarabeswarar, Pratayangara Devi, Ganapathi and so on to show that they are superior gods compare to Mahavishnu.

The propoganda is as follows:-

1. Inscription at Kancheepuram Arulalaperumal Temple

In case of Brahma Thanthra Jeeyar Lord Arulalaperumal himself nominates a person in 1360 AD as a Yathi, gives him a mutt, books for maintaining a library to propagate Visishtadhvaitha philosophy etc. Then Lord Himself tells, this incidence may be engraved in copper plate and inscribed on stone to be a permanent record.

Of course, both were not done immediately. But an inscription has been created perhaps after creating a story as said above during the Honorary Trusteeship of Thathachariars after 1800 AD at Arulalapperumal Temple and they have also successfully made it included in

Epigraphia Indica, a book of Archeological Department created by the British Government.

2. Ahobilam Jeeyar

In this case Lord Narasimha Himself calls a person, gives him Sanyas. An uthsava murthy comes and sits on the lap of the Jeeyar on His own accord from ten km. away from that place. Lord is said to have given him Kashaya and Thrithanda that were available with the idol of Sri Ramanuja (*making Ramanuja an ordinary person as though not taken Sanyas perhaps*). The Jeeyar goes on a tour to Alwar Thirunagari where Nammalwar calls him from a lake to be rescued and installed at that place. The Jeeyar completes the task for which Nammalwar was very much pleased and gives the Jeeyar a title of “Adi Van Satakopa” and a Hamsa Mudra.

He goes to Tondanur in Mysore and finds one Krishna Vighraha (*idol*) floating! in that lake. The Jeeyar takes the idol and installs It, saying that It was the idol which was in the Aradana of Sri Ramanuja himself.

Though all these stories are told the actual place where idol was installed is not made known and authentication for all the above happenings not at all given. These stories as we know were coined to project the Jeeyar and the mutt in high esteem.

In religious history it is only an idol of Lord Varadaraja that was in Aradhana by Sri Ramanuja. But he advised all his disciples as per Guru Parampara Prabavam to have only Lakshmi Narasimha for Aradhana.

3. Parakala Jeeyar

It is said that Brahma Thanthra Jeeyar started a mutt at Kancheepuram, shifted it to Thirumala and then to Melkote and finally to Mysore. They even say that the Jeeyar was a Trustee of Thirumala Thirupathy temple. The TTD inscriptions or any authoritative book do not mention about this Jeeyar at all.

Apart from the above it is said that this Parakala Jeeyar met Aurangzeb, the Mugul Emperor who is said to have honoured him. There seems to be no limit for such boastings. Actually this muslim king was famous for his fanaticism and was against Hinduism to the core. It is a wonderful imagination to say that he honoured a Hindu Jeeyar.

Even Tippusultan has not done such thing though he was only an ordinary ruler trying to thrive. He was a fanatic to the court and even asked his own master (*Guru*) and pradan "Poornaiah" to convert to islam.

4. Kadonthethi Andavan (1809 AD)

In an article in "Gopura Darisanam" journal of

March 2003 it is said that this Andavan a Sanyasi went to Mysore and got Hayagreeva Manthra from Parakala mutt and Narasimha Mantra from Ahobilam Jeeyar. He learnt Tharka Sastra from Aakki Alwan at Mysore.

He went to Thiruvananthapuram where some people wanted to test the capacity of this Andavan in which he excelled. The actual test was not at all explained! On seeing that everybody was spell bound some one made this Andavan dumb. Knowing the plot Andavan chanted Sudarsana Sathakam and regained his speaking capacity. The person who made him dumb started vomiting blood. He then surrendered to this swamy and the king drew away that person after pardoning him on the advice of Andavan.

Then swamy went to Kochi where some people tried to kill him for reasons not known to anybody. Swamigal as usual chanted Hayagreeva manthra which made some help come from king's quarters on the back of the horse and the swamy escaped.

Then swamy went to Calicut and stayed there in a choultry. Some thieves came there to attack Andavan to take away his belongings. It is not known as to how such a swamy was alone that too with some wealth. Knowing such an attempt is made he chanted Hayagreeva and Sudarsana Manthras when a serpent appeared before

them. On seeing the snake thieves ran away.

Swamigal wrote one Grantha “Arputha Vamanan” which is said to be available in Madurai and Thiruvavadu thurai (*Strangely with a Saivaite organisation*). He also wrote one stotra “Swapna Sadakam” about Thiru Vengadamudayan which is also not available!

It is also said that he composed a work called “Sri Komala Dandagam” on Komalavalli thayar of Kumba konam and regained his lost sight (*Perhaps imitating Kurathalvan*).

It is said that he use to chant Hayagreeva Manthra (*not detailed*) keeping the boiled Horsegram in a vessel and keeping it on his head when Lord Hayagreeva used to keep his fore legs on the shoulders of Andavan and ate the Horsegram. (*This is an imitation of an episode from the story of “Vathiraja” or Madhva saint. Ref: “Bakthi” monthly issue of Oct.2004*).

He gave away some **crore** Mula mantras to his disciples and successors in order to wipe off the violence from this world!

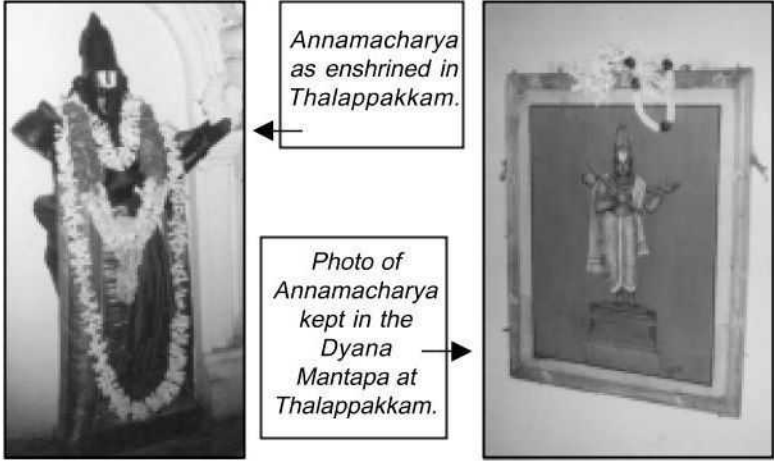
He seems to have taken Sanyas at his 76th year in 1905, Viswavasu, Avani month from Ahobilam Jeeyar (38th pontiff) and attained Acharyan Thiruvadi in his 79th year.

Actually having born in 1809 according to the article and taken sanyas in his 76th year will come to (1809+76) 1885 only and not 1905 as said.

Another wonderful act of Ahobilam Jeeyar is annexing the fame of Annamacharia into his fold. Knowing fully well that at the time of Annamacharya, the poet, Ahobila mutt was only Thenkalai and it was only under him he studied. It is also a fact that Annamacharya got his Samasra yanam from some other person (*Thirupathy Jeeyar*) and not from Ahobilam Jeeyar. But the present Jeeyar celebrates Annamacharya festival affixing Vadakalai Thiruman to him. Even T.T.D. is doing the same because of the influence of this Jeeyar. Books published by one Sri.T.S.Parthasarathy with a story of Annama charya and his songs set to Ragas by Smt.R.Vedavalli have also shown Annamayya with Vadakalai Thiruman only.

Contrary to the above, the statue of Sri Annamayya at Thalappakkam and the inscription available there telling about him are having only Thenkalai Thiruman. Even the statues kept in a mantap on the bank of Swamy Pushkarani at Thirumala of Annamacharya, his son and his grand son, only Thenkalai Thiruman is found. Even the figure at the entrance of Keertan Pandaram at Thirumala Temple only Thenkalai Thiruman can be found. A photo of the above was already published by Dr.Ramesan I.A.S., who was incharge of TTD Adminis-

tration in his book about Thirumala. The photo of Annamayya as available at Thalappakkam Chenna Kesava Perumal temple worshipped by Annamayya bears Thenkalai Thiruman only.



Annamayya's temple is situated adjacent to Chennakesava Temple at Thalappakkam. An inscription about Annamayya on stone, now lying in a paddy field where he was doing harvest at his younger days also bears Thenkalai Thiruman only. (*Photos taken by the author during his visit in the year 2005*).

Annamacharya had sung about Ananthalvan and his grand son also has praised Ananthalvan. In his book "Paramayogivilasamu" he praises Ananthalvan.

Sri Prabunandan Giridhar visited Thalappakkam and then wrote about Annamacharya in the popular weekly



*Temple of Chennakesava
at Thalappakkam.*



*Stone inscription in a field at
Thalappakkam where from
Annamacharya first went to
Thirupathi.*

“Ananda Vikatan” had given a photo of Annamacharya with Thenkalai Thiruman and had stated that the inscription available at Thalappakkam is with Thenkalai Thiruman.

We should remember that it does not matter how old a mutt is and how famous the pontiffs were. So it is not necessary to create stories in order to get name for a sanyasi or his mutt. Any Sanyasi is expected to do Japa, Thapa etc. and conduct himself in discharging purely religious activities for which, the mutt was established and carryout the activities as laid down by the preceptors. He has to acquire knowledge so that they can advise those who come to him for solace. He has to be in a position to guide them to render service to the Lord at all times.

To decide seniority of any Yathi we have to count only the number of Chathurmasya Vrithas undertaken by him. The Yathi must be having unbiased views and straight forward thinking. If such things are possible the Sanyasi as well as the seat he occupies will get name and fame. People of all walks of life will respect him. It is not necessary to fabricate and float stories for that purpose.

Before concluding this introduction I would like to express my thanks and gratitude to all those who were guiding me in my effort.

1. I am grateful to Keerthimurthy Sri Mahamahimopadyaya, Padmabushan Sri.U.Ve.Prathivathi Bayankaram Annagarachariar Swamy of Kancheepuram for having given many details in his monthly journal "Ramanujam" and in other books.

2. Dr.K.V.Raman for giving many inscripational details in his book "Varadarajaswamy Temple" and his guidance given to me in collecting valuable details. But for his initiation into the research work as early as in the year1976, I would not have got an opportunity to know historical and inscripational details which I continue to use in my works.

3. I am greatful to Sri.U.Ve.Elayavilli Bhuvanachariar swamy for having given me valuable information

about conduct of rituals at Alwar Thirunagari and the honour given to Thiruvaimozhipillai for his services which are continued to be given to his descendants even today.

4. I thank Sri U.Ve.D.Thirumalai of Alwar Thirunagari for his help in getting particulars about Alwar Thirunagari and Ramanuja Chathurvedhi Mangalam.

5. I am thankful to the Dy.Superintendent (*Epigraphic*) Archeological Survey of India, Chennai-9 for permitting me to refer to books in his library and for his clarifications. I also thank the librarian for extending his co-operation by making available books required by me to complete this research work.

With the help of all I continued my research about Alagia Manavala Jeeyar Mutt Kanchee, Ahobila mutt, Parakala mutt, Sri Vedantha Desika and to some extent about Thathachariars all inter-connected in Srivaishnava hierarchy. Finally I am able to give the history in a book form. The first of the series is about Ahobila Mutt.

Ahobila mutt was Thenkalai and when the Jeeyar converted himself as Vadakalai, his disciples spread over many places also turned to be Vadakalais. Thereby it was easy for them to convert the temples under their control also into Vadakalais. Though Vaikanasa Archakas look-

ing after these temples did not convert themselves they perhaps agreed to wear Thenkalai or Vadakalai Thiruman according to the place of worship where they were performing poojas. So there was no resistance from them in the conversion of temples. It can be seen even today that Vaikanasa Archakas are wearing Thiruman according to the place of worship, Thenkalai or Vadakalai. I hope that I have given many details which have not come to light hitherto. I also thank a secretary of Divya Desa Parampariya Padhukappu Peravai, Sri A.Krishnama chari for help extended by him in printing and publishing this research work. I also thank him for the foreword given to this book.

I have only attempted to bring the historical facts to public without enmity towards anybody. Since it is only Thenkalai that existed from a long time I only request others to avoid interference in the affairs of Thenkalai temples. In case anybody feels that they require some temples where they can receive honours they are at liberty to construct new one apart from whatever they have already usurped and brought under their control like, Ahobilam, Tiruvallore, Kandiyur, Thiruvaheendipuram etc. and perform worship. This will avoid any quarrel, legal proceedings, waste of money and time and also pave way for peaceful co-existence.

Especially under the present conditions when marriage alliance between the two sects are taking place without any reservation and migration of people to U.S.A. and other places, cordial relationship among the two sects is the need of the hour.

Plot No.2C, Gajalakshmi
Nagar 1st Main Road
Chrompet, Chennai-44
4-8-2005

T.A.Rajagopalan



THE HISTORY OF AHOBILA MUTT

Though Ahobilam is considered to be an old kshetram (*holy place*) even from the period of Prahlad and it is a Divyadesam sung by Alwar there is no record to show that Sri Ramanuja paved way for worship as in other main Divyadesams. Here one “Muktha Sloka” composed by Sri Parasara Bhattar gives us the real position.

ஸ்ரீரங்க₃ம் கரிஸைலமஞ்ஜநகி₃ரிம்
 தார்ஷ்யாத்₃ரிஸிம்ஹாசலௌ
 ஸ்ரீகூர்மம் புஷோத்தமஞ்ச
 ப₃த₃ரீநாராயணம் நைமிஸம் |
 ஸ்ரீமத்₃த்₃வாரவதீப்ரயாக₃-
 மது₄ராயோத்₄யாக₃யா: புஷ்கரம்
 ஸாளக்₃ராமகி₃ரிம் நிஷேவ்ய
 ரமதே ராமாநுஜோ(அ)யம் முநி: ||

(தார்ஷ்யாத்₃ரி - என்பது அஹோபிலத்தைக் குறிப்பதாகும்)

This sloka describing the places considered holy and toured by Emperumanar in his life time was composed by Sri Bhattar in order to chant the same daily viz. “Nithyanusandhanam”.

In this Muktha sloka the name of Ahobila kshetra does find place can be noted. “**Ramanujarya Divya Saritha**” by Pillailokam Jeeyar, a work of 16th century describes that Ramanuja visited Ahobilam. History does not say that a Jeeyar was installed by Sri Ramanuja or

Sri Manavala Mamunigal as in the case of Srirangam, Thirumala, Alwar Thirunagari, Vanamamalai, Thirumalirumcholai etc. However, considering the avathar of Narasimha and having sung by Thirumangai Alwar we have it as one among 108 Divyadesams. But no mutt was established there. Even '**Prataparudrium**' (*poems composed in praise of Pradapa Rudra who was a Kokatia King*) does not reveal any information about any mutt there though it says that Prataparudra donated one Narasimha idol to one of the Ahobilam temples in about 1310-1325 AD. It is said that it was the practice of Prataparudra to cast daily one gold idol of Siva and perform pooja to it.

One day he was staying in Rudravaram a town named after him which was ten miles away from lower Ahobilam. He ordered for a new Vighram (*idol*) of Siva for his worship and it turned out to be that of Narasimha. Though he ordered to make Siva Vighra for the second time it also turned out to be that of Lord Narasimha only. So he gave that idol to the nearest place Ahobilam as there was only Moola Vighra of Narasimha there. It is also said that Proleya Vema kings who were subordinate to Kakatia Prataparudra constructed steps to Ahobilam as well as Simhachalam. They also constructed Mantapas there. However there is no information of any mutt having been there.

Now there is a mutt and Madathipathi at Ahobilam. The TTD inscriptions mention about Ahobila mutt for the first time in the year 1494 AD. through a foot note. In reality it is an information about **Van-satakopan** mutt only. And there was not even any mention about Parakala Mutt.

The traditional account about Ahobila mutt says that the first Jeeyar whom they call as Adhi-Van-Sata kopan was born in 1379 AD and was given Sanyas or Gadi by Lord Narasimha himself even when he was a Brahmacharin. It adds further that the Narasimha idol came on its own accord and sat on the lap of Van-Satakopa Jeeyar and so on in order to infuse in the minds of people Godliness to the Jeeyar so that many people would admire and become disciples of the Jeeyar. There are some more incidents told about this Jeeyar. Perhaps they wanted to connect the episode of donating an idol by king Prataparudra, to show that this mutt had its origin as early as that. But it is proved to be a mistake as detailed below:

The explanatory notes given for the inscriptions in TTD volumes clearly indicate that it is for the first time in 1494 AD a mention is made about Van Satakopan Mutt. The foot note only calls it as Ahobila mutt.

The table at sl.no.88 in Vol.7 of TTD Epigraphical volumes gives the period of Ahobila Mutt Jeeyars as follows:

1st Jeeyar Adhi-Van-Satakopa 1437-1516 - 79 years

1st Jeeyar (*two dates are given*) 1456-1516 – 62 years

Both the above dates seems to be incorrect unless a person lives for a full life time he cannot be a pontiff or Jeeyar for 79 years or even for 62 years. Moreover, the span of later Jeeyars viz. 2nd and 3rd are very much less being for 13 years.

In one of a monthly journal (*Gokulam Kadir, Jan 2004*) some one writes that Adi-Van-Satakopan was born in 1379 AD. Even in “Ladies Special” Deepavali Malar of 1999 the same year was given. Even granting that one takes Sanyas as a bachelor he cannot be a Sanyasi for 62 or 79 years. If we calculate the period from 1379 AD upto the date of second Jeeyar who became the pontiff in 1516 AD as given in TTD Table referred to above it comes to 136 years of life which is unbelievable under Indian climatic conditions. Normally Srivaishnava Jeeyars are called Thrithandis who take Sanyas or Gadi after married life viz. Brahmacharyam (*boyhood*), Grahastha (*married*) and then only take Sanyas and become Madathipathis.

Now we will see what historical records say about this. Page 109 and 113 of TTD inscriptions, Vol.I gives

us information that one Singayya Dannayaka established two mutts known as Sitakaragandan Mutts one at Thirumala and another at Thirupathi (*Ref.354 TT*); these mutts were left under the in charge of certain Jeeyars for their management along with Arisanalayam Nandavanam and Vansatakopan Nandavanam with a condition that on the demise of the Jeeyar the properties were to revert to the Dannayaka for whom the rights are reserved or he can appoint Desanthris as the head of the mutts. This is in saka 1243 (*1323 AD*) and as well as 1347-48 AD also.

In the course of time the Vaishnava Acharya who looked after Arisanalaya Nandavanam became a Koil Kelvi Jeeyar at Thirumala. Van Satakopan Nandavanam was not having the name Ahobila Mutt. This is the mutt of Sitakaragandam, property of Immidi Rahutharayan Singayya Dannayaka in the name of Van Satakopa Nandavanam in 1347-48 AD. Sl.111 of Vol.I, TTD 434 TT clearly states that this is the Mutt of Sitakaragandam Immadi Rahutharayan Singayya Danayakar, sl.112-676 TT also indicates the same.

Mullai Thiruvenkata Jeeyar belongs to Saka 1312 (*1390 AD*) (*Ref.57 TT*). According to this inscription there were two Koil Kelvi Jeeyars at Thirumala. Table 31 of TTD Vol.7 says that Mullai Thiruvengada Jeeyar has become Peria Jeeyar in 1375 AD. There was no Jeeyar for Van Satakopan Nandavanam at this stage.

An interesting inscription No.359 GT (*Govinda rajan Temple*) pertaining to Saka 1518 (AD 1596) says a Koil Kelvi of Thirumala was named as Van Satakopa Alagia Manavala Ramanuja Jeeyar who is to receive Prasadam offered as a share as per the will of the Donor.

Sl.10 of Vol.6 – 413 GT. says that when Venkata pathy Raya was the king of Vijayanagar in 1594 AD sthalathar executed a silasasanam in favour of Koil Kelvi Annan Ramanuja Jeeyar to perform his ubayam on Chitra star day in the month of Chithirai when Lord Govindaraja with his consorts visits Van Satakopa mutt at Thirupathy and has holy bath with gingely oil, sandal paste, etc.

Note: *If this Ahobila mutt was Vadakalai, Koil Kelvi Jeeyar of Thirumalai would not have chosen to perform holy bath (Thirumanjanam) at Van Satakopan Mutt. Hence even on the days of 1594 AD the mutt was Thenkalai only. Moreover, this Van Satakopa mutt was in Thirupathy only. It can be remembered that Van Satakopan Nandavanam was installed with a mutt by one Dannanayaka in 1324-25 itself at Thirupathi in the name Sitakarakandam Mutt.*

Sl.12 – 359 GT when Venkatapathy Raya was ruling in 1596 AD one Silambudayar Sethi paid for offerings to Varadaraja Perumal, Govindaraja with his consorts and Thirukkachi Nambi at Thirupathy. Quarter (1/4)

share of Prasadam to be given to Koil Kelvi Vansatakopa Alagia Manavala Ramanuja Jeeyar.

Note: *It is to be noted that even Koil Kelvi Jeeyar of Thirupathy-Thirumalai was named Van-Satakopa Alagia Manavala Ramanuja Jeeyar.*

Sri Venkatesa Ithihasamala in its page 266 (*Tamil rendering by Sri.U.Ve.T.A.Krishnamachariar of Thirupathy*) indicates that Sri Ramanuja installed one Senapathy Jeeyar first as Ekangi and then a Sanyasi or Jeeyar. This Jeeyar was given Sanyas or Gadi as a bachelor and given the name as Appan Satakopa Jeeyar. This Thiruvencatanatha Appan Satakopa Jeeyar was a disciple of Thirumalai Ananthalwan. This took place when Sri Ramanuja was 102 years and Sri Ananthalwan was 60 years of age perhaps in the year 1118 AD. This indicates that Jeeyar at Thirumala also was named as Satakopa Jeeyar.

Table 88 of TTD, volumes VII gives the periods of Ahobila Mutt Jeeyars as follows:

1 st Jeeyar or Adhi Van Satakopa Jeeyar (two dates are given)	1437-1516 AD 1456-1516 "
2 nd Jeeyar - Srimannarayana Jeeyar	1515-1528 "
3 rd Jeeyar - Parankusa Jeeyar	1528-1541 "
4 th Jeeyar - Srinivasa Jeeyar	1541-1551 "
5 th Jeeyar - Vedantha Satakopa Jeeyar	1552-1558 "

6 th Jeeyar - Parakusa Jeeyar II	1557-1572 AD
7 th Jeeyar - Satakopa Jeeyar on the Peeta in	1585 – AD

List of some of the Jeeyars who performed Nanda vana Kainkaryam at Thirumalai Thirupathi. All of them were with mutts attached.

1. Ramanujam Nandavanam and Madam
(*Ref.236 TT on p.165 of Vol.1*)
2. Arisanalayam Nandavanam and Madam
(*Ref.257 of Vol.7, p.109 of Vol.1*)
3. Van Satakopan Nandavanam and Madam
(*Ref.354 TT, p.109 of Vol.1 & p.34 of Vol.1*)
4. Thiruvazhi Parappinar Nandavanam
(*p.235 of Vol.7*)
5. Perarulalar Nandavanam and Madam
6. Moitha Solai Thirunandavanam and Madam
(*Ref.125 GT sl.90 of Vol.1*)
7. Pangayachelvi Thirunandavanam and Madam
(*Ref.106 TT Sl.219 of Vol.1 & p.248 of Vol.7*)
8. Pinsenra Valli flower Garden (*Ref.Table 67 & 85 of TTD Vol.7*)
9. Deivanayakam Madam & Flower Garden,
(*Ref.Table 126*)

In a monthly issue of "Gnana Alayam", May 2003, some one wrote about Ahobila Mutt, its Jeeyar and the

kshetra. In that article it was mentioned that the first Jeeyar of Ahobilam was born in 1379 AD and he was asked by Lord Narasimha Himself to come to Ahobilam and have darshan of him. This Jeeyar whose original name was Kidambi Srinivasachariar, after taking bath in Bavanasini river went to have darshan of the Lord. There he saw a Sanyasin whom he could recognise as Lord himself. At that time some voice from the air came asking him to take one of three idols that were there and propogate "Visishtadvaita" philosophy. It also said that Lord Himself will help him in this task. Overwhelmed with his bakthi and affection he requested the Lord to give him an idol for daily worship. At that time an idol of Malola Narasimhan from nearby place which was 10 k.m. away came and sat on his lap on its own accord. The Lord gave him the name Satakopa Yatindra Mahadesikan. This Yatindra then established a mutt there and so on.

It is not explained as to when he was given sanyas and by whom? It says that in order to propagate **Advaita** (*wrongly for Visishtadvaita*) he undertook kshetradanam. While reaching Alwar Thirunagari in Thirunelveli Nammalwar appeared in his dream and said that somebody had thrown his idol in a nearby lake and that he should be recovered and re-installed. This Jeeyar completed the task with the help of the king of that place. In appreciation of this act Nammalwar appeared before him

and gave him the name of the Lord of that place Adhinathan as Adhi to prefix his name as Adhi-Van Satakopan and also gave him one ring with Hamsa Mudra. **This story is given in a souvenir released for completion of 600 years of the mutt also.**

Refer Sl.140 (*XIV Srirangapatnam-269*) Melkote Inscription. Actually the practice of grant of “Mudra” is to enable the person to receive prasadam and salary on a permanent basis. This will not confer any other right on the person who is issued with such Mudra.

One similar Mudra was granted by Srirangaraya-deva Maharaja to Peria Malainambi Komara Thirumala Thathacharya of Ettur to receive Arulappadu, Thirtha and Prasada after distribution to all Sri Vaishnavas during sixth decad recitation of Thiruvaimozhi during Thiruvadyayana festival. Srivaishnava having the mudra receives salary of 2 varahas per month; 1 plate of offered food daily, Thiruppaniaram at the rate of 2 each during the reading of Kaisikapuranam and during “Ulakamundaperuvaya”. This is writing of Ramanuja, Senobava of Treasury.

The use of Annamudra is not in vogue at present in Alwar Thirunagari. At Alwar Thirunagari even today i.e. 2005 AD there is no person residing belonging to Vadakalai sect.

Vol.VI of Epigraphia Carnatica

Sri Ramanuja was originally granted a mudra when he was in Yathiraja Jeeyar Mutt at Melkote. During the period of King Sadasiva Raya, the pontiff of the mutt was granted a mudra called Hanumath mudra which was to be affixed along with Ramanuja seal and Royal seal to ensure safety, at the time of closure of the temple.

But in the case of Annamudra said to be available with Ahobilam Jeeyar it is not used for the above said purpose and it is used only to get Theertham and Prasadam at Alwar Thirunagari.

An interesting inscription at SI.434 of AR 107 of 1947-48 records grant of Desanthri Mudra to Alagia Manavala Jeeyar and his disciples by Thirumalai Naicker.

The article also narrates an episode connected with Pradaparudra (*it says Pradapamudra*) and says that the Jeeyar explained the mahima (*power*) of the Lord as to how the Sivalinga cast for Pradaparudra turned to be of Narasimha when Pradaparudra came and enquired reason for such happening. After this the idol was given to the Jeeyar which he is keeping in Aradhana even today.

Another incident is also he narrated in that article. It says that when this first Jeeyar went to Tondanur in Mysore he saw an idol of Lord Krishna floating in Tondanur lake

which he took and kept in Aradhana. This Krishna idol was in Aradhana of so many disciples of Sri Ramanuja earlier.

Now we will discuss the incidents narrated in the above article. In this article so many un-believable acts are narrated.

1. Vansatakopa Jeeyar was born in 1379 AD according to this articles. Since the second Jeeyar of the mutt became the pontiff only in 1516 AD the first Jeeyar should have lived upto that year, (*period 1516 – 1379 = 137*) for 137 years which is certainly not possible at least under the Indian climatic conditions and so it is a false statement. The fact that the second Jeeyar took the office in 1516 AD is explained with Epigraphical data elsewhere in this book itself.

2. The article says that a voice asked Srinivasa chariar to pickup one of the three idols that were there. But he took only the Malola Narasimha which came on its own accord from a place 10 kms. away and sat on his lap. What happened to those three idols that were there already as told by the voice in the Air?

3. Even without taking sanyas he was given the name Satakopa Yathi by Lord himself. How could it be? How did he get Gadi cloth Thridanda etc.?

4. In Alwar Thirunagari the Jeeyar was asked to recover the idol of Nammalvar from the nearby lake and re-install the same in the temple.

Neither the date for such re-installation nor any authentication is given for such a happening. At this time other Acharyars like Manavala Mamunigal were there. Actually Manavala Mamunigal was the native of the place and he was held in high respect by all the religious people and Sri Vaishnavas at that time. But this Jeeyar is said to have been chosen. Manavala Mamunigal was born in 1370 AD itself.

**WHO RESTORED AND CONSECRATED
THE ARCHA VIGRAHA OF NAMMALVAR?**

Actually it is Thiruvoimozhipillai the Acharya of Sri Manavala Mamunigal who re-installed the idol of Nammalwar. This fact is asserted by "Sudarsanar" in his book on page 183 which is reproduced here to explain the same with authority. Thiruvoimozhi Pillai is called Thiruvoimozhi Muni in the inscriptions.

- a. Pillailokam Jeeyar in "Yathindra Pravana Prabawam" states that Thiruvoimozhipillai went to Alwar Thirunagari, clearing the forest, renovated agrahara and re-installed Nammalwar in his own place. (Ref. Page 46 of Yathindra Pravana Prabawam). For

this Nammalwar gave the name “Satakopadasar” to him. In page 63 and 64 of the same book Pillailokam Jeeyar states that Thiruvoimozhipillai re-installed **Nammalwar** and **Yathirajar** in Alwar Thirunagari (*Bavishyadacharya Vigramam*).

- b. Appillai one of the Ashtadiggajas of Sri Manavala Mamunigal has said in his Oran (ஓரான்) Acharya’s Vazhithirunamam (*verses sung in praise of perceptors*) as “தொல்குருகாபுரியதனை துலக்கி னான் வாழியே” viz. Long live the Acharya who brought the oldest “Kurugur” to light.
- c. While describing kainkaryas of Thiruvoimozhi Pillai ‘Periathirumudi Adaivu’ states that the important Kainkarya performed by him is renovation of Alwar Thirunagari (இவர் செய்தருளின கைங்கர்யம் ஆழ்வார் திருநகரி ஜீர்ணோத்தாரணம்).
- d. While expounding the Thanian (*invocatory verse*) of Thiruvoimozhi Pillai given in Bhagavat Vishayam, Pillai Lokam Jeeyar elaborates the renovation work carried out at Alwar Thirunagari by Thiruvoimozhi Pillai. Ref. page 43 of “Bhagavath Vishayam”, published by Sri Sudarsanar. (*Bhagavath Vishayam 1st two Thiruvoimozhigal printed and published by Puttur Sudarsanar, dt.24.5.1975, Vol.I*)

Actually during the muslim invasion Nammalvar also was taken to a place in Kerala and Karnataka (*Thirukanambi*) for safety. After Sri Ranganatha along with His consorts were re-installed at Srirangam in 1371 AD by Gopanarya (*after defeating Muslims*), Nammalwar was also taken to Alwar Thirunagari. The place where he was earliar installed could not be located due to growth of plants etc. for nearly 50 years.

It was Thiruvoimozhi Pillai who was ruling from Madurai as a regent, through his counter part at Cochin, brought Nammalwar from his hidden place, located the place where he was earlier installed, removed all the bush and wild growth, etc. and re-installed Nammalwar after renovating the temple.

On account of the monumental service by Sri Thiruvaimozhippillai the descendants of him are getting the honour everyday viz., the remnant of Thirumankappu worn by Nammalwar's idol after Thirumanjanam.

Thiruvoimozhippillai apart from renovating in the shrine of Nammalwar and installing him therein brought out the Bhavishyadacharya (*Ramanujar*) Vigramam shown to Madura Kavi and Nathamunigal by Nammalwar himself, and installed at Ramanuja Chathurvedi Mangalam an outskirt of Alwarthirunagari at a shrine west of Adhinatha temple. "Yathiraja Vimsathi" was sung in praise of this Ramanuja idol by Sri Manavala Mamunigal.

The Bhavishyadacharya Vighram dugout from the bottom of Tamarind tree by Sri Sailesa, was installed and consecrated in a temple an extension of Alwar Thirunagari called Ramanuja Chathurvethi Mangalam. It is also said that a scar sustained while digging out the idol is visible even now on the Bhavishyadacharya Vighraha Viz., Ramanuja's idol.

Traditional account say that Thiruvoimozhippillai, Thiruvoimozhi Acchan and Jananyacharya of Melkote were disciples of Nalurachchan Pillai at Melkote. Thiruvoimozhipillai gave a house to Thiruvoimozhi Acchan, a co-student, in the North Mada Street of Ramanuja's (*Udayavar*) temple. It is only that house where Ahobila mutt is situated at present. It is the great grand son of Thiruvaimozhi Achchan by name Srinivasachariar who became Van Satakopa Jeeyar to look after Van Satakopan Nandavanam at Thirupathi.

So the Ahobilam Jeeyar played no part in restoring and reinstalling the idol of Nammalwar at Alwar Thirunagari. He is called Adhi-Van-Satakopan only to denote that he is the first Van-Satakopa Jeeyar of Ahobila Mutt (*Adhi=Earliest*). This is also further explained in detail in this book.

The article says that Prataparudra came to the Jeeyar and enquired about the casting of Siva vighraha

turning to be that of Narasimha. It is nothing but a joke. Prataparudra belonged to a period 1310-1325 AD. Even according to the article this first Van-Satakopa Jeeyar was born only in 1379 AD. It shows the over enthusiasm of the writer.

Apart from the above actually the period of Adhi Van-Satakopa Jeeyar as given in TTD Vol. is 1457-1516 though we assign a later period to him. This is explained with Epigraphical references in the following pages.

The myth of Krishna Vighraha floating in a lake

Tondanur: It is not indicated where that Vighraha now is! and when it happened. We have not seen any reference to this in the history of Sri Ramanuja or elsewhere. It is also a mystery.

Then one Sri.K.N.Varadachariar (*Retd. Vice President*) writes in another book 'Aanmeekam" journal of April, 2000 that Lord Narasimha himself appeared as a Sanyasin before Srinivasachariar of Melkote and gave Thrithanda and Kashaya. He further states that these were obtained from the shrine of Ramanuja. He states that at this time Malola Narasimha came and sat on the hands of Van Satakopa Jeeyar. These statements are given without any authentication quoting references from inscriptions or accredited literary works. Perhaps Sri Ramanuja's idol was given white cloth (*for the second*

time) taking away his Kashaya and thrithanda! The first occasion was when he was to leave Srirangam forced by the Chola king.

Vijayanagar king Narasimha was born out of the grace of Lord of Ahobilam and was named accordingly. The king ordered Naganayaka to repair the old tanks at Ahobilam, which was carried out and an agrahara by name Chaken-Halli or Dwara Samudra was established in the year 1493 AD. (*Ref. Vol. III of Epigraphia Carnatica page 28*). **In this also there is no mention about the presence of any Jeeyar or mutt at Ahobilam at that time.**

It is said that Vyasatheertha belonging to 1524 AD was an younger contemporary of Srimannarayana Jeeyar the second pontiff of Ahobila mutt. He is said to have paid money to the Sripandaram of Thirumala for offering to Lord Srinivasa in Saka 1438 (1516 AD) as per inscriptions 60 GT and 106 GT. The year mentioned in these inscriptions is in agreement with the year of Second Jeeyar given in the TTD table as 1516-1528 AD. Vysa Theertha a Dwaitha Pontiff belonged to a period around 1524 AD the year in which he had paid some amount to TTD and constructed a mutt for him there.

On page 369 of the book "The Thirumala Temple" by Dr.N.Ramesan, published by TTD in the year 1999, it

is stated that Vyasa Theertha was an younger contemporary of Srimannarayana Jeeyar of Ahobilam.

(a) Sl.118-611 TT of Saka 1439 (*AD 1517*) in Vol.III refers to an agreement with Vengu Chettiar who donated some money for certain offerings. It states that a portion of Prasadam will be given to people who look after Van Satakopa Nandavanam and Mutt. This is the first inscription which says that prasadam will be given to a Desanthri looking after Van Satakopa Mutt on behalf of Sthanathar. The inscriptions does not mention the name of Jeeyar. Hence there was no Jeeyar at this time at Thirumalai Mutt or he must have moved to Ahobilam for the first time in 1513 AD as per details given below:

(b) Sl.27-51 TT of Vol.IV pertaining to Saka 1455 (*1533 AD*) also says prasadam to be given to people looking after Van Satakopan Nandavanam.

(c) Sl.171-68 TT for the year Saka 1463 (*AD 1541*) says that Prasadam will be given to the agent of Van Satakopan Nandavanam.

As per the above details there should have been some one as Jeeyar in the Sita Karagandam mutt attached to Vansatakopan Nandavanam at Thirupathi looking after the Van-Satakopan Nandavanam and he might have left the mutt sometime around the year 1513 AD.

This information is also confirmed by Koti kanyadanam D.Ramaswamy Iyengar of Rayadurgam while narrating the History of Ahobilam. He asserts that the first Van-Satakopa Jeeyar was installed at Ahobilam by the king Krishnadevaraya of Vijayanagar Empire in 1513 AD after the king returned from his victorious campaign against Oriyan king and others. The king also donated enormous jewels, money etc. to the temple of Narasimha at Ahobilam. Accordingly the Jeeyar looking after Van-Satakopan Nandavanam at Thirupathi must have been placed at Ahobilam as the agent or representative of the king to look after the maintenance and other affairs including performance of poojas.

Page14, Volume VI of “108 Divyadesas” written by Ms.M.S.Ramesh makes a reference on the installation of the Jeeyar at Ahobilam by Krishnadevaraya.

Like all other places Ahobilam was also a Thenkalai Divyadesam and hence a sanyasi looking after a Nandavanam at Thirupathi was made incharge of Ahobilam at that time. Thenkalai Thiruman can be seen at Ahobilam temple even now.

“Thirumalai Ozhugu”, a book which gives details of history of the temple at Thirumala-Thirupathi and daily routines carried out there states in page XXX (30), part-1 that Van Satakopa Jeeyar was looking after a

Nandavanam at Thirupathi like so many other Jeeyars and had his mutt on the bank of Rayar Tank.

Similarly the practice of so many Jeeyars or Sanyasis gathering at a particular place on a regular basis is found in some other holy places also. Some of them are indicated here for the information of the readers.

1. Page 119 of Epigraphia Indica, Vol.28 inscriptions of Somideva Maharaja at "Muchu Pallee" in Siddeswaram Taluk of Cuddappa District in Andhra Pradesh: "there was "Mudi Vangum Perumal Mutt" attached to God Narayana in Sermadevi, Thirunelveli district. Here a number of Thrithandisanyasis and paradesi (*desanthri*) Srivaishnavas were living". This information is also given in Madras Epigraphical Collections of 1916 Nos.667 and 675.

2. Same order of Sanyasis and some Ekangi Sri Vaishnavas were accommodated in Thirunadudayan Mutt attached to the famous Vishnu temple at Alagarkoil near Madurai. This information is given in Madras Epigraphical Collections of 1930 No.277.

3. Page 821 of Mysore Gazettee, Vol.II, Part II, Chapter XI, states that one Kalidasa appears to have founded an agrahara near Nagarjuna Sagar, "**Nagavavi**" (*modern Nagai in Nizam's dominions*) for four hundred

Brahmins, well versed in Vedas, and obtained a copper plate grant for it from King Jayasimha-II in 1063 AD. It had one Madusudana temple with rooms for accommodating Ekadandis, Thrithandis, Sanatata and other kinds of Brahamacharians, Hamsas and Parama hamsas and Mutts for study of Vedas and Vedangas in various "Sakhas" (சாலைகளுள்) Ruk, Yajus etc.

Thus similar to the above places at Thirumala also many Sanyasis were living performing Kainkaryas to Lord Thiruvengadamudayan staying in different mutts attached to Nandavanams.

An interesting and valuable information is noticed in the Diary of Sri Anandarangam Pillai a Dubashi of the then French government in which Military informations are mainly recorded. It says that a Sanyasin took a sum of 300 (*Three hundred*) pagodas from Thirupathy to Thiruvahendrapuram for Vaikasi festival there in 1748 AD April. Another note on 3.10.1749 also refers to this.

As money can be moved from one Thenkalai Devasthanam to another similar devasthanam it is inferred that Thiruvanheendra puram Temple was Thenkalai upto 1749 AD and only after that it might have been converted into Vadakalai or usurped by Vadakalais.

As the temple and Koil Kelvi Jeeyars and other

Jeeyars belonged to Thenkalai sect only, established by Sri Ramanuja and placed under Thirumalai Ananthalan. The Jeeyar shifted to Ahobilam also belong to Thenkalai sect only. It may be mentioned here that at that time there was no other sect in Srivaishnavas as Vadakalai. This fact is explained elsewhere while discussing about Kotikanyadanam Thathachariar who lived at a later period. It is accepted by Ahobilam Jeeyars themselves that there were many Thenkalai Jeeyars in the initial hierarchy of Ahobila mutt.

To further clarify the position about the period of first Jeeyar of Ahobila mutt the Archeological departmental records give us some valuable information. ARE 1920 states in its page 114 that the dates given for second and third Jeeyars by the mutt of Ahobilam viz., Srimannarayana Jeeyar and Parankusa Jeeyar seems to be wrong. It states that 1458 AD and 1473 AD were anti-dated by a cycle of sixty year period. Naturally the period of first Jeeyar also would have been anti dated by a cycle of sixty years at least.

Inscriptions shown as SI.No.373 and 374 of ARE 1919 say that "Kalappan Pattu" (கலப்பன்பட்டு), "Tarkolap pattu" (தார்க்கோலப் பட்டு) and "Pandri Thangal (பன்றி தாங்கல்) in Damarkottam of Chandragiri Rajya in Sholangipuram circuit were given as gift to Arulalap perumal of Kancheepuram by Parankusa Jeeyar-I in the year 1539 disciple of Srimannarayana Jeeyar of Ahobilam

for meeting the expenditure for fifteen Ekadasi days (15 days). This is dated in Saka 1461 (1539 AD) Makara month on Wednesday.

Sl.374 of ARE of 1919 is dated Saka 1452 and 1530 AD gift of gold by same individual for meeting the expenses on nine Ekadasi days and one Kaisika Dwadasi day during Chathurmasya (four months) after hearing Kaisika Puranam.

The Jeeyangar-II known as Parankusa Van Satakopa Jeeyar-II was a great religious teacher, author of several books and an agent of Alia Ramaraja at Ahobilam. Sadasivaraya presented the Jeeyar with a village named "Bhashyapuram" for repairing the temples around Kamala puram in 1553-1558 AD. This is detailed in inscriptions of Madras Presidency-II; 971 of No.579 and MER 1915 No.65. This Parankusa Jeeyar is said to be the uncle of Panchamatha Banjana Thathachariar. During 1565 AD King Sadasiva's daughter was cured by Parankusa Van Satakopa Jeeyar-II of Ahobilam.

The items of expenditure includes presentation of a cloth to Van Satakopa Jeeyar who read Kaisika Puranam.

Based on the above inscriptions the date of second and third Jeeyars of Ahobila mutt extends upto 1539 AD from 1516 AD. Accordingly as stated by Rayadurgam

Kotikanyadanam D.Ramaswamy Iyengar in the History of Ahobilam published in 1916 AD we may take that the Ahobila Mutt was established at Ahobilam in 1513 AD by the king Krishna Devaraya of Vijayanagar Empire and the first pontiff lived upto 1516 AD. Being the first Jeeyar he is called Adhi-Van-Satagopa Jeeyar (*Adhi-Earliest*).

In view of the fact that Van-Satakopa Nandavanam was very much available at Thirupathi and was looked after by a Jeeyar from a period even before the said birth year of the first Jeeyar of Ahobila mutt (*according to tradition 1379 AD*) the woven story that Van-Satakopa Jeeyar was invited and given Sanyas by Lord Narasimha himself could only be a story without any basis and authentication. **So it must be that the Jeeyar took Sanyas or Gadi at Thirupathi itself and was looking after the Sitakaragandan Mutt and Van Satakopan Nandavanam during which period he was installed as Jeeyar at Ahobilam in 1513 AD by Krishnadevaraya.** Though at Thirumala the Jeeyars were given full powers as Koil Kelvi, the Ahobilam Jeeyar was called only an agent of the Emperor.

Moreover, there is no inscriptional evidence to show that Adhi-Van Satakopa Jeeyar gave any donation to any temple as his successors did. Since he was a pontiff only for a period of three years from 1513 to 1516 AD perhaps there was no occasion for him to give any such donation.

INSCRIPTIONS AT AHOBILAM

The following inscriptions are available at Ahobilam temple. Some of them inform us that there were two Jeeyars concurrently.

1. On a slab at the entrance to Narasimha shrine. Ref. ARE 64 of 1915 - AD 1515.

Krishna Devaraya visited Ahobilam and presented a Necklace to God with pendants in Diamond, Emerald, Rubies etc. His Queen also gave a pedant to God. Villages and a golden plate with 1000 Varagans were also given. (*Ref.Mysore Gazetteer, p.1877 of Vol.II, Part III also*).

2. ARE 76 of 1915 - 1536 AD

Garudasthamba was set up in the street opposite to temple and money deposited for providing offerings to God, management was also placed with Purushothama Jeeyangaru Trustee of the temple.

3. Around the base of Central Shrine of Narasimha swamy. Saka 1458 - AD 1536: Mentions about Purushothama Jeeyangar.

4. On the west wall of Narasimhaswamy shrine. ARE 61 of 1915 Saka 1474 - AD 1552

Gift of Gurja Palli village for maintenance of Ramanuja Kutam in the shrine of Bashyakar by Kondaya Deva Maharaja.

5. Ref.65 of 1915 ARE Saka 1477- AD 1555 on the slab in court yard.

Parankusa Jeeyar was the trustee of Ahobilam temple who granted Dasavenda Manya to Abubala Raja.

(Note: This must be the Parakusa Jeeyar II who was pontiff during 1557-1572 AD who was the sixth Jeeyar in the line. The period of first Parankusa Jeeyar was upto 1541 AD only. Perhaps he was second Jeeyar inline during that period of fifth Jeeyar).

6. Ref.69 of 1915 Saka 1479 - AD 1557 On the third slab in the courtyard:

Here again two Jeeyars are mentioned. Ramanuja Jeeyar agent of Van Satakopa Jeeyar trustees of Ahobilam temple sold 5 (five) maruts (a land measurement) of land to Abubala Raja and the same was gifted back to the temple for offerings to be made to Nammalwar in Bargava street. Prasadam to be distributed to twelve Srivaishnavas.

7. Ref.79 of ARE 1915 of Saka 1480 - AD 1558:

Lease granted to some one by Parankusa Van-

Satakopa Jeeyar II (1557-1572) and by other trustees of the temple.

8. ARE 73 of 1915 Saka 1486 - AD 1564 on a second slab.

Parakusa Van Satakopa Jeeyar was assigned a piece of land in Lingam diva which had been presented by Narasayya for providing offerings to God.

9. ARE 67 of 1915 Saka 1531- AD 1609 on a slab right to the entrance in to the Kanju Kambam Gopura. Gift of seven gold gilt penacles for Big Gopura of Vira Narasimha temple.

10. ARE 75 of 1915 on the platform of the huge Jayasthambam.

Abubala Ranjam Garu purchased a piece of land from Van-Satakopa Jeeyar, Trustee of the temple and the sale money paid into the temple treasury.

11. ARE 70 of 1915 Saka 1506 - AD 1584:

Under the orders of King Sriranga-II and at the request of Van Satakopa Jeeyar; Venkataraju expelled muslim "vibrane" who had occupied the temple for seven years in alliance with Hamadevan. Chola Maha Raju received certain privileges for having drivenout them.

**INSCRIPTIONS AT THIRUMALA-
THIRUPATHI ON VANSATAGOPA
JEEYAR**

12. Ref.374 GT of TTD inscriptions:

Nandiala Narapathi Raja donated to TTD for offerings and authorised Vedantha Satakopa Jeeyar (*5th pontiff*) to receive prasadam.

Narappa Raja is the son of Narasingaraju and grand son of Singaraja. This Singaraja is the brother of Alia Rama Raja who lived in 1549 AD. (*Ref.SI.122-373 GT of Saka 1470 (AD 1549)*).

Nandiala Narasingaraja installed two Dwara palakas in Govindaraja Swamy temple at Thirupathi and donated for daily offerings, the villages (1) Gundipundi and (2) Pallipattu. As per the above 374 GT Vedantha Satakopa Jeeyar was alive in 1549 AD. Though this period is given in Table 88 of TTD as 1552-1558 AD perhaps he was Junior Jeeyar with his predecessor viz. 4th Jeeyar belonging to 1541-1551 AD as there were two Jeeyars at Ahobilam concurrently for quite some time.

13. SI.110-60 GT of TTD Saka 1438 - AD 1516:

This records gift by Srimannarayana Jeeyar disciple of Adhi-Van Satakopa Jeeyar of Ahobilam for offer-

ings on every "Jeyeshta" star being the birth star of Adhi-Van Satakopa Jeeyar and during Adyayanotsavam.

14. SI.114-106 GT, Saka 1438 - AD 1516:

Records gift by Sriman Narayana Jeeyar disciple of Adhi-Van Satakopa Jeeyar for offerings Dosai during Adyayanotsavam.

15. SI.178-275 GT, Saka 1450 - AD 1528:

Records gift by Sri Vaishnava disciples of Adhi-Van Satakopa Jeeyar for offerings to Lord Venkateswara and Govindaraja during Adyayanotsavam.

16. SI.101-280 GT, Saka 1415 - AD 1493:

Records donation for offerings to Narasimha Swamy and Prasadams to be given to Acharya-Van Satakopa Jeeyar who looks after the Nandavanam (*Garden*).

17. SI.83 of TTD 70 GT

In Vol.II mentions about Van Satakopa Jeeyar of Sita Karagandam Nandavanam having constructed a Verandah at the entrance of Govindarajaswamy temple at Thirupathi for Vasantha Mantapam on an earlier period and another person now constructed the roof for it in Saka 1407 (*1485 AD*).

18. Inscription No.280 TT at Sl.101 of Vol.II:

Indicates that the portion of Prasadam from the offerings made to Narasimhaswamy at Thirumala may be given to Van Satakopa Jeeyar and his successors in line. On perusal of the above quoted inscriptions it may be seen that Sl.13 above 60 GT states that gift was made in 1516 AD. for offerings on Jyeshtha star every month, the birth star of Adhi-Van Satakopa Jeeyar. We can infer that the first Jeeyar was no more then as his monthly birth star was remembered by making food offerings to Lord in 1516 AD.

19. Sl.139, 292 GT, Vol.3 of TTD, Saka 1442 - AD 1520:

Says donar's share of Prasadam shall be delivered to the Jeeyar managing the Vansatakopan Matham at Thirumalai. He is not called Van-Satakopa Jeeyar.

Then Sl.13, 14 and 15 were gifts made for offerings during Adyayanothsavams. This Uthsava is specifically celebrated during the month of Margali (*Dec.-Jan*) for ten days during day time called Pagalpathu and in continuation for Ten days during Erappathu. The final day of Erappathu festival is celebrated to denote the attainment of moksha at the feet of Lord by Nammalwar. This festival is intended for recitation of Divyaprabandam by Alvars which is important only to Thenkalai sect who give importance to Divyaprabandam. So it can be concluded

that Ahobila Mutt Jeeyar and the Temple belonged to Thenkalai tradition. It can be ascertained that upto the beginning of the 19th century the Vadakalai school did not accept celebrations of this festival as they did not give importance to the recitation of Divyaprabandham.

It can be quoted here that at the Varadaraja Swamy Temple of Kancheepuram there are some court cases in which some persons of Vadakalai Sect obstructed the conduct of this festival by grabbing and throwing the cloth called Parivattam tied on the head of Alwars as a mark of respect while Srisatakopam of Lord Varadarajaswamy (*symbol of lord's feet*) was being bestowed on the Alwars. The court had fined those who committed these types of disrespectful acts.

In SI.101-280 GT, Saka 1415 (*AD 1493*) it says that in 1493 AD a share of offering was to be given to Vansatakopa Jeeyar who was looking after the Vansatakopa Nandavanam. It shows that there was a Jeeyar looking after the Nandavanam in 1493 AD. But SI.6 (*1557 AD*) and 51 TT say that the Prasadam is to be given to Sri Vaishnavas looking after the Nandavanam indicating that there was no Jeeyar in 1533 AD and 1557 AD being incharge of Sita Karagandam Nandavanam.

It is clear from SI.16 and 17 referred above that Van-Satakopa Jeeyar was living at Thirupathi looking af-

ter Nandavanam as well as Sitakaragandam Matham established by Dannayaka and left that Matham at a later period. This Matham was established to offer Thirupponagam to Vira Narasingapperumal and Thirumangai Alwar shrine installed by Raja Raja III and to feed thirty two Srivaishnavas.

Adhi-Van-Satakopa Jeeyar started construction of Alwar Koneri Tank at Ahobilam during the period of Krishnadevaraya and it could be completed by his successor only during the period of Sadasivaraya. Inscriptions reveal the fact that he did not live for long years to ensure the completion of the work he undertook.

**VAN-SATAKOPA JEEYAR AS A DISCIPLE
OF VATHSYA VARADACHARIAR**

The title Brahmathantra Swathanthrar was held by the immediate disciple of Sri Vedantha Desika who studied along with Kumara Vedanthachariar. So it could be inferred that they were contemporaries with a marginal age difference. Since Kumara Vedanthachariar is stated to have born only after Vedanthachariar went to Srirangam in and around 1320 AD. Kumara Varadachariar was a contemporary of Sri Manavala Mamunigal. He is stated to have visited the court of Singama Nayadu and defeated Sakalyamalla an advaitin. Hence he should have lived in the year 1421 AD as revealed by Srirangam

plates of Madhava Nayaka referred to in Epigraphia Indica, Vol.XIII.

Accordingly there cannot be any truth in saying that Brahmathantra Swathanthrar was nominated by Lord Arulalapperumal himself as a Jeeyar in 1360 AD and his successor is Parakala Jeeyar. He was only disciples of Vedantha Desika. Moreover Prathivati Bayankaram Annan as well as Vathsya Varadachar son of Varada vishnu (*called Kadika sadam*) who in turn was the great grand son of Nadadurammal, also were disciples of Nainarachar and Brahmathanthra Swathanthrar. Incidentally Prathivati Bayankaram Annan became a disciple of Sri Manavala Mamunigal. Prathivati Bayankaram Annan, Sri Manavala Mamunigal and Kumara Vedanthachariar all lived during the period 1360-1450 AD. Sri Vathsya Varadachariar acharya of Adhi-Van-Satakopa Jeeyar as stated by tradition should have been alive upto 1475 AD.

Sri Manavala Mamunigal	...1370–1443 AD
Prathivati Bayankaram Annan	...1361–1454 AD

The T.T.D., vol.7, table 87 on page 57 shows that the title Brahmathanthra Swathanthrar is adopted by Ahobilam Jeeyars also. The table indicates Varada Vishnu as Guru of Brahmathanthrar and only after his name Adhi-Van-Satakopan is shown. A statement showing details these Acharyas who were contemporaries

though some of them were elder, some of them were younger. This Brahmathanthrar disciple of Varadavishnu is perhaps third person with that name.

Actually Vathsyavaradachariar-II should have been shown as acharya of Adi-Van-Satakopan. The reasons are explained below:

Vathsyavaradachariar was the son of Varadavishnu who in turn was the great grand son of Nadadur Ammal. He wrote "Yathiraja Vijayam" otherwise called "Vedantha Vilasam" in Sanskrit. The descendacy goes like this:

1. Sri Ramanuja
2. His newphew was Nadadur Alwan who otherwise called Varada Vishnu-I a great Vedanthic Scholar.
3. His son was Devaraja
4. His son was Vathsya Varadachariar alias Nadadurammal. His disciple was Sudarsana Bhattar or Sruthaprakasika Bhattar. Vedantha Desika was a young boy who attended his discourses with his uncle Athreya Ramanuja at Varadarajaswamy temple Kancheepuram.
5. His son was Sudarsanar.
6. His son was Varadachariar.

7. His son was Sudarsanar alias Varada Vishnu called Kadika Sadam.

8. His son was Vathsya Varadachariar-II a disciple of Brahmathanthra Swathanthar-II.

This Vathsya Varadachariar was the perceptor of 1st Jeer (*Adhi*) of Ahobila mutt. The information that Van-Satakopa Jeeyar took Sanyas as a bachelor is given in the book “Yathiraja Vijayam” authored by Vathsya Varadachariar which was translated into Tamil by Sri.U.Ve.Kannan Swamy of Sri Villiputhur, published in the year 1992. The original book was in Sanskrit. Vathsya Varadachariar had also authored another work by name “Vasantha Thilakabanam”. The following verses are given in his book about Varadachariar.

“காஞ்சீபுரே கவிரபூத் வரதார்ய நாமா
ஸுநு: ஸுதர்ஸனகுரோ: கடிகாசதஸ்ய
வேதாந்த தர்க்க விவிதார்த்த விசாரதக்ஷ:
வாத்ஸ்யோவஸந்ததிலகம் ஸபபாணபாணம்”

To assert that Van-Satakopa Jeeyar-I was the disciple of Vathsya Varadachariar Sri Kannan Swamy quotes the Thanian (*invocatory verse*) being recited in Ahobila Mutt viz. “நமோ வரத விஷ்ணவார்ய நயனாநந்த தாயிநே வாத்ஸ்யாய வரதார்யாய வாதி நீஹார பாஸ்வதே” and in Vazhi Thirunamam (*verse in praise of him*) says “பண்புடைய அம்மாஸ்தன் பரிவுடையோன் வாழியே”. This Vathsya

Varadachariar was called “Chinna Ammal”. TTD table 192 (*Vol. VII*) also states that Adhi-Van Satakopa Jeeyar was the disciple of Gatikasadam Ammal. But the table wrongly quotes Gatikachalam Ammal alias Varadacharia, son of Devaraja Perumal. Actually the name Devaraja Perumal was given only to the son of Nadadur Alwan.

Hence having decided that the first Van Satakopa Jeeyar (*Adhi*) of Ahobilam Mutt was the disciple of this Vathsya Varadachariar we may safely conclude that he would have lived in the second half of 15th century only and took Sanyas or Gadi during that period.

The above book “Yathiraja Vijayam” also called “Vedanthavilasam” authored by Vathsya Varadachariar was earlier published by Kumbakonam Vidwan Vajapeya Kotikanyadan Veeraraghava Thathachariar in 1902 AD printed at Vaideeha Varadhani Press in Grantha Lipi. In publishing this book Sri.U.Ve.Srivillputhur Kannan swamy was assisted by Sri.U.Ve.Srinidhiswamy, his son U.Ve.V.S. Karunakaran Swamy; Sri U.Ve.N.C. Narasimha chariar Swamy; Sri U.Ve.V.V.Ramanujam, Editor, Yathiraja Paduka who incidentally has given a foreword and blessed by Ahobilam Jeeyar and Srimath Andavan Swamigal.

To summarize we may conclude that Adhi Van Satakopa Jeeyar, the first pontiff of Ahobila mutt belonged

to a period in second half of 15th century and first quarter of 16th century only. i.e. upto the date of the second Jeeyar becoming the pontiff in 1516 AD at Ahobilam.

In view of the fact neither the Ahobila mutt nor the Jeeyar of it existed during the period earlier to 1510 AD it is proved beyond doubt that there is no connection with re-installation of Nammalwar by the first Ahobilam Jeeyar. The deforestation of Alwar Thirunagari and reinstallation of Nammalwar was carried out by Thiruvoimozhippillai around 1370 AD. This clearly proves that the resurrection of Nammalwar by the 1st Jeeyar of Ahobila mutt is only a story and not a fact. Hence the so called issuance of mudra to the 1st Jeeyar of Ahobila Mutt by Nammalvar is not borne by facts. On the basis of this concocted story, the Ahobilam Jeeyar cannot claim any special Honour at Alwar Thirunagari Adhinathar temple.

The District Gazetteer of Kurnool, AP has reference to an inscription of Western Chalukya king Vikramaditya-VI. It says Prolaya Vema, the king built steps at Ahobilam in 1346 AD. He was a descendant of a feudatory of Kakatia King. Even before that date Kakatia King Prataparudra (1295–1325 AD) had donated one Uthsava Vighraha of “Narasimha” to Ahobilam temple made of gold

which is even today being worshiped. This was cast at Rudravaram by Prataparudra. This information is also given by Dr.Ramesan, I.A.S., who was the Director in TTD. "Pradaparudrium" a poetic work gives the above information to us. **This information is also quoted by Sri Jagadeesa Iyer in his work "South Indian Shrines". He had given a photo of Trivallore temple with Thenkalai Thiruman in his book.**

INVASION OF AHOBILAM BY MUSLIMS IN 1675 AD

Ibrahim Qutubshaw, Sultan of Golkonda and chief Hande Malakkappa (*a Hindu feudatory*) invaded Ahobilam and occupied the temple for about six years. The sixth Jeeyar of Ahobilam was held in high esteem and respected by Mukunda Deva a Vaishnavite king of Orissa. This Jeeyar installed idols of Srivaishnavite Always as well as Sri Ramanuja at Puri Jagannath with Thenkalai Thiruman. This Jeeyar has authored a work known as "Vasanthika Parinayam". Hence the period of this Jeeyar coincided with the records of Pontiff of Ahobilam from 1572 AD.

This Jeeyar approached Emperor Sri Ranga-II of Vijayanagar who sent the army under the command of Venkataraju who defeated the muslims and the Hande chief. He restored the temple back to Hindus. As indi-

cated in "Further sources of Vijayanagar History", on page 306 Sri Ranga-II commanded Venkataraju to proceed against Mohamadans and expel them from there. Accordingly Venkataraju marched against Hande Malakkappa and his allies and defeated them in 1584-1585 AD. He then restored the shrines, reconstructed them. This commandant set up a Jayasthamba to mark the expulsion of invaders and the inscription on it bears the testimony to this day. It is actually a Garudasthamba. As per the inscriptions of Sri Ranga-II in Saka 1506 (1584 AD) the Jeeyar and inhabitants setup a stone inscription in favour of one Telugu Chola chief Kondaraju Venkataraja.

"Bala Bhaghavatham" by Konetinatha Kavi on China Thirumalaraja of Aravitti family says that Thirumala constructed mantapas, choultries and gardens for God of Ahobilam. He also constructed the Big Tank of Barghava Narasimha there in the year 1604 AD. (*Ref. Epigraphia Carnatica, Vol. VI*). Being a Guru of Sri Ranga-II and Venkata-I, Ettur Kumara Thirumala Thathachariar in the year 1586 AD was given certain previlages at Melkote and Ahobilam being a representative of the king. (*Ref. Madras Archeological Report 1915-16, para 74 APP 'C' No.2009 and 174. Vide Madras Ephigraphical Report, para 62 PB 564 & 565 of 1601 AD*). He is called Kotikanyadan Thathachariar, the Manager of Vaishnava temples at Kancheepuram.

Parakusa Jeeyar-II of Ahobilam is said to be the uncle of Panchamatha Banjanam Thathachariar. He was the author of "Narasimhasthava", "Prapathi Yoga" and other literary works. Kotikanyadan Thathachariar repaired



Archa Vighraha of Adhi Van Satagopa Jeeyar at Melkote

Thenneri lake and constructed twenty one sluices for the water to flow out in which Thenkalai Thiruman with Sanga Chakra are inscribed. This shows that he was only a Thenkalai. It is said that Brindvan of Adhi-Van Satakoopa Jeeyar in Melkote had only a Thenkalai Thiruman till recently. An archa vighraha of him wearing Thenkalai Thiruman as published in "Gokulam Kadair", Jan.2004, monthly journal is given here.

It can be seen from the picture that this Van-Satakopa Jeeyar is wearing his cloth upto his ankle in the same pattern as that of Thenkalai Yathis, where as Vadakalai Jeeyars will wear the lower garment only upto knee.

Another photo with four Jeeyars is also given. Two Jeeyars belonging to Vadakalai sect and two Jeeyars



Two Thenkalai Jeeyars wearing their lower garment or Antaria upto ankle and two Vadakalai Jeeyars wearing their antaria upto knee and keeping a towel in the armpit

belonging to Thenkalai Sect. It can be seen that two Vadakalai Jeeyars are wearing their lower cloth only upto knee level with **a towel in the armpit**, whereas the two Thenkalai Jeeyars are wearing **antaria** cloth upto ankle below the knee and having an upper cloth tied on the waist



Statue of Alagia Manavala Jeeyar at the third pillar of a mantap in Perundevi Thayar shrine, Kanchee. Thenkalai Thiruman also be seen on his face apart from Antaria upto ankle.

according to Thenkalai tradition and all of them are having Thrithanda in their hands.

Similar to it the figures of Alagia Manavala Jeeyar one in the second pillar of Thayar shrine front Mantap in Varadarajaswamy Temple, Kancheepuram facing North having Thenkalai Thiruman mark on the forehead and wearing his lower cloth antaria upto ankle in a standing pose with Thrithanda. Another figure in a sitting pose on the eastern side pillar of the same mantap wearing lower cloth upto ankle with Thridanda in his hand. Thenkalai Thiruman can also be seen on his forehead.

These pictures clearly indicate that these Mantapas were constructed by Alagia Manavala Jeeyar only. There is not even one Vadakalai mark there. Such figures are available in the 100 pillar mantapa also which speak of prominent role played by Alagia Manavala Jeeyar at Varadaraja Swamy Temple as Koil Kelvi.

This confirms our conclusion that even Kotikanyadan Thathachariar who is said to have constructed Kalyanakoti Vimana of Thayar shrine also was Thenkalai only. In case he had been a Vadakalai there should have been at least one Vadakalai sect mark in that Vimana. The portrait of Alagia Manavala Jeeyar with Thenkalai Thiruman on the forehead as well as Thenkalai Thirumans on the face of almost all the Gandarvas figuring on the top of each pillar

would not have been permitted by Kotikanyadan Thathacharyar. Apart from those, clear Thenkalai Thiruman flanked with Sangu and Chakkaram is prominently found on the last pillar on South Eastern side behind the small mantap where Lord with his consort seats on Maha Navami day.

Kotikanyadan Sri D.Ramaswamy Iyengar of Rayadurgam writes that the shrines at Ahobilam were managed by Jeeyangars personally as long as they were at Ahobilam. This fact is evident from the inscriptions of Sadasivaraya, Rangaraya and Venkatapathy Raya. The Jeeyangars were performing "Thiruvadanam" to Lord themselves. When they left Ahobilam and settled at Trivallore they left the management at the hands of an agent called 'Mudrakarta'. Originally this system of appointment of Mudrakarta was in vogue in Pushpagiri mutt - a Madhwa mutt. They appointed their disciples at various parts of India to their mutts as Mudrakarthas. But the Ahobilam Mudrakartas were appointed on lease who had no power over Brahmins. They had to: (1) collect fees from Dasaries and Baswas. (2) Collect certain fees during marriages and death ceremonies. (3) To arrange for conduct Samasrayanam and to arbitrate in religious and communal disputes among Dasavis with much judicial temperament and make decisions to be followed by those people.

When Jeeyangars went to south the Mudra Karthas were invested with duty of managing the temple at Ahobilam and their properties. Large amount cash was made available by the mutt for repairs were misappropriated. Even the Jeeyangar's sold some property including jewels and vessels of the temple. Some times mortgage was also done. Unlike other Jeeyangars who were appointed at other places by Sri Ramanuja this Van-Satakopa Jeeyar mutt seems to be a different one. Actually they were acting as agents of the King.

On the decline of Vijayanagar empire who did everything to nourish the temple and the mutt patronisation by kings didnot continue during the 2nd half of 17th century. Since Jeeyangars were trustees as well as agents of kings managing all the affairs of the temple they usurped the entire power to manage all the affairs for themselves. Inscriptions reveal that Jeeyars were selling lands of the temple and granting lease for themselves. A silver coconut of the temple was mortgaged to a Komutti at Rudravaram. This power made them unquestionable in matters concerning the temple affairs.

Perhaps the above position made easy the conversion of the temple into Vadakalai sect. It is said that there was not much difference in the initial stages between Thenkalai and Vadakalai. When Vadakalai sect was formed they were also given sanyas to look after the

Ahobilam mutt. This situation paved way for conversion. However, the religious practices such as celebrating Krishna Jayanthi, performing 'Sandya vandanams' following principles of prapathi etc. were similar for Thenkalai as well as Ahobila Mutt sampradaya.

Sri.U.Ve.P.B.Annagarachariar Swamy of Kanchee asserts that Ahobila Mutt Jeeyars wrote "Purushakara Mimasa", "Rahasyathraya Jeevathu" etc. granthas according to Thenkalai tenets only and established that they belong to Thenkalai Sampradaya only. (Ref. page 81 of "Sath Sampradayartha Saranidhi".)

A book "Rahasyathraya Jeevathu" authored by the Van-Satakopa Jeeyar (about 1550 or 1560 AD) asserts that it is only Sriman Narayana who can and will give "Moksham". His consort Sri Mahalakshmi will only recommend to Sriman Narayana to give moksha to a "Chetana". Her action is called Purusha Karathvam only, which is one of the fundamental tenets of Thenkalai Sampradaya.

Sri Mukkur Lakshmi Narasimhachariar also wrote in the same manner in his book "Kurai Onrrumillai". It may be noted that he was a Vadakalai preceptor of 20th century and very much devoted to Ahobila Narasimhar.

Since Trivallore temple was under the control of

Ahobilam Jeeyar it was easy for him to convert the same to Vadakalai. Sri.U.Ve.P.B.Annangarachariar Swamy of Kancheepuram states in one of his issues of "Ramanujan" a Monthly Journal that in 1835 AD, one Ranganatha Satakopa Jeeyar, for the first time recited "Ramanuja Dayapathram" a Vadakalai Thanian at Trivallore. For such recitation the Jeeyar and his agents were fined by the Dy.Collector H.Richardson on 25.8.1835.

Sri Mukkur Lakshmi Narasimhachariar Swamy in his book "Kurai Onrum Illai" quotes from Vedantha Desika's works that those who had darshan of Lord Ranganatha, those who are having darshan of Him, and those who are going to have dharshan of Him all should note his "Abaya Hastha" (*right hand palm*) and it is just turned to tell us that it is enough to prostrate before him only once, and only those who are not pure in their heart and do it as a formality should do it more than once. If one does it more than once it will mean that they have no complete faith in Lord Ranganatha.

He again says that while taking Lord in a Palanquin or other, mode of vehicle (*Vahana etc.*) during Sandhya period the Lord should not be placed at a mantapa without completing the procession just to perform "Sandhya Vandanam". Sandhya Vandanam is an ordinary duty and if it cannot be performed at the appropriate time

(*Sandhya period*) while performing Kainkarya to Lord it can be performed later with an excuse by giving one extra "Argya". But to stop the procession in order to perform Sandhya Vandanam is "Vikrama" a wrong act. This is exactly the basic principle of Thenkalai sect.

CONCLUSION

Having given many references from inscriptions and literary works, I would like to point out that it is proved beyond doubt, that, the Jeeyar of Ahobilam was installed only in 1513 AD. That there were many Jeeyars performing Nandavana Kainkarya at Thirumala to Lord Thiruvengadamudaiyan and Govindaraja. One of those Jeeyars was made the Jeeyar of Ahobilam. The mutt and Jeeyars belong to Thenkalai sect only upto the year 1800 AD. or approximately upto the period of 26th pontiff.

That as in the case of Varadaraja Swamy temple, Kanchee many Thenkalai Thirumans can be seen in stone pillars as a boss relief projecting from the normal surface at Ahobilam temple also.

Articles published in magazines like Gokulam Kadir, Alayam, Ladies Special, etc. had been quoted in this research work as they are articles contrary to established historical facts. These stories would gain currency and

corrupt the minds of lakhs of people. If not, contradicted quoting authoritative works. We do agree that articles appearing in such magazines are not authentic references to quote and refute. If proper rebuttal is not given these stories published in such popular magazines will become the basis for future Guruparampara stories by over enthusiastic followers/writers of these mutts.

To conclude, it is asserted that the temple at Ahobilam and the mutt belonged to Thenkalai sect upto 1800 AD. a fact abundantly established in this research work.

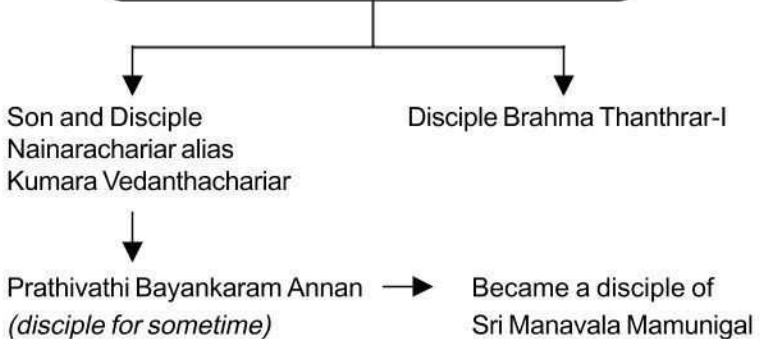


GENEALOGICAL TABLE
(as per Ahobila Mutt Guruparamparai)

Sriman Narayanan
Mahalakshmi
Ramanuja

Samasrayana Parampara	Grantha Parampara
Govinda (Embar)	Kidambi Achan
Parasara Battar	Ramanuja Pillan
Nanjeer	Srirangaraja
Nampillai	Kidambi Appillar
Vadakku Thiruveedippillai	Thirukkurugaipiran Pillan
Kidanmbi Sirangachar	Engalazvan
Kesavarya (Kali 4392)	Nadadur Ammal or Vatsa
Srinivasa (Kali 4423)	Varadachar of Kanchi
Kesava II (Kali 4443)	Vedantha Desika
Srinivasa (Adivan Satakopa Jeer AD 1437-1516)	Nainaracharya
- The founder of Ahobila Mutt	Gatikachala Ammal or Varadavishnu
	Brahma Tantra Swatantra
	Adivan Satakopa (1437-1516 AD)

Vedantha Desika (1268–1369 AD)



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