

Tanjavur
Brhadīśvara temple **The Monument and
the Living Tradition**

No. 1. Inscription on the north and west walls, upper tier

This inscription consists of nine sections engraved on the north wall and four sections on the west wall of the central shrine. It opens with a Sanskrit Ślōka, according to which it is an edict of Rājarāja, (alias) Rājakēsarivarman. The remainder of the inscription, like all the other Tanjavur inscriptions, is written in Tamil.

On the 20th day of the 26th year of his reign, Kō-Rājakēsarivarman, alias Rājarājadēva, issued orders, that the gifts made by himself, those made by his elder sister (viz., Kundavaiyār), those made by his wives, and those made by other donors should be engraved on the stone walls of the temple. A second important fact is that the Tanjavur temple had been built by Rājarājadēva himself, and that it was called after him Rājarājēśvara, i.e., the Īśvara (temple) of Rājarāja.

It also contains a list of gold images, vessels and ornaments, which the King himself presented to the temple of Rājarājēśvara and to the image of Dakṣiṇa-Mērū-Viṭaṅkar. Part of the gifts which the King made between his 23rd and 29th year were taken from the treasures, which he sized after having defeated the Chēra King and the Pāṇḍyas in Malaināḍu. A number of gold trumpets were presented to the temple, after he had assumed the titles of Śivapādaśēkhara, 'the devotee of Śiva, and of Rājarāja, 'the King of Kings'. A number of gold flowers were also presented after he had returned from the conquest of Satyāśraya.

Each of the gifts is stated to have been weighed by 'the stone called after Āḍavallāṅ.' This was evidently a standard weight for gold, made of stone and preserved at the shrine of the God Āḍavallāṅ, who was also called Dakṣiṇa-Mērū-Viṭaṅkar (Naṭarāja image).

