

A Socio-Cultural Analysis of Temple Functioning and its Significance in the Kāverī Delta Region (From the 9th to 13th Century C.E.)

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Abstract: *In medieval South India, temples stood at the heart of the socio-economic and cultural life of the people. Beyond their religious role, they functioned as centers of state and local administration, trade, Brahmin settlements, artisan activity, dēvadāsī traditions, and education. Temples also acted as intermediaries in local governance and were instrumental in establishing political authority. This study aims to explore how temples served as a medium of communication between the king, the state, and the ordinary people by analyzing various socio-cultural factors. Special attention is given to the Significance of temples in the medieval Kāverī delta region. Accordingly, the study focuses on temple administration in the region, emphasizing communicative functions rather than symbolic expressions. It also examines the hierarchical structure of communication as revealed through temple inscriptions. To support its analysis, the article cross-references primary sources, such as inscriptions, with secondary literature, enriching its descriptive, interpretive, and historical perspectives.*

Keywords: Temples, Medieval South India, Communication, Chōlas, Inscriptions, Brahmādēya, Kāverī Delta.

Temples are significant religious institutions that play a vital role as the center of all social and cultural activities of the people. The temples had been a significant strengthening factor in keeping the people united. It unites people for various ritual activities. The temples have given employment to many people, as they needed people for the construction, maintenance, and daily

functions. Apart from these, bringing people together for various events, including trade, entertainment, meetings, festivals, and worship, was essential. Additionally, *bhaktas* (devotees) and deities communicated through the temple. Over time, it became an excellent way for the people and the state to communicate, and it eventually called forth royal commands. Every social encounter starts with communication. It was a way for two or more people to send and receive information. The information covered the facts, theories, notions, attitudes, actions, guidelines, viewpoints, convictions, and feelings. With the advancement of technologies in communication systems during the twentieth century, the study of the communication process came to be in the academic field. However, compared to the present communication system, scholars have paid far less attention to the study of the ancient system of communication. From a wider angle, two distinct forms of communication occur in society: non-verbal and verbal. In medieval South India, these two communication technologies were also in practice. There were several examples of oral communication, mostly during battle and preaching in temples, and there were also plenty of written communication systems to be seen in inscriptions.

The temples of medieval south India are the center of all socio-economic and cultural developments. More than a religious center, it played multiple roles as an administrative center of the state and local chiefs, a trade center, a settlement area of the Brahmins, *dēvadāsī*, artisans, a center of learning, etc. Local administrations were carried out through the temple. It is also clear that the political control of the state was possible only through the temple institution. We come to know from epigraphic evidence that the medieval period was about land donation to temples, tax payment to temples, the exemption of taxes on land given to temples and Brahmins, and the transfer of land rights mainly among the members of the ruling class. The state intervened in the affairs of temples as well as local administrations. Local rulers often find State intervention as an administrative direction to levy certain taxes and pay them to the temple. Thus, the temple was a symbolic representative of the state. Even at the local level, the temple remained an effective means for the landlords and wealthy traders to exercise their power and legitimize their authority.¹

Historians studied the multiple roles of the Hindu temples and the role of the different social groups in temple affairs. When they mentioned the role of different social groups in temple affairs, they pointed out the significant role of Brahmins, landed groups, merchant communities, artisans, and temple servants. The daily routine of the temples, especially of the more prominent temples, gave constant employment to a number of priests, chariots, musicians, dancing girls, floweriest, cooks, and many other classes of servants. Periodic festivals were characterized by public entertainment such as wrestling contests, fairs, and educational events. Schools and hospitals were often located in the temple precincts, and it also served as the town hall, where people assembled to

consider local affairs or to hear the expression of sacred literature. The temple endowments, donations like animal wealth, ornaments, and other similar articles managed all the temple functions.

Role of the Temples in the Kāverī Delta Region

The Chōla empire was one of the most significant and powerful kingdoms in medieval south India, from the middle of the ninth to the twelfth centuries C.E. When the three modern significant powers of the Tamiḷ country – the Pallavas in the north, the Pāṇdyas in the South, and the Rāshtrakūṭas of the Deccan – were battling for hegemony in the ninth century, the Chōlas took control of the Kāverī delta region in order to fortify their position. Scholars first encountered the term 'choḷā'² for the Chōla country in the Second Rock Edict of Aśoka, which served as the epigraphic source.

The temple is referred to as 'ālaya' in the Āgamic writings, although '*vimāna*' and '*prāsāda*' or '*harmya*' were commonly used in Vaiṣṇava scriptures. The most often used phrase in early Tamiḷ country's inscriptions to identify the temple was '*kōyil*',³ which dated to the second half of the seventh century C.E. There were few terms which were originated from the Sanskrit, such as '*gṛha*' means 'house' used in Tamiḷ to refer temple. The name '*parameccuragaram*'⁴ for a Śiva temple was documented in the Kuram plates dating back to the late seventh century C.E. In this context, '*garam*' or '*graham*' these two terms denoted with temple, whereas for Viṣṇu temples there mentioned '*karam*' instead of '*garam*' such as '*viṅṅakaram*'. This was found in the text *Nālāyira Divyaprabandhaṅgam* in Tirumankai Ālvar's poem on the Vaikuṅṭha Perumal temple in Kāñchīpuram, as well as in the inscription of the early ninth century C.E.,⁵ by the end of that century the word was shortened to '*viṅṅakar*'.⁶

The mainstream research on medieval South India focused on the social, political, and economic conditions of the influential section of the people and the activities of the royal houses. Consequently, we know very little about the nature of socio-political norms and the intricate process that gives rise to communities and identities. The present endeavour aims to highlight how the temple served as a communication medium between the king, the kingdom, and the laypeople by examining socio-cultural factors. It also explores the Significance of the temples in the medieval Kāverī delta region. As a result, among other things, the topic of communication rather than what is stated through temples will be discussed, leading to the temple administration of Kāverī delta region. The temple inscriptions also allowed us to focus on a glimpse of the stratified communication process. This article adorns the descriptive, interpretative, and historical methods with a comparative examination of primary sources (i.e., inscriptions) and secondary sources to check facts. Different aspects of communication were manifested from various perspectives. Inscriptional records of the temple will be critically evaluated to

see how the process of communication and the temple communication was functioning. The Chōla kings issued many inscriptions in medieval Tamil country, bringing it to another level.

The inscriptions and copper plate grants (*tāmiraśāsanam*) were not only the witness of the royal commands but also played a role as a medium of communication, i.e., poetic and allegory style of the Tamil language, grammar, and linguistics development in the language, king's ideology, his religious beliefs, sometimes from inscriptions. From the copper plate grants, we may learn about the king's psychology and motivation behind any expeditions and about royal genealogy. The Chōla epigraphic records of the tenth century C.E., such as the Leyden plates, the Tiruvalaṅgadu copper plate grants of Rājendra Chōla I, the Anbil copper plate grant of Sundara Chōla and the Kanyākumārī inscription of Virarājendra Chōla are prominent, from where we get lot of information about the Chōla genealogy. Most of these inscriptions and copper plate grants were engraved on the temple's walls.

Establishing temples was not as important to the early Chōla rulers as declaring their lineage through memorials to distinguished ancestors.⁷ The magnificent style that preceded Parāntaka I was heroic in nature, with the ruler being considered imperial through *yajña* (sacrifice) instead of *dāna* (gift) in that particular region. Establishing, protecting, and contributing to temples were essential for creating and maintaining their religious authority under the Imperial Chōla ruler Rājarāja I. The king engaged in the customary dominion of the god by defending it and earning its honors. It was declared publicly by the temple structure that the king's ability to protect and donate to the deity created the king's sacred authority as well as a location for economic and ritual mechanisms that could focus a region's material resources and psychological attention on the king.⁸ Based on the inscriptions of Parāntaka I, his architectural accomplishments were linked to the construction of the Ādityeśvara temple at Toṇḍmanād in 941 C.E., which was referred to as a *paḷlipaṭai*⁹ for his father. To commemorate Āditya's natal star every year, the king had given the temple a gift of one hundred five *kaḷaṅcu* of gold and four thousand *kati* of paddy.¹⁰ The term *paḷlipaṭai* denoted the temple, which also appeared in inscriptions but not in ancient texts concerning temple construction in that particular period. The Āgamic tradition questioned the notion that temples were used for burial. Temples honoring fallen warriors by erecting hero stones depicting these men fighting appear to have more in common with an ancient custom than temples honoring the death of a mighty warrior monarch. The hero-stone tradition could also be attributed to the temple's location. For instance, as Āditya died at Toṇḍaimanād, the temple may have initially marked the spot of his death.¹¹ Herman Kulke¹² emphasized that during the reign of Rājarāja I, the kingship turned into the 'incorporative mode of kingship'.¹³ Hence, a boom in temple-making construction suddenly emerged in the Kāveri delta region during his reign. Kesavan Veluthat¹⁴ specified that the temple was part of a complex

phenomenon developed in the Kāverī delta region with various interrelated aspects. The most significant was the fertile soil of delta regions, suitable for cultivating wet crops. This soil richness depended on the flourishing Kāverī River, irrigation tanks, and other factors. Numerous *brahmadēya* settlements, significant and tiny, surrounded this expansive area and may also be connected to it. As a result, this process accelerated the breakdown of tribal culture. It led to the development of a caste system, in which temples gradually established connections between various social classes. The Bhakti movement emerged in Tamil Nadu and throughout southern India as caste ideology began to take hold of society.

In India, especially in Tamil Nadu, temples served as places of worship and had broader socio-cultural, political, and economic Significance. From ancient times, kings had granted land or religious endowments to promote religious institutions, a practice that peaked during the Imperial Chōḷa period. Indian history was significantly influenced by the complex, interdependent, and conflicting nature of the king's relationship with the deity and the country. During the Chōḷa times, the temples were built to communicate with their subjects. The enormous temple structures communicated topics to the state's people, including the valor of their monarchs, the state's economic situation, and cultural interests. The term '*vimāna*' was used metaphorically, and some scholars¹⁵ have connected it to *Dakṣiṇamēru* (southern *mēru*, a mythological axis of the earth), which was encircled by shrines representing the guardian deities of the four corners and the four cardinal directions. It was the initial step in connecting the temple to the universe – consequently, the deity and the temple universe identified with the king, who ruled the entire cosmos. The construction of temples near the banks of the Kāverī river was encouraged by the Chōḷas. According to scholars, all civilizations in the world were located close to a river basin. There was also the argument that river water is used in the consecration rites and for ceremonial washing. Regarding the ultimate purpose of purification, Van der Leeuw mentioned, "There is no more liberation from actual dirt in the sense of modern hygiene, but release from evil and the induction of good".¹⁶

The idea of the deity was used as a paradigm of royal authority and the king's "shared sovereignty".¹⁷ Indian rulers, the assertion of god's kingly nature became firmer, and the connection between the temple and a local dignitary's palace became more intricate.¹⁸ The royal ritual activated this heavenly analogy to access the riches and prosperity the gods could grant. The land distributions for temples represented a vast form of kingship where the king's power was reflected. Temple patronage was an indication of the communication system's means. Renowned historian D.N. Jha highlights how the temples became the landed magnates of south India.¹⁹ The Brihadīśwara temple in Tañjāvūr, along with the other temples in the Kāverī delta regions, employed around six hundred functionaries, as they were spread over multiple states. Thus, most of the Chōḷa rulers' workforce came from those conquered territories.

Chōliyaraiyan was described in an inscription from Paiyyūr Nādu as a 'ruler' (*vanniyar*) who had an assistant (*akampaiyār*) who was in charge of maintaining local security (*kāval kūli*).²⁰ The Chōlas initiated the tradition of gathering representations of the kings in temples. Almost all the temples in the Kāverī delta region have these portraits of the Chōla monarchs, which are worshipped²¹ as symbols of their authority at the time. Early medieval inscripational documents clarified that the king ordered the temple to be built to fulfill his subjects' desires.²² Temple's priest frequently performed *yajña*, or sacrifice, which was crucial for early medieval kings. A dependent and mutually exclusive symbolic cluster was constructed by the political and administrative authority of monarchs and the spiritual power of Brahmins.

Temple and Land Endowments

In medieval south India, the temple was becoming the landholder, banker, guild, etc.²³, but it also represented the state's economic advantage. The temple used to receive endowments from the royal houses and private individuals.²⁴ The terms *brahmadēya* and *dēvadāna*, which referred to the donation of land to the Brahmins and temple, respectively, also served as channels of communication between the monarch and his subjects and occasionally served as a means of delivering messages about the social structure of that era. According to the Tāñjāvūr inscription²⁵, Rājarāja I sent the villagers of *sabhā*'s settlement to the temple, Brihadīśwara, to serve as treasurers, accountants, and guards. These instances implied the *brahmadēyas*' grip over royal authority: the temples and the *brahmadēyas* integrated institutions in reorganizing the political system, economy, and society. The introduction of caste and ceremonial ranking in medieval south Indian society, including both *brahmadēya* and non-*brahmadēya* communities, was brought about by the granting of land grants (*dēvadāna* and *brahmadēya*). Thus, the practice of ritualistic presence during that period led to the formation of the castes in the medieval Kāverī delta region. James Heitzman²⁶ concentrated on how, in medieval south India, religious institutions evolved into urban morphology. In his paper, Burton Stein²⁷ underlined that the primary goal of a land endowment is to provide perennial revenue for a ritual function. In addition, land endowments to the temple offered a location for the investment of monetary endowments. Most of the temple's lands had been leased long-term or short-term. Comprehensive agreements were reached between the parties involved regarding the kind of crop to be grown and the portion to be given to the temple before the land was transferred on lease.²⁸ Therefore, the temple granaries provided food for the hungry and needy people. Consequently, the temple communicated its humanistic philosophy to the inhabitants in this way.

Temple conveyed moral and social lessons to the citizens of the state. In the context of the agrarian economy, the temples served as a conduit for further surplus extraction from the peasants. Furthermore, it accelerated the process of

tribal civilization's dissolution and reconstruction as a caste society. A few inscriptional pieces of evidence from South India²⁹ highlighted the new notion of caste proliferation in early medieval South India by mentioning the numerous types of temple personnel. All *pūjā* performances fall under the responsibility of the priestly class, which also holds a prominent position in society as a mediator for the god and the populace. The scholarly Brahmins were given lands as favors, and occasionally, they were admitted as members of local assemblies, particularly *bhaṭṭas*, and according to R.S. Sharma,³⁰ Priests, and other musicians had been praising the king's services since the time of the *Vēdas*. In the later portion of *Atharva Vēda*, the king was referred to as a god who transcends death. The priestly community enjoyed most of the temple's *dakṣiṇā*, ritualistic activities performed by temple authorities. At Tiruvallam, the *Śivabrāhmaṇas* who performed *pūjās* to the deity were rewarded with five hundred *kāḍi* of paddy.³¹ Several epigraphic references from the ninth and tenth centuries C.E. mentioned Brahmin villages, including *pārppanachēri*, *vāmanachēri*, and *nāranachēri*.³² The Brahmins legitimized their authority in politics and social domination by controlling the land and the administration of the temples through the *brahmadēya* settlement. There were only a few examples from the inscriptions of the tenth century C.E.; the term *ālunṅaṇam*³³ referred to the groups in charge of managing or ruling the temple.

K.A. Nilakanta Sastri³⁴ considered the *alunṅaṇam* as an executive body of *ūr*. This was undoubtedly a Brahmin-dominated group; in contrast to the two village bodies, *ūr*, and *sabhā*, the members of *ālunṅaṇam* are frequently mentioned by name when donating or purchasing and selling land in their individual capacities. An inscription at Uttiramērūr³⁵ dating back to 1002 C.E. mentioned the *ālunṅaṇam* connected with many *chēris* of large settlements. Epigraphs mentioning temple officials date back to the early Chōla period. At that time, Śiva temple transactions were conducted under the appellation *Chaṇḍēśadēvar*. Subsequently, it was believed to be the protector of Śiva temples. Nonetheless, the same name appeared in the inscriptions of Parāntaka I³⁶, indicating that these organizations were intimately involved in overseeing or managing temple operations.

Temple Functionaries and their Role in Temple Affairs

The temple could be described as a magnificent affluent religious center in south Indian society. Many social groups were involved in ritualistic and non-ritualistic activities in the temple. According to Rajan Gurukkal³⁷, the increase of temple officials, including Brahmins, priests, artisans, craftsmen, etc., was the primary cause of the proliferation of *Jāti*. Thus, the temple played a crucial role in forming society's hierarchy and stratification. During the nineteenth regnal year at Tañjāvūr temple, Rājarāja I installed the image of Tirunāvukkarasār, a Tamil scholar, and announced upkeep funds.³⁸ In the inscription, we find references to several functionaries, including *kōyilar*.³⁹ The committee overseeing

the temple's sanctum sanctorum was known as *agaṇaliṅgaiyar*, consisting of a few authorities.⁴⁰ In addition to the priestly class and Brahmins who built the temples, a few artisan communities also developed the temple economy in the Kāverī delta region. The five leading artisan communities in south India were known as '*pañcha kammālār*' or '*añchuvannam*';⁴¹ they were *taṭṭān*, *kaṇṇār*, *kollan*, *taccan*, *śilpī* or *Kal taccan*.⁴² An inscription during the reign of Vikrama Chōla dated 1123 C.E. from Thāñjavūr mentioned that the inscription, which concerned a land grant to the temple by the king, was engraved by 'greatest of masons, our temple *āchārī*'.⁴³ The most detailed *praśasti* on the community of artisans, including their names and ancestry, came from the Chingleput district, which dated back to 1018 C.E., during the reign of Rājendra Chōla.⁴⁴ According to Kulōtunga III's inscription, the deity Tiruvannāmalai Udaiyanāyanār had leather footrests produced by *Chakkili*⁴⁵ and *Chakkiliar*,⁴⁶ who were mostly cobblers. The phrase '*pañiceyyā penṭukaḷ*'⁴⁷ was observed in the inscription during the Chōla period, referring to women who serve in the temple. *Dēvadāsī* was regarded as an honorable in society. According to an epigraphic document, Iravi Varma gave the Sucindram temple land to introduce a *pūjā* and other rites. The property was dedicated to the Perumal Rāyār, a well-known *dēvadāsī* of that time.⁴⁸ Thus, the temple expressed the roles that temple women played in society as well as their responsibilities (i.e., '*vrata*' and '*dharma*').⁴⁹ Other female functionaries were associated with the temples besides *devadāsī*. A late twelfth-century inscription from the Tirunelveli district of Tamil Nadu speaks of a woman who worked in the Pāṇḍya kings' palace. She installed an image of the goddess in her daughter's honor and gave her jewelry and other gifts to encourage worship.⁵⁰ She conveyed her daughter's name to the next generation with this inscription. She used the temple as a communication channel and became renowned or immortal in the eyes of her daughter and granddaughter.

The temple officials were called *kōvil adhikariḡal*⁵¹ and were directly involved with temple management. Generally, the *kōvil adhikariḡal*, who were members of the royal family, were conceived as a vital link between the central government and local government for revenue collection. They were also involved in settling the temple's land disputes. A Tiraimur inscription of the Chōla period speaks about a royal official called *adhikariḡal* and their role in settling the problems of land traction. From the inscription, we learn that the royal official argued that Tiraimur was a *kudiṇikki dēvadāna*, where the cultivators, those who were attached to the land, were being transferred to the temple.⁵² Another inscription speaks of the rights of the royal officials, and they found irregularities in the temple expenses. After finding irregularities, the *adhikariḡal* ordered that a larger scale of expenses be adopted, given the higher income he found was available to the temple. The implication is that the local bodies participating in the temple's management found their role as temple overseers profitable regarding certain redistributions of temple revenues or the temple's share of local agricultural production.⁵³ The royal officials periodically supervised the

activities of the temple assembly.⁵⁴ There is evidence recorded in the Tiraimur inscription making the inquiry into temple endowments and the revenue and expenses of the temple.⁵⁵

The temple officials were also involved in the investigation of temple lands. An inscription of Parāntaka II records that a royal official examined the disposition of a plot of land at the village of Vilaṅgudi, which formerly had been held in trust by the combined assembly of the Tiruvidaimarudūr temple. The official determined that the temple showed recommence its possession of this land, which was also being claimed by a garland maker.⁵⁶ Kenneth R. Hall states that even in this instance, royal intervention, possible because of the local institution's inability to resolve their problems successfully, provided a foothold from which future kings could claim the right to interfere in local affairs.⁵⁷ The temple *adhikāriḡaḡ* engaged in the supervision of the temple affairs, auditing temple accounts, and redistribution of temple resources not only in the core region but in remote parts of the kingdom, would also establish that they provided the main political links between the king and the locality.⁵⁸

The royal officials attended assembly meetings of the temple as representatives of the king but did not directly participate as voting members in the assembly decisions.⁵⁹ One such meeting was attended by an official who was said to represent the interest of a queen of Uttama Chōḡa when the assembly was accounting for gifts.⁶⁰ During the same period, a royal official met with the assembly to inquire about the religious endowments of lamps, accounting for the rewards of gifts inscribed on stone and kept in the temple's underground cellars during temple renovations.⁶¹

Religious Performers of the Temple

The emergence of the temple as a focus center of all socio-cultural activities in the Kāveri delta region during the time of Chōḡas, *Patikam* singing symbolized a regional cultural form. The term 'chanter' or 'ōtuvār' means *patikam paduvaar* in Tamil.⁶² The three main ways that the people were supposed to learn the text of *Tēvāram* were through the saints themselves – through their schedules – the *patikam* singers in the temple, and the cult leaders – who set up *maḡhas* and schools for communication.⁶³ The hymns of Śiva pushed the whole ideological temple movement by the Chōḡa kings. The Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava saints built a sophisticated network of holy sites throughout these times that would grow in number and political power through royal patronage and chanting assistance. The saints were drawn from every caste, including Brahmins and untouchables.⁶⁴ The devotees considered *Periya mēḡam* to be the auditory embodiment of the deity, rendering the deity's presence immediate and essential.⁶⁵ A number of inscriptions discussed the employment of specific musicians and the payment procedure for them. For example, it was stated that the *emperumāṅaḡiyār* (temple dancer), the *naḡtuvār* (dancing master), and the *nāḡasara* players were to receive an equal amount of money (two *paṅam*).⁶⁶ Thus, divine communication among

gods, chanters, musicians in temples, and followers emerged. Throughout the entire procedure, a general statement about temple musicians and ethnomusicology at this time was also established based on epigraphic references.

Discussion and Conclusion

The primary sources of the Chōla period were ample inscriptions engraved on the stone walls of temples, recording the donation of lands, money, agricultural produce, funding of temple rituals, and much more. Fifty-five long inscriptions from the period of Rājarāja I addressed the costs of the Thāñjāvūr temple and the connections with the surrounding countryside that facilitated its rich ritual activities. The king was shown in paintings on the temple's interior walls as the foremost rank of the devotees who adorned Lord Śiva. The king's image was still the main object of adoration at the yearly temple celebration. Thus, the temple symbolized the king's continued rule over the area. The religious institutions manipulated the political and economic structure of the Kāverī delta region. The 'voice of hymns' became the 'voice of stratification' in medieval South Indian society. The *dēvadāna* lands procured dominance over the *brahmadēya* lands. Thus, the decline of Brahmins' influence was significant during this period of growth in the power of crafts and mercantile community. The temple linked to man's physical world and god's divine world and compared the territory with the cosmos. Based on the above discussion, this may be a preliminary observation that the temple inscriptions, the temple songs, and the temple functionaries were addressed to the society about information, ritual beliefs, political legitimization, the polity of economy, and the cognitive history of that particular period. Eventually, the temple had its aesthetic beauty and significance in the socio-political scenario. It was one of the prominent examples of modes of communication in medieval south India for developing, consolidating, transmitting, and conserving the legacy of culture.

Further, the temples of medieval south India were the great gifts of Brahmanical spirituality to the society. Under the royal patronage of various dynasties, the medieval south Indian temples began gradual expansion and adoption, attracting the populace's imagination and benefactions from them. Due to the royal patronage, the temples grew both vertically and horizontally. This phenomenal expansion necessitated an increase in the persons who administered and managed the temple affairs. Many people are involved in temple affairs through the endowments, maintenance, and administration and as temple devotees. We can find frequent inscriptional evidence in the medieval Tamil country, which gives more information about temples and their activities because most inscriptions dealt with temple affairs. A more important reason is that the temple mobilized resources of land and money only to the state and was, therefore, capable of financing the state as well as the uniting force of the society. As rightly said by K.A. Nilakanta Sastri,

“As a landholder, employer, and consumer of goods and services, as bank, school, and museum, as hospital and theatre, in short, as a nucleus which gathered round itself all that was best in the arts of civilized existence and regulated them with the humaneness born of the spirit of Dharma, the medieval Indian temple has few parallels in the annals of mankind.”

Thus, it is very clear that the temple administrators, artisans, servants, and other temple functionaries co-operated in the all-temple affairs, and it shows that there was collective responsibility and cooperative endurance. The people involved in temple affairs and services, from the chief priest to the sweeper and washer man, are considered ritual tasks and services.

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