

## Śrī Padmanābhasvāmī Temple : Its Genesis Based on Legends, Epigraphy and History : A New Look

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The Śrī Padmanābhasvāmī temple has become the richest temple of the globe after the discovery of some secret vaults consisting of diamonds, rubies and jewellery worth about eight lakhs crores in terms of heritage value and one and half lakhs crores in terms of material value.<sup>1</sup> One will be astonished to see that the temple record office consists of 30 lakhs of cadjan records written in ancient script locally called *kolezhuthu*. A historiographic pilgrimage to the temple record office reveals three categories of records, viz., records of pre-Mārtaṇḍa Varmā period,<sup>2</sup> Mārtaṇḍa Varmā period (1729-1758) and post-Mārtaṇḍa Varmā period. The pre-Mārtaṇḍa Varmā period cadjan leaves educate us regarding the genesis and growth of the temple side by side with shedding light on the political history of the state of Travancore. The present paper is an attempt to trace the genesis and growth of the temple based on epigraphical pieces available in the temple inscriptions besides local legends. This epigraphical pilgrimage add much to the early phase of its history and culture.

The temple records testify to the fact that the temple had extensive landed properties known as *Śrīpandaravakai* estates, administered by the temple committee known as *Ettarayogam*.<sup>3</sup> For the collection of taxes and cesses from the temple estates that lay in several parts of the state, officers were appointed by this temple committee to positions like *Saktimukhom*, *Avarodha Saktimukhom*, etc. For example a daily service like *Vīramārtaṇḍan pūjā* was instituted in the temple from 30-1-721 (1546) out of the revenue or income from Maranchery desom in *Caturvedimaṅgalam*. For appointments like those of the Pañcagavyathu Nambi, Tekkedam santi members of the *Ettarayogam* summoned old records to verify the precedents or conventions. King Balarāma Varmā (1798-1810) removed Jayantan Sankaran Namboothiri from the *Dīwānship* based on old conventions according to which officials were dismissed due to popular and public demands.<sup>4</sup>

John Munro when he became the Resident settled the dispute for the throne in between Kerala Varmā, the *Elaya Rājā* and Rānī Gaurī Lakṣmī Bāi based on the records produced by the *Ettarayogam*. In other words the temple records, also known as

*Mathilakom* records, proved to be the largest collection of records shedding light on temple history, culture, etc. not to speak of the history of the state of Travancore.<sup>5</sup> Fifteen inscriptions are discovered from the temple and most of them are in *Kolezhuthu*, some in Tamil written in Tamil characters and some in *Cholagrantha* in Sanskrit.<sup>6</sup>

## Literary Sources

The literature in Malayalam, Tamil and Sanskrit is vast in referring to the Śrī Padmanābhasvāmī temple. *Syananduraspurāṇasamuccaya* in Sanskrit is perhaps the earliest among them. The works of Swati Tirunal (1829-46) form the latest significant literary composition of rare erudition. The *Līlātilaka*, the *Rāmakathā*, the *Mayūrasandeśa* of Udayana, the *Rukmiṇipariṇaya* and *Pradyumnābhyudaya* of Samgramadhira (1299-1314), Lakshmidasa's *Śukasandeśa*, *Haṁsasandeśa*, *Acyutarāyābhyudaya*, *Bālamārtaṇḍavijaya* of Devarāya, the *Sītārāghava* of Rāmapanivada, *Syanandurapuravarṇana Prabandha* and *Padmanābhaśatakam* of Swathi Tirunal, *Kārtavīryaprabandha*, etc. form important Sanskrit works that shed light on the temple history or its rituals and sacrifices.<sup>7</sup>

Of the above works *Syanandurapurāṇam* is very vital as a source. The present day capital of the State of Kerala is Tiruvananthapuram or Trivandrum. It was originally called *Tiru Anantapuram* or the sacred city of Ananta, the serpent god. It is also called as *Anantaśayanam* after the temple of Lord Padmanābha who is reclining on Ananta – the serpent lord. The name *Anantapuram* too was in vogue for sometime as is shown by the phrase *Tiru Anantapuram tankum anantane*, i.e. the sacred city where Ananta is residing or reclining.

In all the early usages the name of the place is *Anantapuram* or *Śrīanantapuram* or *Tiruanantapuram*. Puram means city. Śrī or Tiru simply means sacred as in Tirupati, Thirumala, Trippunithura, etc. In Prakrit Śrī Anantapuram would be pronounced as Śrīanantapuram, the compound of which is *Syānandurapuram*. In Sanskrit literary usage the place is invariably called *Syanandurapuram*. In the Padmanābhasvāmī temple stone records the name of the temple as *Syanandurapura* in Sanskrit. But in the Malayalam or old *kolezhuthu* cadjan leaves, the place is called Tiruvananthapuram which is the local form of *Syanandurapuram*. These names are interchangeable and surely refer to the city of Anantapadmanābha or Mahāviṣṇu reclining on serpent king Ananta.

Nammālvāra one of the prominent Āḷvāras refers to Tiruanantapuram and not to Padmanābha. Some believe that Nammālvāra belonged to the 8<sup>th</sup> century CE and to some he lived in the 9<sup>th</sup> century. There was a time when Nammālvāra was assigned to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE.<sup>8</sup>

In the *Acutarāyābhyudayam* of Rājanatha Dindima there is a reference to the temple of Anantaśayanam. After the battle of Tamraparṇi, the commander of Vijayanagar forces Sālukarāja Tirumala is stated to have visited the temple on his way to Rameshwaram. A Vijayanagar crown is supposed to have been listed as a dedication to the temple.

Dr. S. Krishnaswami Iyengar and Dr. Venkitaramayya identify Anantaśayanam with Anantapadmanābhasvāmī temple of Trivandrum.<sup>9</sup>

According to S. Sanku Iyer, there is mention of the temple in *Varāhapurāṇam* of the 6<sup>th</sup> century CE. In any case the antiquity of the temple could be traced to a period anterior to 6<sup>th</sup> century CE.<sup>10</sup>

There is also a work entitled *Śayanandura Purāṇasamuccayam*, a Sanskrit poem that extolled Lord Padmanābha. It is a manuscript dated CE 1168 but it is silent about Vilwamaṅgalam Svāmiyar or Divākaramuni – legendary figures. There is also no mention of Anantankaṣu or forest of Anantan which is behind the western side of the temple.<sup>11</sup> The temple is well fortified from the days of Mārtaṇḍa Varmā and its four sides are known as East Fort, North Fort, South Fort and West Fort.

Three kilometers from the West Fort is a conch *tīrtha* in the sea coast (Saṅghumukhom) where Lord Padmanābha is given a holy bath after festivals (*Āraat*). The conch mark is the symbol of the Travancore royal family and this symbol can be seen in most of the palaces or forts, even in letterheads. In *Bālamārtaṇḍa Vijaya* – a poem in Sanskrit – King Balamārtaṇḍa Varmā is believed to have performed a *māghasnānam* in the conch *tīrtham*.<sup>12</sup>

The crowded city of Tiruvanantapuram is a city of hills like Rome. Not far away from this capital city is the Agastyakūṭa peak about 1850 meters above sea level. It is believed that Saint Agastya propounded the first grammar of Tamil by sitting in this hill. The hill is believed to be the Podiyill Hill well known in Tamil literature. The Mookkunnimala (*mala* means hill or mountain) is another hill carrying the land-slopes to the west in a series of hills. The regular coastline with a sea-port – now only a fishing centre – attracted foreigners to the city through the harbours of *ophir* (Poontura), *balitha* (Varkala) and Vizhinjam. The Karamana and Killiar rivers water the city. Even for the temple, a flower garden was maintained known as Nandavanam (Palayam). Lakṣmīdāsa's *Śukasandēśam* (stanzas 40-41) has treated the capital city as a seat of prosperity, more prosperous than the abode of the Lord, the most comfortable place to live in. *Anantapuravarṇana* (lines 20-26) and *Unnunīlisandēśam* (lines 6-10) are noted for details about the natural beauty of the city.

## Historiographical Pilgrimage

The Padmanābhasvāmī temple records or cadjan leaves are countless like its wealth. T. K. Velu Pillai the well known editor of the *Travancore State Manual* wrote thus, “the number of bundles in the Mathilakom (fort) alone is nearly three thousand, each containing over thousand cadjan leaves”. This would mean that about 30 lakhs of records are there to be re-written or deciphered about the temple, its genesis and growth over the last 1000 years.<sup>13</sup>

The earliest record preserved in the temple is dated 1336, i.e. 7<sup>th</sup> Makaram (Feb) 511 Kollam Era issued during the reign of Vīra Rāma Mārtaṇḍa Varmā, Prince of Desinganad.<sup>14</sup> This is the earliest of the records available in which the following persons were present for the committee or board which developed into the *Ettarayogam* referred above. The members present were:

1. Muttavila Mahadevan Dhananjayan
2. Atthiyara Śrīdharan Narayanan
3. Neythasseri Kaman Narayanan
4. Koopakara Dathan Padmanābhan
5. Athiyara Divakaran Kumaran
6. Karuva Devan Mathevan
7. Sri Karyam Pokannankuli Aniruddhan Aniruddhan
8. Adhikarapadartham Mampallikandan Narayanan
9. Marayathottathu Sankaran Sankaran
10. Śrī Karanam Keralan Kumaran
11. Karanakanakku Iravi
12. Pandarakkanakku Raman Chandran.

The above 12 persons in the presence of Śrī Sadānandāanubhūtipilarar Tiruvati (Prince) recommended to adopt Narayanan Narayanan and Narayanan Kṛṣṇan to Poovapally royal family by paying customary *dakṣiṇā* or *adukkumathu*. This recommendation was accepted by the Prince or King of Desinganad, viz. Vīra Rāma Mārtaṇḍa Varmā.<sup>15</sup> This cadjan leaf clearly testify to the establishment of maintaining records for anything and everything held in the temple of Lord Padmanābha. It is also stated that the copy of the order was given to each of the members present. Each one got *dakṣiṇā* from the newly adopted persons.<sup>16</sup>

The adoption was made to retain the lineage of the family. This is a clear case wherein temple accounts or details of administration were well maintained in the Matilakom Record Office of the Padmanābhasvāmī temple from medieval days.<sup>17</sup> “The object, ‘according to A. G. Menon’, is to preserve the procedural details relating to the functioning of the temple”. Every act or deed of even little importance used to be recorded in the correct and infallible manner with a view to furnishing guidance for the future.<sup>18</sup> Recording of details and careful upkeep became part of the state administrative apparatus consequent on the revenue reforms initiated by Mārtaṇḍa Varmā. Even in removing the Jayantan Namboodirī from the Dīwānship based on popular demand and the appointment of Rānī Lakṣmī Bāi in 1811 setting aside the claims of Kerala Varmā are two recent instances in which old records/precedents were consulted.

Business done in taluk offices (*Maṇḍapathinvaathils*) and village offices (*Chāvaḍis*) were again recorded at length and in depth.<sup>19</sup> The land revenue records for the last one hundred years was taken into account for augmenting taxes. The revenue settlement was made in 1783-84 and all papers related to this were brought to the Padmanābhasvāmī temple and kept safely, inside the Mathilakom Record Office. This adds to the credibility of the Mathilakom records besides telling us its historical significance as primary and authentic records or data to tell us about the precedents and conventions of Travancore State and in particular of the Śrī Padmanābhasvāmī temple.<sup>20</sup> It was Vīra Iravi Iravi Varmā, the senior prince of Trippappur who set up the first record office in the Padmanābhasvāmī temple.<sup>21</sup>

Earlier it was in the *Mahābhāratakoṇam* area that the *Ettarayogam* used to meet and the record office was set up nearby.<sup>22</sup> Vīra Iravi constructed a new record keeping office in the southwest called *Kanakkupura* and it was there until Mārtaṇḍa Varmā's ascendancy as the absolute ruler.<sup>23</sup> The temple record office had a team of officials such as the Karana Kanakkan, the Śrī Pandarakanakkan, the Achara Kanakkan, etc. In 1505 the Karanakanakkan was Adichan Perumal, Acharakanakkan was Iravi Govindan and Karuvanakanakkan was Kannan Ayyappan. The Karana Kanakkan wrote down the proceedings and transactions of the *Ettarayogam* and other items related to the general administration of the temple estates and establishments. He was directly attached to the Yogam.

The Pandara Kanakkan wrote and preserved the records of the day to day functioning of the temple, accounts of the temple treasury, maintained accounts of the revenue collections and expenditure and recorded all expenses of other establishments. A body of assistants called *Kizhkanakku* (lower category of accountants/record keepers) assisted the above two officers. Even for slightest flaw they were answerable and the posts were more or less hereditary and as such innocent successors were even penalized for the commitment of omissions and commissions of their ancestors. Naturally the record and account system of the Padmanābhasvāmī temple was utmost efficient, flawless and truthful. Even in the *Ettarayogam* minutes book the Karanakanakkan and Pandarakanakkan entered their names and signed so as to locate the responsibility for all things staged or done.

By 1737 Mārtaṇḍa Varmā suppressed all rebellious elements and even *Ettarayogam* lost its age old power and authority and consequently Record Officers also lost their pristine glory. By 1750 Karanakanakkan and Pandarakanakkan disappeared from temple registers and in their place came Kanakku Sankaran Mārtaṇḍan who signed as *Melezhuthu* (Controller of Records writing and accounts) of the state of Travancore including the Padmanābhasvāmī temple. Under Mārtaṇḍa Varmā the temple record office was demolished and a new one set up outside the temple as we see today (Regional Archives, Trivandrum).

The record offices inside the temple were often set to fire by rebellious elements and consequently some records were consumed by fire. In order to prevent such a dismal situation, the record office – Mathilakom – was set up outside the temple. Basically

the records were all written in Malayalam in *Tekkan* style (southern Malayalam). This *Kolezhuthu* was used but Tamil characters in Tamil too had been in use.

## Epigraphical Sources of the Temple

Taking into account the total area of the temple of Lord Padmanābha the number of inscriptions proved to be not much. But some of them are rich in giving clues to certain vital issues. Altogether fifteen inscriptions were seen engraved inside the temple.

1. In one of the inscriptions on the southern side of the front *maṇḍapa* close to the *Ottakkalmaṇḍapa*, there is mentioning of the starting of the reconstruction of the Padmanābhasvāmī temple complex. It is dated 1729 and issued by Balamārtaṇḍa Varmā (1729-58).
2. Another inscription constructed by the wives of king Vīra Ravi Ravi Varmā Kulaśekhara dated 1600 is on the *Tulāpuruṣamaṇḍapam*. It is in Sanskrit written in Malayalam about *tulāpuruṣadāna*.<sup>24</sup>
3. Another epigraphical piece dated 1731 in stone mentioned about the arrival of the single solid granite for constructing the Ottakkal *maṇḍapam* in the temple.
4. On the southern side of the front *maṇḍapa* close to the *Ottakkalmaṇḍapa*, there is an inscription of Mārtaṇḍa Varmā relating to the fixing up of the image of Lord Padmanābha. It is dated CE 1732 (actually all records are in Kollam era or Malayalam era).
5. On a pillar in *Namaskāramaṇḍapa* of the central shrine, Mārtaṇḍa Varmā inscribed (1732) in Tamil details of the donations made by a private individual.
6. Another inscription in the *Namaskāramaṇḍapa* mentions about the donors dated 1375. It is in Sanskrit grantha.
7. An inscription in the Kṛṣṇa temple mentions about the gift of two lamps to Lord Padmanābha. No date is seen.
8. Gift of a drum to the temple is inscribed in another pillar. This is the content of the inscription.
9. Bathing the Tiruvambadi deity in oil for which a land donation was made by somebody.
10. On the base of the central shrine there is an inscription which mentioned the grant of land to feed the Brahmins and for keeping the flower gardens. It was given during the reign of Vīra Rāma Kerala Varmā, King of Venad (Venad grew to become Travancore by 1729). It speaks of Mitrānandapuram, Tiruvanantapuram, etc. It is dated 1710.

11. There is a stone for *bali* near the Śrīkṛṣṇa temple. This damaged inscription mentions about King Vīra Iravi Iravi Varmā and Sarvāṅganāthan eldest prince of Trippappur royal family.
12. The Sanskrit inscription in front of the Kṛṣṇa shrine mentions about its donor as Āditya Varmā alias Sarvāṅganātha who built the temple of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the *mandapa* in its front besides a *gośālā*.
13. On the southern side wall of Kṛṣṇa shrine, there is an inscription that stated that Āditya Varmā who was the umbrella bearer of Kodamārtaṇḍa Varmā King of Kolamba (Ceylon?) gave to the temple a drum. He also donated rice for feeding Nambis of the temple who managed its administration. It is in Sanskrit language but the script is in Malayalam.

There are numerous other inscriptions here and there inside the main temple and outside; some are damaged, most of them are not decipherable.

The history of the Śrī Padmanābhasvāmī temple as revealed through the records kept inside the Mathilakom Records office (Archives) is a boon to any historian. The only difficulty is in deciphering old scripts, now almost defunct. The literary data in Tamil, Sanskrit and Malayalam supplement and complement the data which we gather from the epigraphical pieces. Perhaps, there is no temple in the whole globe with so much of primary data to tell its history through records. For the history of Angkorvat or Prambanam in South Asia we have to depend more on literary data. Here we have mutually dependable sources to complete the history of Śrī Padmanābhasvāmī temple in its vitalities and varieties.

The Padmanābhasvāmī temple owned by the Travancore royal family had so much of wealth because of the devotion of the people to the deity. It is not compulsory donation or donation from the public alone. Until the Temple Entry Proclamation of 1936 issued by Sri Chittira Tirunal (1931-47) the last Mahārājā of Travancore State donations were made only by *savarṇas* or people belonging to the upper classes.<sup>25</sup>

During 1766-1792 the *rājās* of Malabar sought asylum in Travancore state for fear of conversion by Hyder Ali Khan (1766-1782) and Tipu Sultan (1782-1792). King Kārthika Tirunal Rāma Varmā (1758-98) popularly known as Dharma Rāja gave asylum to these *rājās* without collecting any donation for their stay in Trivandrum palaces for about 25 years as guests. After the Treaty of Śrīrangapatnam in 1792 when these *rājās* were restored to their palaces, they gave donations to the Padmanābhasvāmī temple in lump-sum.<sup>26</sup>

When the subsidiary system was introduced in Travancore, Velu Tampi (1765-1809) *Diwān* of Travancore hesitated to make prompt payment of tribute to the English East India Company. When John Munro came as Resident and *Diwān* in Travancore (1810-1819) he paid all arrears of subsidy to the tune of 19 lakhs to the English by

confiscating all major temples of Travancore. Thus temple wealth was pledged in the Padmanābhasvāmī temple in 1811-12.<sup>27</sup>

All these, besides through spice trade, Travancore earned a huge sum and it was dedicated to Lord Padmanābha by the Kings of Travancore. It is not public wealth but donations made to the Lord, and as such, it is the wealth of the temple. The study of Śrī Padmanābhasvāmī temple is fascinating and unparalleled and without any model in South Asia.

## Endnotes

1. Padmanābha is Mahāviṣṇu lying on serpent Ananta as in Śrī Padmanābhasvāmī temple Thiruvananthapuram, Ādikeśavaperumal in Tiruvattar (Kanyakumari district) Sreerangapatanam temple, Srirangam and in many other temples. During the incarnation of Lord Rāma, Lakṣmaṇasvāmī was Ananta and during the life of Śrīkṛṣṇa Balarāma was the Ananta incarnation. In North India Lord Budha is also treated as an incarnation of Lord Viṣṇu. For this there is no Vedic reference at all.
2. Anizham Tirunal Mārtaṇḍa Varmā proved to be the builder/architect of modern Travancore, a princely state lying in the South Western coast of the Indian peninsula. Travancore, Cochin and Malabar joined together to form the state of Kerala after the States Reorganization in 1956 based on language. The Malayalam Language is a Dravidian stock and its speakers are there all over the globe including Kerala State.
3. Ettarayogam is a confederation of eight and half members of the Padmanābhasvāmī temple ruled by Padmanābhadāsas. After raising Venad to Travancore state Mārtaṇḍa Varmā, the king of Travancore, dedicated his Kingdom to Lord Padmanābha of the Śrī Padmanābhasvāmī (Viṣṇu) temple. After this dedication, what Kerala historians call as *Thrippati dānam* – gifting of the Kingdom to the Lord – the Travancore royal family ruled the state as Padmanābhadāsas or servants of Lord Padmanābha. In order to assist the temple Administration of the temple, the kings assumed the title Padmanābhadāsas. Until the death of the last ruler Chittira Tirunal, who became the king of Travancore in 1931 and later became the first and last Rājapramukha (1947-49) after independence, the kings of Travancore enjoyed the title Padmanābhadāsas. See details in T. P. Sankarankutty Nair, *The Last Phase of Monarchy in Travancore*, SUTIC publication, GPO Lane, Trivandrum, 2011, pp.136 -190.
4. Due to ill health Rājakeśvadāsa, the Valiya Diwānī was practically under house arrest. During an annual festival season, the Diwān was poisoned to death. This is to secure the Diwānship for Jayanthan Sankaran Nambutiri. He was supported by Mathoo Tarakan a timber merchant who wanted to get special concessions for trade and commerce. It was against this ascendancy that a revolt was hatched by a later Diwān Velu Tampi Dalava (1765-1809). See details in Travancore Disturbances in Tamil Nadu Archives, Egmore, Political consultations for 1808 and 1809. Also see the present author's, *A Tragic Decade in Kerala History*, Kerala Historical Society, Thiruvananthapuram, 1977, pp.76,99.
5. Mathilakam means inside the fort. It was controlled by the rulers of Travancore state and there are over 30,000 cadjan leaves shedding light on Travancore's modern history.
6. Ottakkal *maṇḍapa* is made of solid granite brought from Thirumala in Thiruvananthapuram with 20 feet length, 20 feet width and six feet height. It is constructed in front of the Lord of the temple who can be seen through three doors. Through the first door only the head of the Lord can be seen. Through the second door the body of the Lord along with, Lord Brahmā coming out of the navel of the Lord and through the third door, the Lord's feet can be seen along with other sages or gods. In the sanctum sanctorum the Lord with Lakṣmī Devī and Bhūdevī too can be seen in the small *vigraha* shape. See *Supra*, *The Last phase ... passim..*
7. See details in A. Sreedhara Menon, *A Survey of Kerala History*, Kottayam, 1967, pp.20-80. Also see A. G. Menon, *History of Śrī Padmanābhasvāmī Temple till 1758*, Menon and Co., Thiruvananthapuram, 1996, *passim*.
8. Nammālvāra does not use the term Padmanābha; he prefers Anantapuram. See Yesudasan and Hephzibah Yesudasan, *A History of Tamil Literature*, pp.114-15.

9. A. G. Menon, *op.cit.*, pp.9-10.
10. S. Sanku Iyer, *The Antiquity of Śrī Padmanābhaswāmī Temple in Chaitraprabha*, Sree Chitra Central Hindu Religious Library, Thiruvananthapuram, 1946, Vol.I, p.56.
11. There are two temples dedicated to Lord Ananta behind the western side of the Padmanābhaswāmī temple. A family which inherited the temple of Ananta was there in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. After the death of the senior member, dispute arose for its ownership. Now it is under a 'receiver rule'. The other temple has been constructed recently by the late S. Srinivasan Potty – a priest of many trades.
12. A. G. Menon, *op.cit.*, also see Mathilakom Records, Vol.I, Kerala State Archives, Thiruvananthapuram.
13. T. K. Velu Pillai, *The Travancore State Manual*, Thiruvananthapuram, 1940, Vol.II, pp.2-9.
14. Mathilakom Records, Vol.II, *passim*.
15. *Ibid.*
16. *Ibid.*
17. *Ibid.*
18. See A. G. Menon, *op.cit.*
19. *Ibid.*
20. K. Maheswaran Nair, *Theory and Practice of Archives in Ancient Travancore*, pp.36-60.
21. *Ibid.* Trippappur palace or royal family is the headquarters of the Travancore royal family from which the lineage was counted. Since matrilineal system was in existence, sons or daughters born of Trippappur mothers alone got the title to the throne of Travancore state. This was continued down to 1947 in spite of the abolition of *marumakkathayam* (matrilineal system) through the new regulation of 1924-25 and the legalization of *makkathayam* (patrilineal system of succession and inheritance). In other words Trippappur is the mother family of Travancore.
22. Mahābhāratakoṣam vaults are richer than the other vaults as revealed during the accounting of jewellery based on Supreme Court order.
23. Kanakku means accounts. Kanakkupura simply means office where accounts were written and kept.
24. A ceremonial occasion when the Mahārājā is weighed against gold and the gold was distributed among Brahmins. There is a *maṇḍapam* exclusively for this inside the Padmanābhaswāmī temple. See V. Nagam Aiya, *The Travancore State Manual*, Travancore Government Press, Thiruvananthapuram, 1906, Vol.III, pp.Ixii.
25. Mahadeva Desai in his *Epic of Travancore* treated the temple entry proclamation of the king of Travancore as the miracle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. When king Balarāma Varmā wrote a letter to Mahatma Gandhi addressing him as "Mahātmā", Gandhi wrote back telling the king that the king had become, Mahatma by opening all temples to the Harijans. See details in the present author's *Sri Chittira Tirunal*, in Malayalam and Hindi, SUTIC, PRAG 58 Trivandrum, 2012, *passim*.
26. Also see in *The Last Phase of Monarchy...* *passim*.
27. *Ibid.*