

Temple land in Chola and Pandyan inscriptions: The legal meaning and historical implications of *Kuḍinīṅgā-dēvadāna*

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The purpose of this dēvadāna study¹ is twofold. In Chola and Pandyan inscriptions (tenth to thirteenth centuries) dēvadānas granted to Hindu temples are often designated as kuḍinīkki or kuḍinīṅgā in relation to the mode of their utilisation by the temple. In past studies, however, these two terms have been variously and wrongly interpreted by scholars. The first and main purpose of this study, therefore, is to ascertain the correct legal meaning of these terms, which stipulate the position of the new kuḍis and not that of the old kuḍis, as most past studies have assumed. Having done so, we shall be able to understand the historical implications of dēvadāna, especially kuḍinīṅgā-dēvadāna, appearing in inscriptions. As a second and subsidiary purpose, therefore, I shall try to relate this dēvadāna analysis to the broader issue of the social change which occurred during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries caused by changes in the landholding system and land revenue policy of the state. For this purpose I shall examine the pattern of dēvadāna appearing in Chola and Pandyan inscriptions. This pattern seems to reflect these changes.

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¹ While until the eleventh century *dēvadāna(m)* denoted land granted to both Siva and Vishnu temples, thereafter it denoted land given to Siva temples only and the new term *tiruvīḍaiyāṭṭam* was introduced to denote land granted to Vishnu temples. Land of Jain or Buddhist temples is described as *paḷḷichandam*. However, as *dēvadāna* has been used in the broader sense of temple land in modern studies, I use *dēvadāna* in this sense too in this study where specification is unnecessary.

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Introduction

Though we have roughly 900 Tamil inscriptions for the period from the sixth to ninth centuries (corresponding more or less to the Pallava and Early Pandyan period), the number of inscriptions increases greatly during the next four centuries—from the tenth to the thirteenth centuries (corresponding roughly to the Chola period), amounting to 19,000,² most of which record donations to temples for the purpose of burning lamps, conducting worship, repairing temple structures, etc. Donated objects were varied and included land, sheep, food, money, and taxes on professions and products. From the twelfth century the number of inscriptions which record matters other than donations, such as land sales, government orders, decisions of local assemblies, resolutions of communities, political compacts, etc. also increases. Therefore, these inscriptions of the Chola period and after can afford us good information on social conditions and state administration of the time.

Using these inscriptions, particularly those recording grants and sales of land, I conducted studies of the landholding system of the Chola period and clarified the change in the landholding system from communal holdings practised in the earlier half of the Chola period to individual holdings prevalent in the latter half.³ Subsequently, in collaboration with Subbarayalu, I examined how this change in landholdings was related to state policies on land control and taxation, and also studied the emergence of new *jātis* and the gaining of power by merchants and artisans during the later Chola period and succeeding later Pandyan period (the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries).⁴ Through these studies I have argued for the occurrence of serious social changes during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, which finally brought medieval social and state formation to the Tamil country in the fifteenth century under Vijayanagar *nāyaka* rule.⁵

To advance the study of landholdings further, however, we have to make a detailed study of the relationship between landlord and tenant/cultivator. The *dēvadāna* problem, which I am going to examine in this paper, concerns this point. The term *dēvadāna*, literally meaning ‘gifts to God’, is used in inscriptions to indicate lands or villages owned by a Hindu temple, which were often donated to the temple by various people, including the king. In Chola and later Pandyan inscriptions (from the tenth to fourteenth centuries), *dēvadānas* are often designated further as *kuḍinikki* or *kuḍinīṅgā* in relation to the mode of their utilisation by the temple. The term *kuḍinīṅgā* is in the negative form and means ‘*kuḍi* not

² Garbini, ‘Software Development in Epigraphy’; Subbarayalu, ‘Tamil Epigraphy—Past and Present’.

³ Karashima, *South Indian History and Society*.

⁴ Karashima and Subbarayalu, ‘Kaniyalar Old and New’; Karashima and Subbarayalu, ‘The Emergence of Periyannadu Assembly in South India’.

⁵ Karashima, *Towards a New Formation*; Karashima, ‘Emergence of Medieval State and Social Formation’.

being evicted', and its affirmative counterpart, '*kuḍinikki*', means '*kuḍi* being evicted'. Since *kuḍis* were tenants, occupants, or cultivators, these terms have crucial importance in the study of the landholding system in relation to lordship and so-called landlord-tenant relations.

In past studies, however, these two terms, *kuḍinikki* and *kuḍinīṅgā*, have been variously and wrongly interpreted by scholars. The first and main purpose of this study, therefore, is to ascertain the correct legal meaning of these terms. Only then, shall we be able to advance the study of landholdings further through the examination of inscriptions concerning *dēvadāna*, especially *kuḍinīṅgā-dēvadāna*. Though there are of course many lines of enquiry, I shall examine in this paper the pattern⁶ of *dēvadāna* appearing in inscriptions during the Chola and later Pandyan period to discover how the pattern reflects changes in landholdings and state taxation policy. That is the second and subsidiary purpose of this paper, but the examination will remain preliminary.

Past Studies and the Problem

The terms *kuḍinikki* and *kuḍinīṅgā*, especially the former, appear in Pallava and Chola royal grants of villages to Brahmins or temples, often together with the phrase '*mun perrārai (uḍaiyārai) māṛri*', meaning 'former grantee or possessor being changed'. In the case of Pandyan royal grants, the phrase '*kārāṅmai miyātchi uḷḷaṅga*' (including tenantry and proprietorship) is used instead of the phrase '*mun perrārai (uḍaiyārai) māṛri kuḍinikki*', and in Chola royal grants both phrases appear. We have to examine, therefore, all these terms and phrases in this study.⁷

The purpose of granting a village to Brahmins or temples is to let the grantee enjoy the agricultural produce of the village, and there should be somebody to cultivate the land to get the produce. If the granted village was not exempted from tax, the produce should be shared, therefore, at least by three bodies, namely, the state, the grantees (Brahmins or temples), and cultivators. The position of grantees seems to be expressed by the word *perrār* or *uḍaiyār*. *Kuḍis* are placed under the *perrār* or *uḍaiyār*, but they do not necessarily cultivate the land themselves and they can engage cultivators, as will be seen later. For *kuḍi*, therefore, the word 'tenant' or 'occupant' seems to be better than 'cultivator'.

Though the literal meanings of the terms *kuḍinikki* and *kuḍinīṅgā* are simple and clear, some difficulties arise in determining their legal meaning, as they relate to the mode of landholding and cultivation. For example, Burton Stein writes,⁸ 'When, as occasionally occurred, lands were granted to temples expressly without the benefit of cultivating labour ("*kuḍinīṅgiya-dēvadāna*")', this may have meant

⁶ By the word 'pattern' I mean in this study the situational pattern of *dēvadāna* known from the examination of various points of *dēvadāna* analysis, which will be explained later.

⁷ The term *kuḍinīṅgā*, however, does not appear in inscriptions recording village grants to Brahmins.

⁸ Stein, 'Vijayanagar', p. 31.

that the temple donee as part of the locality society had access to the local agrestic labour force, or it may have meant that there was a shortage of such labour and it was the responsibility of the donee to acquire additional workers.' He interprets the phrase *kuḍinṅgiya* (same as *kuḍinṅki*) as the donee was not provided with labourers for cultivation.

Criticising Stein, R. Tirumalai insists⁹ that the terms *kuḍinṅki* and *kuḍinṅgā* should be rendered as 'after extinguishing the subsisting occupancy rights', and 'without extinguishing the subsisting occupancy rights'. He further writes, 'In the former case, the grantee could stipulate revised terms for occupancy. In the latter case, the grantee could only demand the subsisting rate of land-dues from the occupants.' Though his interpretation is closer to the actual meaning of the terms than that of Stein, he takes them to pertain to the variability of the 'amount' that the donee can demand from the occupants (*kuḍis*). Neither of these interpretations can be accepted.

James Heitzman, who studied the issue after Stein and Tirumalai, writes,¹⁰

In most cases which featured the term "*kuḍi nṅkā*" the temple was interested in the higher share, relinquishing the cultivator's share and even ownership of the land in exchange for a steady flow of income. Conversely, secular owners of land were willing to relinquish ownership, with its responsibility for tax-paying, as long as they retained the cultivator's share.

This interpretation, based on the analysis of later inscriptions, shows deeper insight into the problem, but Heitzman's inadequate analysis of taxation makes it untenable.¹¹

Though it is not to a temple, but to Brahmins, one of the best examples of a royal grant of a village comes from the Karandai copper plate inscription of Rajendra I,¹² which records the grant of 56 villages to 1,080 Brahmins by converting these villages into a huge *brahmadēya* village. In this record we find the phrases '*kāniyudaiyārai māṛri kuḍinṅki* (changing the *kāni*-holders¹³ and evicting occupants) *kārāṅmai mīyāṅchi uḷḷaḍaṅga* (including tenantry and proprietorship)' relating to the rights to the village (land) claimed or to be claimed by Brahmins and others. As explained already, the Pallava royal grants employ the phrase *munnuḍaiyārai māṛri kuḍinṅki* and the Pandyan royal grants use the phrase *kārāṅmai mīyāṅchi uḷḷaḍaṅga*. Actually, however, both phrases convey the same meaning, and the Chola royal grants combined them to stress their meaning.

⁹ Tirumalai, *Land Grants and Agrarian Reactions*, p. 95.

¹⁰ Heitzman, *Gifts of Power*, p. 72.

¹¹ Moreover, by relinquishing the cultivator's share and ownership, how could the temple secure a 'steady flow' of income?

¹² Krishnan, *Karandai Tamil Sangam Plates*.

¹³ *Kāni* in Tamil means hereditary right to land, profession, office, etc. In inscriptions, however, it usually means the right to landholding, unless otherwise specified. *Kuḍi*-ship is also a *kāni*, but in this

From these phrases we are able to say that people recognised at least two kinds of rights existing in one and the same village/land. Judging from the expressions *mēl-vāram* (upper share) and *kīl-vāram* (lower share) in some inscriptions with reference to the share of produce, people seem to have regarded these two rights as being in tiers. *Uḍaiyār/mīyāṭchikkāran* was an upper-right holder as proprietor and *kuḍiyār/kārāṇmaikkāran* was a lower-right holder as occupant, tenant or cultivator. During the Chola period, particularly in its earlier half, however, villages were commonly held by Vellala agriculturists, who were not divided into proprietors and cultivators. They were landholders as well as cultivators of the land they held, and such holdings were known as *vellān vagai*. Taking this point into consideration, we have to say that the differentiation of land rights into two as seen in royal grants was rather exceptional and seems to have been a new phenomenon, at least in the early Chola period.

Keeping all the above points in mind, I now examine the inscriptions referring to *kuḍinikki* and *kuḍinīṅgā*, especially the latter, for the Chola and the later Pandyan periods. English translations of four such inscriptions are given in Appendix 1 to illustrate the way in which *kuḍinikki/kuḍinīṅgā* temple land was referred to in inscriptions.

The Legal Meaning of *Kuḍinikki* and *Kuḍinīṅgā*

The terms *kuḍinikki* and *kuḍinīṅgā* have been often translated by epigraphists and historians in past studies as ‘having evicted *kuḍi*’ and ‘having not evicted *kuḍi*’, their meaning being taken to refer to a (pre-)condition of, or an arrangement made before, the transaction. In some cases, particularly those of *kuḍinikki*, this interpretation may be acceptable,¹⁴ but it cannot be so in other cases, particularly those of *kuḍinīṅgā*.

According to the Pallankoyil copper plate inscription (TASSI-1958/59: AD 970), though there is some ambiguity because some of the plates are missing, it is clear that a Cheletti Kudiyan constructed a Jain temple and in appreciation of this the king granted to the temple 30 *vēli* of land as *paḷḷichanda-iraiyili* (Jain temple land exempt from tax) after having removed old *kuḍis* (*paḷḷankuḍinikki*). At the same time, however, it is stated in a later section that he was given the land (30 *vēli*) as *kuḍinīṅgā-paḷḷichandam*, with him and his descendants becoming the *kuḍis* of that land. In light of this, therefore, the term *kuḍinīṅgā* cannot convey the meaning of continuation of *kuḍi*-ship before and after the grant.¹⁵

case, *kāni-uḍaiyār* (possessor of *kāni*) must have meant the proprietor, i.e., people holding a higher position than *kuḍi* (occupant/tenant), since it corresponds to *mīyāṭchi* in the succeeding phrase.

¹⁴ In such cases, however, the term *paḷan* (old) or *mun* (previous) is often prefixed to *kuḍi* to make the meaning clear, as will be seen in the Pallankoyil plates.

¹⁵ T.N. Subramaniyam, who studied this inscription, expresses a similar idea (TASSI-1958/59, p. 94).

Another case comes from an Andanallur inscription (*SII*, viii, 668: Tp, AD 926), according to which some three *vēli* of land was granted to a temple as *kuḍinīkki-dēvadāna* and seems to have been kept as such (without any fixed *kuḍi*) by the temple for some years, but afterwards it was given to an *araiyan*¹⁶ as *kuḍinīṅgā-dēvadānam* by a royal order. Obviously, in this case too, the interpretation ‘having not evicted *kuḍi*’ for *kuḍinīṅgā* is not applicable.

An Achcharapakkam inscription (*SII*, vii, 460: Cg, AD 1136) records the actual continuation or non-change of *kuḍis* before and after the grant of villages as a new *dēvadāna iraiyili*,¹⁷ but the term *kuḍinīṅgā* does not appear in the inscription. Instead, it is stated that the *kāṇiyāḷars* who previously had *kāṇi* right should keep the *kāṇi*. This also can be taken as suggesting in a negative way that the term *kuḍinīṅgā* does not mean the continuation of *kuḍi*-ship before and after the grant. From all these above examples it may be understood that *kuḍinīṅgā* does not relate to a (pre-)condition of the grant or treatment of previous *kuḍis*, but concerns the condition of the present *kuḍi* who is granted *kuḍi*-ship.

The Pallankoyil inscription states that Cheletti Kuḍiyan and his descendants will be *kuḍis* of that 30 *vēli* of *paḷlichandam* which is designated as *kuḍinīṅgā*. Likewise, a Tiruvidaimarudur inscription (*SII*, xxiii, 257: Tj, 979) records that Choliyavaraiyan, who became the *kuḍi* of *kuḍinīṅgā-dēvadāna*, was given the *dēvadāna* land as his *janma-kāṇi*. *Janma-kāṇi* in Tamil inscriptions usually connotes a *kāṇi* right given for several generations,¹⁸ and therefore this inscription also confirms the point that *kuḍinīṅgā* was a condition prescribed for the present grantee (*kuḍi*) and not for the previous *kuḍi*. We can conclude, therefore, that the *kuḍi* who had been given *kuḍi*-ship as *kuḍinīṅgā-kuḍi* could not be evicted or changed at least in his lifetime. This is the meaning of *kuḍinīṅgā*.

Once the legal meaning of *kuḍinīṅgā* is defined as a condition for the present *kuḍi*, its counterpart *kuḍinīkki* may also be, or should be, interpreted as a stipulation for the present *kuḍi*, though its literal meaning ‘having evicted *kuḍi*’ is also applicable in some cases, as already seen in Pallankoyil plates. Anyway, it is clear from the usage in inscriptions that *kuḍinīkki* and *kuḍinīṅgā* were a pair of concepts expressing opposite meanings. According to the Tiruvidaimarudur inscription (*SII*, iii, 203: Tj, AD 960), for example, the *sabhaiyār* of Tiraimur, which was a *dēvadāna-brahmadēya*,¹⁹ were paying in tax only 800 *kalam* of paddy (*nel*) on the

¹⁶ *Araiyaṅs* are persons of some importance holding the title of *araiyan*, literally meaning ‘king’.

¹⁷ *Iraiylil* means tax (*irai*) exemption (*ili*).

¹⁸ Though *kāṇi* itself usually means a hereditary right, there is some ambiguity as to whether *kuḍinīṅgā-kuḍi*-ship can be inherited or not. According to an Iluppur inscription (*ARE* 1944–292), the *kuḍinīṅgā-dēvadāna* enjoyed by the father of Sambanda Perumal became *tirunāmattu-kāṇi* land after his father’s death and he had to purchase the right to become the *kuḍi* of the *kuḍinīṅgā-dēvadāna* enjoyed by his father.

¹⁹ *Dēvadāna-brahmadēya* is a village granted to both Brahmin(s) and a temple. Brahmins enjoyed the produce as *kāṇi*-holders, but paid a concessional tax (*pañchavāram*) to the temple.

pretext of the village being *kuḍinīṅgā*, though it was actually *kuḍinīkki*. The latter sense became clear through the investigation of an officer and the *sabhaiyār* were ordered to pay 2,800 *kalam*. The *sabhaiyār* seem to have misappropriated 2,000 *kalam* of *nel* enjoyable by the *kuḍi* of *kuḍinīṅgā-dēvadāna*.

Another term that is contrasted with *kuḍinīṅgā* in inscriptions as having the opposite meaning is *tirunāmattu-kāṇi*, which means 'kāṇi in the name of the god'. According to a Tirumalvadi inscription (ARE 1920, 44: Tp, AD 1433), two-fifths of the *dēvadāna* village Porpadanallur were *kuḍinīṅgā-dēvadāna* and three-fifths were *tirunāmattu-kāṇi-dēvadāna*. An Iluppur inscription (ARE 1944, 292: Tp, AD 1300) tells us that a certain Siyanadan purchased some *tirunāmattu-kāṇi* land for *kuḍinīṅgā-dēvadāna*, himself becoming the *kuḍi*. The land he purchased had actually been *kuḍinīṅgā* land of his grandfather, but it became *tirunāmattu-kāṇi* after the grandfather's death.

From the above it is clear that *tirunāmattu-kāṇi* is a category of landholding by temples which is contrasted with *kuḍinīṅgā*. In this sense, we are able to regard the *tirunāmattu-kāṇi* category as being the same as the *kuḍinīkki* category. As *kuḍinīṅgā* is interpreted to mean 'kuḍi cannot be evicted' or 'kuḍi is fixed', *tirunāmattu-kāṇi* and *kuḍinīkki* can be interpreted as 'kuḍi can be evicted' or 'kuḍi is not fixed'. In this connection a further question may arise: are *kuḍis* cultivators or not? In inscriptions there are *kuḍinīkki* cases in which the temple itself is stated to cultivate the land, but in such cases the temple must have engaged labourers for cultivation. The term *kuḍi* has varied connotations and can certainly mean cultivators too, but in the case of *kuḍinīkki* and *kuḍinīṅgā* it seems to have meant someone who had a higher right to the land, besides the cultivating right, as tenant or occupant, irrespective of whether he himself cultivated the land or not.

What, then, was the difference between *kuḍinīkki* and *kuḍinīṅgā* regarding the benefits enjoyed by the temple? The difference seems to concern whether the produce was to be enjoyed by the temple or by the tenant (occupant). In this connection we may note that the term *kāṇi* was used for the right that *kuḍinīṅgā-kuḍis* held. In a Jambai inscription (SII, xxii, 98: SA, AD 1301) the land that the Brahmin purchased as *kuḍinīṅgā-dēvadāna* is stated to have been given as his *kāṇi*. In an Iluppur inscription (ARE 1944, 291: Tp, AD 1300) the musician who was given *kuḍinīṅgā-dēvadāna* by a chief is described as *kāṇiyālanāy kuḍi* (*kāṇi*-right-holding *kuḍi*). According to a Tiruvidaimarudur inscription (SII, xxiii, 257: Tj, AD 979; text in English given in Appendix 1), a *jīvitam* holder became a *janma-kāṇi* holder when he was granted *kuḍinīṅgā-dēvadāna*.

In four Pudukkottai inscriptions (IPS, 283 [text in English given in Appendix 1], 287, 343 and 393) we find the phrase *kārāṇ-kiḷamai* or *kārāṇ-kiḷamai-kāṇi* (*kāṇi* or the possession of *kārāṇmai*) for the right transferred as *kuḍinīṅgā-dēvadāna*. This is quite understandable from the fact that in Chola royal grants *kārāṇmai* and *kuḍi* are equated, as stated earlier. All these cases, therefore, suggest that *kuḍinīṅgā-kuḍis* enjoyed a good portion of the produce as *kāṇi*-right holders.

In the case of *kuḍinīkki*, on the other hand, the *kāṇi* right belonged to the temple, as *kuḍinīkki* is equal to *tirunāmattu-kāṇi*, which means *kāṇi* right in the name of the god/temple. This *kāṇi* right must have been the same as the one authorised in *kuḍinīṅgā*-holding, namely, *kārāṇmai*, though there are cases of village/land grants in which *mīyāṭchi* was also given together with *kārāṇmai* or without *kārāṇmai*.²⁰ However, the word *mīyāṭchi* in *dēvadāna* grants appears only in royal grants in which the state share (tax) was granted to a temple. In the case of ordinary *tirunāmattu-kāṇi* (*kuḍinīkki*), on the other hand, the temple seems to have paid tax to the state, having only occupancy (*kārāṇmai*) of the land. For a better understanding of the produce-sharing of temple land by the state, temple, and occupants, however, we have to know the principle of taxation on temple land by examining the actual tax and the amount imposed on, or exempted from, temple land. We now proceed to examine this.

Tax on Temple Land and Sharing of Produce

First, we have to ascertain the point that there were two different cases of taxation on temple village/land: 1) it was exempted from tax by royal order, namely, the state share was granted to the temple, or 2) it was not exempted from tax, namely, the temple had to pay tax to the state. Though this can be inferred from the imposition and exemption of tax on temple village/land recorded in many inscriptions, it is explicit from a royal order issued by the Chola king Rajaraja II in 1150, stipulating the auction of some problematic eleemosynary land, including temple land. According to this order recorded in a Tiruloki inscription, A) the *dēvadāna* land to be put to auction, and B) that to be exempted were described as follows:

- A) Land to be put to auction: 1) *dēvadāna* given to Siva and Vishnu by evicting former owners, and 2) old *dēvadāna* without owners.
- B) Land exempted from auction: 1) land being enjoyed by various people after purchase from temples, 2) land made tax-free by village assemblies and entered as such in the government tax register, 3) *dēvadāna* and other land which were made tax-free by removing the *kuḍi* but were made taxable (*tirappu*) again and the *vishṇuśhānas* of this category, and 4) land that was checked by referring to the government tax register and classified as taxable among the land made tax-free by village assemblies.

Though it looks rather complicated, it is clear from this that there were two categories of *dēvadāna*, one taxed by the state and the other exempt from tax by the state. The complication derives from the exemptions from state tax made by

²⁰ In the case of *brahmadēya*, *kārāṇmai* was always given together with *mīyāṭchi*.

village assemblies, which took the responsibility of paying it for the temple. Furthermore, though it is not stipulated in this royal order, *dēvadāna* was taxed by local assemblies (*nāḍu*, *sabhā*, etc.) for some taxes called *siru-irai*, *kīl-irai*, *viniyōgam*, etc., or exempted from them by such assemblies.

Keeping the above points in mind, we now proceed to examine the difference in tax payment between *kuḍinīkki* holdings and *kuḍinīngā* holdings of temple land. For this we have to ascertain in each case the person who or agency which paid it and the manner of their payment. In the case of a *kuḍinīkki* (*tirunāmatu-kāṇi*)-holding, the *kāṇi*-holder is the temple and cultivation seems to have been done by labourers who had nothing to do with the tax on land. We can conclude, therefore, that the temple bore the tax burden. On the other hand, in the case of a *kuḍinīngā*-holding, the *kuḍi* was regarded as the *kāṇi*-holder and he/she seems to have borne the tax on land. In many inscriptions it is stated that the *kuḍi* of *kuḍinīngā* temple land should pay *kaḍamai*, *irai*, *kuḍimai*, etc., to the temple or state.

In many of these inscriptions which stipulate the payment of *kaḍamai*, etc., to a temple, however, it is not clear whether those *kaḍamai*, etc., were given to the temple for its own use or for being transmitted to the state by the temple, unless the temple land was exempted from tax as *iraiyili*. If it was stipulated as *iraiyili*, the temple was able to enjoy the tax amount. However, there are many cases in which no word appears for tax exemption, though *kaḍamai*, etc., are stated to be paid *to* or *in* the temple. In such cases, did the temple enjoy the *kaḍamai*, etc., for itself²¹ or did it transmit them to the state (and local assemblies)? This question leads to another closely related one. Did *kuḍis* of *kuḍinīngā*-landholdings pay any amount of produce to the temple as something like rent (*mēlvāram*) for their landholding or for borrowing the name of the temple? To clarify this, we have to examine the amount of *kaḍamai*, etc., imposed on individual plots of temple land and the manner of payment by *kuḍis*. This examination will in turn clarify the principle of produce-sharing by the state, temple, *kuḍi*, and cultivator.

Therefore, we now examine the kind of taxes and their amounts which *kuḍis* were asked to pay by dividing the inscriptions into three groups, each composed of several inscriptions of the same period and locality.²²

Thanjavur/Tiruchirapalli District: Tenth Century

The first group consists of the following four Thanjavur/Tiruchirapalli District inscriptions of the tenth century.

²¹ *Kaḍamai*, meaning duty, usually denotes in inscriptions the state tax, but there seem to be some cases in which it was used in relation to *dēvadāna* in the sense of duty to a temple, namely, the thing to be given to a temple.

²² Abbreviations used for Districts are: Pd = Pudukkottai, SA = South Arcot, Tj = Thanjavur, and Tp = Tiruchirapalli. For tax terms, see Karashima, *South Indian History and Society*, pp. 69–128.

- 1) A Melappaluvur inscription (*SIL*, xiii, 236: Tp, 969) records the assignment of 24 *vēli* of *dēvadāna* land to an *udaiyān* as *kuḍinīṅgā-dēvadāna* by a local chief (Palavettaraiyan). The *udaiyān* was asked to pay, as the *kārāṅmai*-right holder, *nel* (paddy) of 2,880 *kalam* (120 *kalam* per *vēli*) to the temple for his *kāṅikkāḍan* (obligation for holding *kāṅi*), though he seems to have been allowed to enjoy small taxes (*siṅṅirai* and *siṅṅupaṅgu*) for himself. This should be taken as recording a tax-grant to a temple by the chief.
- 2) An Allur inscription (*SIL*, viii, 692: Tp, 974) records the local chief's (Ilangoval's) grant of one *vēli* of land as tax-free (*iraiyili*) *kuḍinīṅgā-dēvadāna*. The *ūrār* should cultivate the land and measure out 120 *kalam* of *nel* in the temple. As it was *iraiyili*, the temple was able to use the whole amount for conducting daily worship in the temple.
- 3) A Tiruvidaimarudur inscription (*SIL*, xxiii, 257: Tj, 979; text in English given in Appendix 1) records a royal grant of *kuḍinīṅgā-dēvadāna* as *janma-kāṅi* to an influential *araiyan*, who was asked to pay 120 *kalam* of *nel* per *vēli* to the temple for *irai*. In this case too the *dēvadāna* was exempted from tax and, therefore, the temple used the amount as expenditure for conducting a festival. The *mīyāṅchi* said to be given together with *kārāṅmai* should be taken as being given to the temple, while *kārāṅmai* was given to the assignee of *dēvadāna*.
- 4) A Tirunedungalam inscription (*ARE* 1909, 688: Tp, 993) records the sale of *kuḍinīṅgā-dēvadāna* by *sabhai*, *ūr* and temple to an *araiyan* who was asked to pay 120 *kalam* of *nel* per *vēli* to the temple as tax (*irai*). The sale was made to pay off a fine imposed by the government, but at the same time the purpose was stated to be the offering of food to the deity in the early morning. We may have to conclude, therefore, that the *irai* paid by the *araiyan* was to be used for the food offering, though this *dēvadāna* is not stipulated explicitly as *iraiyili* in the inscription.

Among the above four inscriptions, the first three record tax grants to a temple by a king or chief, and the amount stated to be paid to the temple by the *kuḍis* seems to have been the tax amount otherwise to be paid to the state. The amount stipulated in the fourth inscription also must have been that of tax. In all four cases, therefore, the temple is thought to have been given *mīyāṅchi* right for the land, while the *kuḍis* of these *kuḍinīṅgā-dēvadānas* seem to have enjoyed, as *kārāṅmai-kāṅi* holders, the produce of the land after paying the temple the amount equivalent to tax. The amount equivalent to tax, i.e., 120 *kalam* of paddy per *vēli* in all cases, is a little higher than 100 *kalam* of *nel* per *vēli* described in the famous Thanjavur inscriptions of Rajaraja I (*SIL*-ii-4 & 5: AD 1013) recording a (*kuḍinīṅgā*)-*dēvadāna* grant of 40 villages in Chola-mandalam.²³

²³ Karashima, *South Indian History and Society*, pp. 94–105.

Tiruchirapalli District: Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries

The second group consisting of eight Tiruchirapalli District inscriptions of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries gives the following information.

- 1) A Tirunedungalam inscription (ARE 1909, 679: Tp, 1220), recording a local chief's (Muttaraiyan's) grant of *kuḍinīṅgā-dēvadāna* by purchase from *sabhā*, stipulates the payment of 30 *kalam* of *nel* per *vēli* to a temple. Taxes (*kaḍamai*, *kuḍimai*, etc.) were exempted and the amount seems to have been used for maintenance of the hall that the chief built in the temple. Who became the *kuḍi* is not clear.
- 2) A Tiruppattur inscription (ARE 1908, 589: Tp, 1236) records the decision made by *nāṭṭavars*²⁴ of some four *nāḍus*. They ordered the *kuḍis* who would come to the three *kuḍinīṅgā-dēvadāna* villages, which had been in a state of ruin, to pay 20 *kalam* of *nel* per *vēli* (1/*mā*) of *nañjey* and 5 *kalam* of *varagu* (millet) per *vēli* of *puñjey* for *mākkalam*²⁵ according to the custom in this locality. They exempted local tax (*viniyōgam*) and the temple would have enjoyed it, paying *mākkalam* to the state.
- 3) A Ratnagiri inscription (ARE 1914, 160: Tp, 1238) records that a merchant (*viyāpāri*) purchased two *mā* of land from the *nagarattār*²⁶ and granted it as *kuḍinīṅgā-dēvadāna* to a temple. The *kaḍamai* is stipulated to be four *kalam* of *nel* per *mā* (80/ *vēli*) and the purpose is to offer food to the deity and feed *mahēśvaras*. Who was to be the *kuḍi* is not clear, nor it is clear how the temple was to be able to conduct these services.
- 4) Another Tiruppattur inscription (ARE 1908, 591: Tp, 1248), recording the order of some three *nāṭṭārs* (*nāṭṭavars*) concerning a *kuḍinīṅgā-dēvadāna* village, which had been in a state of ruins for some years, stipulates that land should be cultivated from this year and 20 *kalam* of *nel* per *vēli* (1/*mā*) of *nañjey* and five *kalam* of *varagu* per *vēli* of *puñjey* should be paid for *śrīkāriya-pēru* (*mākkalam*),²⁷ while local tax (*viniyōgam*) was exempted. Another stipulation that the surplus income after paying *śrīkāriya-pēru* (*nīkki niṅra uḍal*) should be used for worship in the temple might have been made possible by the use of exempted local tax if the tax imposed on

²⁴ *Nāṭṭavars* are members of a *nāḍu* assembly consisting of leading landholders of villages included in the *nāḍu*.

²⁵ *Mākkalam* is the tax of one *kalam* of *nel* (paddy) per *mā* imposed in favour of a temple, which is rather low as a tax rate.

²⁶ *Nagarattār* are members of a *nagam* assembly consisting of leading merchants of various communities living in the *nagam*.

²⁷ *Śrīkāriya-pēru*, the same as *mākkalam* (1 *kalam*/*mā*), is privileged (*pēru*) tax favourably imposed on temple land. Subbarayalu, 'Land Revenue Assessment under the Cholas', pp. 200–212.

- the temple had not been *mākkalam* and the whole amount had actually been paid to the state.
- 5) An Iluppur inscription (*ARE* 1944, 295: Tp, 1298) records a chief's (Kadambarayar's) order to the effect that a Kaikkola, who became *kuḍinīṅgā kuḍi* by purchase of some *tirunāmattu-kāṇi* land for 90 *paṇam*, should pay the temple four *kalam* of *nel* per *mā* (80/*vēli*) as *kaḍamai* and four *kāsu* per *mā* as small tax (*kīl-īrai*). This arrangement (tax remission?) was made for the maintenance of the idols that the chief installed in the temple.
 - 6) According to another Iluppur inscription (*ARE* 1944, 291: Tp, c.1300), land was granted to a temple by the order of a local chief (Kadambarayan) as *kuḍinīṅgā-dēvadāna* and was assigned to a musician, who was asked to pay five *kalam* of *nel* per *mā* (100/*vēli*) as *kaḍamai* and four *kāsu* (coin) per *mā* as small tax (*kīl-īrai*). The purpose of the grant is stated to be for conducting worship and making repairs in the temple, and the taxes must have been given to the temple.
 - 7) Yet another Tiruppattur inscription (*ARE* 1908, 594: Tp, c.1300) records that *nāṭṭavars* remitted the *tūtavāri* and *śrīkāriya-pēru*, together with small tax (*vilaittuṇḍam*), levied on three *kuḍinīṅgā-dēvadāna* villages, as they had been in a state of ruins for some time. The amount was five *kalam* of *varagu* per *vēli*, and the *nāṭṭavars* seem to have borne these taxes for conducting worship and making repairs for the deity of a temple in Tiruppiddavur (Tiruppattur).
 - 8) Yet another Iluppur inscription (*ARE* 1944, 293: Tp, 1317) records the consent of two *kuḍinīṅgā-kuḍis* (*viyāpāris*) given to a temple and *ūrār* (landholders of the village) to pay five *kalam* of *nel* per *mā* (100/*vēli*) for *kaḍamai* and five *kāsu* per *mā* for small tax (*kīl-īrai*) on the land they cultivated. Prior to this, cultivation had been suspended for some time owing to a breach in the tank.

In numbers 1, 5 and 6 of these eight inscriptions, local chiefs seem to have exempted the tax on the *kuḍinīṅgā* land assigned to *kuḍis*, though it is not so clear in numbers 5 and 6. In the case of number 7, *nāṭṭavars* exempted the tax, assuming responsibility for it themselves. In these cases, therefore, the temples seem to have enjoyed the tax amount for their own use, as was the case in the first group.

However, numbers 2 and 4 show us a somewhat different scenario, that is, the imposition of *mākkalam* (*śrīkāriya-pēru*), namely, a concessional amount of tax on temple land, as already explained. This practice was not found in early inscriptions, and it seems to have become prevalent only in and after the twelfth century, mostly in the Kaveri delta. Though we are not sure of the reason for its introduction, the state's desire to increase revenue even by introducing some concessional tax on temple land must have been the reason, since many temple lands were actually excluded from tax payment in one way or another, as was indicated by the Tiruloki

royal order mentioned above. Anyway, numbers 2 and 4 tell us that the temple paid *mākkalam* to the state, though the local tax was exempted by *nāṭṭavars*, and this introduction of *mākkalam* marks a change in state revenue policy towards the end of the eleventh century.²⁸

Number 3 is a bit problematic, as it is not clear at all whether the temple paid four *kalam of nel* per *mā* to the state or whether it was exempted. If the whole amount had been paid to the state, how would it have been possible for the temple to offer food to the deity and *mahēśvaras*? However, if the temple paid to the state only *mākkalam* (one *kalam of nel* per *mā*) according to the then local custom, it would have been able to perform the service. If that was the case, the term *kaḍamai* must have been used in the sense of ‘duty to the temple’, and we may say either that the state relinquished part of its revenue to the temple or that *kuḍiś of kuḍinīngā* temple land paid something like ‘rent’ to the temple. Though it is just a conjecture in this case, this interpretation may not be impossible, as there is another inscription which actually suggests it.

This is a Tiruppattur inscription (ARE 1908, 598: Tp, AD 1320; text in English given in Appendix 1) recording the decision of two *nāṭṭavars*, according to which, out of the capital *nel* of 60 *kalam per vēli* produced in *nañjey* (wetland) of Tiruppidavur, a *dēvadāna-brahmadēya* village, *nel* of 20 *kalam per vēli* should be paid to the state (*paṇḍārattukku*) as tax (*mākkalam*) after deducting *nel* of 40 *kalam per vēli* to be given to the temple as *dēvadāna* (gift to the deity). It further stipulates the ratio between the two (state and temple) for other categories of land and crops.²⁹ This inscription is quite suggestive, but as the village was *dēvadāna-brahmadēya*³⁰ and it is not designated as either *kuḍinīkki* or *kuḍinīngā*, we are not sure whether this case can be generalised as being representative of all the contemporary *kuḍinīngā* temple land of the locality.

In number 8 again it is not clear whether the amount (five *kalam of nel per mā* and *kīl-īrai*) was transmitted to the state or enjoyed by the temple, but if only *mākkalam* had been taken by the state, the temple would have enjoyed a good amount (four *kalam per mā*) of the produce. However, even if the whole amount had been taken by the state, there would not have been any loss to the temple, even though the temple would not have gained anything, because the arrangement was not for the sale of land but simply consent to resume cultivation. It might have been of merit to the temple, however, that by this arrangement it was freed from such possible trouble as having uncultivated taxable land.

²⁸ Karashima and Subbarayalu, ‘Kaniyalar Old and New’, p. 11.

²⁹ For dryland (*puñjey*), the assessment was five *kalam of varagu per mā*, as seen in the text given in Appendix 1, and this seems to have been the standard, as this rate appears in combination with 20 *kalam of nel per mā* in other inscriptions too.

³⁰ See note 19.

Pudukkottai District: Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries

The third group consists of 12 Pudukkottai District inscriptions (all published in *IPS*) of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. There are six Narttamalai inscriptions in which *nagarattārs* of Kulottungachola-pattinam played a role as the seller of land given to a temple as *kuḍinīṅgā* land and/or as the agency which remitted the tax on land, themselves assuming the responsibility.

- 1) *IPS*, 170: A Narttamalai inscription (1215) records that two merchants of the town purchased land from the *nagaram* and gave it to a temple as *kuḍinīṅgā-dēvadāna*, themselves becoming *kuḍis*. The *nagaram* made it free from tax (*īrai*, *kuḍimai*, etc.) by assuming responsibility and the *kuḍis* were asked to pay 30 *kalam* of *nel* each to the temple. However, the rate is known to have been 2.5 *kalam* of *nel* per *mā* (50/*vēli*) only for the bad season.
- 2) 271: Another Narttamalai inscription (MSP³¹) records that the *nagaram* gave land (one *mā*?) to a temple as *kuḍinīṅgā-dēvadāna*. The two *kuḍis* appointed (an *araiyan* and his brother?) were asked to pay 10 *kalam* of *nel* (the rate being 200/*vēli*) to the temple. The *nagaram* decided to bear the taxes (*īrai*, *kaḍamai*, *antarāyam* and *tēvai*).
- 3) 279: The third Narttamalai inscription (MSP), though the stone is damaged, records that an influential person granted to a temple as *kuḍinīṅgā-dēvadāna* the land (six-odd *mā*) which he had purchased from the *nagaram* and others. The *nagaram* made it tax-free by assuming responsibility themselves and the *kuḍi* (grantor?) was asked to pay the temple *nel* at the rate of 192 *kalam* per *vēli* for *īrai*, *kuḍimai*, *antarāyam*, etc.
- 4) 280: The fourth Narttamalai inscription (MSP), though the stone is damaged, records the payment of 60 *kalam* of *nel* to a temple by two merchants (*viyāpāris*) for 1.2 *vēli* of *kuḍinīṅgā-dēvadāna* land. The *nagaram* exempted it from tax (*īrai*) by assuming the responsibility themselves.
- 5) 281: The fifth Narttamalai inscription (MSP) records the grant of *kuḍinīṅgā-tiruvīдайyāttam* by several people who had purchased the land (five-odd *mā*) from the *nagaram*, which made it exempt from tax (*īrai*, *kuḍimai*, *antarāyam*, etc.) by assuming the responsibility. *Kuḍis* (grantors) were asked to pay the temple 57 *kalam* of *nel* (the rate being 198.26/*vēli*) for food offerings to two deities.
- 6) 283: The sixth Narttamalai inscription (1228; text in English given in Appendix 1) records that a merchant of the *nagaram* granted three *vēli* of

³¹ The inscription refers to the reign of Maravarman Sundara Pandya (MSP), but its date is not ascertainable.

land to a temple, himself becoming a *kuḍinīṅgā-kuḍi*. The *nagarattār* decided that they (*ūr?*) would bear the tax (*irai*, *kuḍimai*, *antarāyam*, etc.) and that the *kuḍi* should pay eight *kalam* of *nel* per *mā* (160/*vēli*) to the temple for various services. It refers to another *kuḍinīṅgā* holding as *kārāṅ-kilamai*.

- 7) 350: A Mayilappatti inscription (1262) records that the *sabhā* of the village and temple priests (*nambiyār*) sold to an individual some temple land as *kuḍinīṅgā-tiruvidaiyāṭṭam* for 35 *varāhan paṇam*, as it had been uncultivated, causing damage to the temple. The purchaser had to pay *nel* and *paṇam* at various rates for different fields (*taḍi*), starting from 12 *kalam* of *nel* (240/*vēli*) plus two *paṇam* per *mā*. The sale price seems to have been used for repairing the temple.
- 8) 393: A Virachchilai inscription (1283) records a grant of *kārāṅ-kilamai* to an individual (original grant was to his father?) by two groups called *arasu-makkaḷ* and *maṛa-mudali* of Viraiyachchilai village, stipulating the payment of *kaḍamai* to the temple at the rate of 7.5 *kalam* of *nel* plus 80 *kāsu* per *mā* for *airppasi*-, *pasānam*- and *chittirai-kuṟuvai* crops in *nañjey*, etc. Crops other than paddy include millet, sesame, sugarcane, and betel-leaf. The two groups were to bear all the taxes (*kaḍamai*, *antarāyam*, etc.) for the temple.
- 9) 403: A Peraiyur inscription (MK³²) records an *iraiyili* grant of *kuḍinīṅgā-dēvadāna* to a *maṭha* head by people called *arasu-makkaḷ* and *maṛa-mudali* of Malaiyalanguḍi (*paḍaiparuru*³³ village), stipulating that he should pay seven *kalam* of *nel* plus one *paṇam* per *mā* to the temple and get a receipt from the *tānattar* (temple authority). The two groups were to bear all the taxes (*achchuvai*, *kaḍamai*, *antarāyam*, etc.) for the temple.
- 10) 541: An Oliyamangalam inscription (1303) records that temple trustees sold to an individual as *kuḍinīṅgā-dēvadāna* the land donated by three persons, stipulating the purchaser's payment of seven *kalam* of *nel* plus 6.5 *kāsu* per *mā*, etc., to the temple for *kaḍamai* and *kīl-irai*. The amount paid might have been transmitted by the temple to the state (and local assembly?) as tax,³⁴ and temple repairs might have been made with the sale price (20 *paṇam*).
- 11) 441: Another Oliyamangalam inscription (1311), though the latter part is defaced, records a sale of *kuḍinīṅgā-dēvadāna* land by *ūrār* and a temple to an individual for 300 *paṇam*, stipulating his payment for *kaḍamai* of

³² The inscription refers to the reign of Maravarman Kulasekhara (MK), but its date is not ascertainable.

³³ *Paḍaiparuru* is the territory assigned to the military.

³⁴ There is a further stipulation that *kaḍamai* should be brought to the temple and weighed with the scales of the *nāḍu* and a receipt should be given for it.

seven *kalam* of *nel* per *mā*, etc. Different rates are given for other crops, including millet, turmeric, and ginger. Temple services and repairs were to be met by the sale price. This seems to record the transfer of *kāṇi* from *ūrār* to the individual.

- 12) 442: A Perumanadu inscription (1313) records that the temple authorities, including a *maṭha* head and *ūrār* of the village, sold *dēvadāna* land to a dancing girl for 100 *paṇam* as *kuḍinīṅgā-dēvadāna*, stating that she should pay eight *kalam* of *nel* per *mā*, etc., for *achchuvāri* and *nel-kaḍamai*. This seems to record the transfer of *kāṇi* from *ūrār* to the dancing girl.

The first six cases record remission of tax (*īrai*, *kuḍimai*, *kaḍamai*, *antarāyam*, etc.)³⁵ on *kuḍinīṅgā* temple land by the *nagarattār* of Telingakkulakalapuram (Kulottungachola-pattinam), which was in some way involved in granting land to a temple and assigning its *kuḍis*. In all cases the temple seems to have been given the amount, probably equivalent to tax, for its own use. However, four cases of them are distinct, in the sense that the amount to be paid by *kuḍis* was very high, ranging from 160 to 200 *kalam* per *vēli*. There are some more similar cases in this group, and number 7 stipulates the payment of 240 *kalam* per *vēli*. This high rate to be borne by *kuḍis* constitutes a peculiarity of Pudukkottai inscriptions.

In the case of numbers 8 and 9, two groups called *arasu-makkaḷ* and *marā-mudali* of some villages bore the tax burden for the temple. They seem to have been military people (one of the villages was *paḍaiparru*), and this also shows a distinctive feature of Pudukkottai. In contrast to these cases, in which tax was remitted by the *nagaram* and some other bodies, in the other four cases (numbers 7, 10, 11, and 12) it seems that tax was not remitted by anybody and that the temple transmitted the amount paid by *kuḍis* to the state. All these cases record the sale of temple land, and the temple could get some money from the sale for performing services and/or repairing the temple. In other words, temples were compelled to relinquish some of their *kuḍinīkki* (*tirunāmattukkāṇi*) land to others as *kuḍinīṅgā* land for getting instant money.

If we compare the results of our examination of the three groups, we find some differences among them, particularly between the first group and the remaining two groups concerning the tax rate and its mode of imposition. These differences seem to have resulted from the big time gap between them, namely, the tenth century of the former and the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries of the latter, suggesting a change in the revenue policy of the Chola state between these two periods,

³⁵ *īrai* is the most general term used for tax, but the mutual relations between other terms are not clear even in Pudukkottai inscriptions. For example, while in *PSI-219 kuḍimai* seems to have included *antarāyam* and *kīl-īrai* (*antarāyam kīlīrai uḷḷiṭṭa kuḍimaigal*), in *IPS-195 āyam* and *kuḍimai* seem to have included *kaḍamai*, *antarāyam* and *veṭṭimuttavāl* (*kaḍamai antarāyam veṭṭimuttavāl marṇum eppērapaṭṭa āyangaḷum kuḍimaigaḷum*). More generally, however, we may be able to say that *īrai* consisted of *kaḍamai* imposed by the state and *kīl-īrai* imposed by local assemblies.

namely in the middle of Chola rule. We shall discuss this point later. As for the localities, which overlap to some extent, the difference is not great, but the third group shows to some extent the political as well as socio-economic particularities of Pudukkottai District. This point, however, I shall discuss elsewhere.³⁶

The Definition of *Dēvadāna*

The first and main purpose of this paper was to clarify the legal meanings of *kuḍinīkki* and *kuḍinīṅgā*, and they have been clarified as follows through the first part of the above examination.

- 1) Both terms should be taken as designating the condition of the present *kuḍi* and not of the previous *kuḍi*.
- 2) *Kuḍinīkki* is the same as *tirunā mattukkāṇi*, and if a temple keeps land/village in this category, it holds the *kuḍi*-ship as *kāṇi*-holder and is responsible for paying tax.
- 3) In the case of *kuḍinīṅgā*, the *kuḍi*-ship is held by some person who was assigned the land by a temple, and that person cannot be removed but is responsible for paying tax as a *kāṇi*-holder.

In the subsequent part we examined the sharing of produce by the state, temple, *kuḍi*, and cultivator, and the results are shown in Table 1. If the land had been taxable in *mākkalam*, part of the state's share would have been given to a temple in both *kuḍinīkki* and *kuḍinīṅgā* cases.

Table 1

	<i>Kuḍinīkki</i> taxable	<i>Kuḍinīkki</i> tax-free	<i>Kuḍinīṅgā</i> taxable	<i>Kuḍinīṅgā</i> tax-free
1	State	Temple	State	Temple
2	Temple (= <i>Kuḍi</i>)	Temple (= <i>Kuḍi</i>)	<i>Kuḍi</i>	<i>Kuḍi</i>
3	Cultivator	Cultivator	Cultivator	Cultivator

Row 1 indicates the state's share originally taken as tax, row 2 the *kuḍi*'s share taken as *kārāṇmai*-holder's share, and row 3 the cultivator's share. Actually, however, they are taken by the body indicated in four columns according to the difference of *kuḍinīkki/kuḍinīṅgā* and also taxable/tax-free.

An Examination for Broader Studies

Now we examine the pattern appearing in inscriptions of *kuḍinīkki/kuḍinīṅgā-dēvadāna* in units of one century from the tenth to the fourteenth centuries in

³⁶ It will be discussed in a forthcoming paper dealing with *pādikāval* tax.

order to relate the above *dēvadāna* analysis to the boarder issue of changes in the landholding system and state revenue policy. As stated in the beginning of this paper, I have been arguing for the social change which occurred during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries as a result of changes in the landholding system and also state revenue policy in the middle of the Chola period. The following examination is to ascertain how these changes in the landholding system and state policy are reflected in the pattern.

In addition to the difference between *kuḍinikki* and *kuḍinīṅgā*, and also between taxable and tax-free, the points of examination which determine the 'situational pattern' of *dēvadāna* for our broader study are 1) how and from whom the temple acquired the land/village, 2) who was assigned as *kuḍi*-ship and by whom, 3) who remitted the tax, if it was tax-free, and 4) how much was the tax imposed or remitted? Apart from mere references to *dēvadāna* and other temple land, there are found 67 inscriptions (70 cases)³⁷ concerning temple land which afford information on those points (pattern) for the period from the tenth to fourteenth centuries. We shall examine this situational pattern by dividing the inscriptions by century. All inscriptions examined in this study are listed in chronological order in Appendix 2.

For the tenth century, there are 15 cases, out of which eight record royal grants³⁸ exempting temples from tax payment and three record similar grants by local chiefs,³⁹ though tax exemption is not clear in one of the chief's grants. In the eleventh century we have eight cases, all of which record royal grants of some villages with their tax. Two cases are clearly in *kuḍinikki* condition, and the rest seem to have been in the condition of *kuḍinīṅgā*, meaning a simple revenue grant of some villages, though the term *kuḍinīṅgā* does not appear. If we combine the two centuries, we can say that the basic feature discernible for the early half of Chola rule concerning temple land was the royal patronage of temples by generously granting state revenue for their proper management. Temples played an important role in state control of society in this period.

For the twelfth century we have eight cases, of which six⁴⁰ record a grant of temple land by somebody in which local chiefs or some other influential persons having the *araiyan* title were involved concerning tax remission and/or assignment of *kuḍis* to the land. There was only one royal grant,⁴¹ which affirmed the position of *kāṇi*-holders after combining some villages into a new village. These figures show the recession of the temple-patronage policy of the state by granting revenue, and instead the protection rendered to temples by local chiefs and powerful personages. This tendency should be understood in the context of the increase in power,

³⁷ One inscription (SII, iv, 529) records four different grants.

³⁸ These are marked with an asterisk in the list.

³⁹ These are marked with two asterisks in the list.

⁴⁰ These are marked with an asterisk.

⁴¹ This is marked with two asterisks.

during this century, of these people, including leaders of ex-hill-tribes, and their management of local administration.⁴²

There are 27 inscriptions giving information on *dēvadānas* for the thirteenth century. Though the protection of temples by *araiyan* title-holders continued in the thirteenth century, since we find seven such cases⁴³ among the 27, more conspicuous is the protection given by some local assemblies in the form of their assigning land to temples and/or bearing the tax burden for temples. There are 11 such cases as a whole.⁴⁴ Six of them record tax exemption made by the *nagaram* which assumed the responsibility themselves, two of them by military groups called *arasu-makkaḷ* and *maṛa-mudali* in Pudukkottai District, and another two by a *nāḍu* assembly in Tiruchirapalli and Chingleput Districts respectively. One case records land assignment by a *sabhā* in Chingleput District. Though there are two cases⁴⁵ of royal transfer of tax to a temple on a holding of military people and learned Brahmins respectively, the tendency of this century shows a self-defensive attitude on the part of local people in a situation in which the protection of the state had been lost. We may also say that it shows the increase in the strength of merchants in this century,⁴⁶ though the cases at present come only from Kulottungacholapattinam.

There are 12 inscriptions for the fourteenth century. As for chief, we find only one case⁴⁷, in which a local chief remitted the tax of the temple land assigned to a dancer. There is no case of royal tax remission or tax bearing by local assemblies. Instead, we find five cases⁴⁸ in which temples sold their *tirunāmatu-kāṇi* land to others as *kuḍinīṅgā* land. In two cases the sold land seems to have been exempted from tax, and therefore the temple would not have lost much of its regular flow of income by the sale, but in other cases it might have lost regular income by the sale. Nevertheless, temples actually needed some money by selling their land for repairing *maṇḍapam* or paying off debt, which seems to reveal the difficulties facing temple management during the period of political disorder in the fourteenth century. Local assemblies also seem to have lost their ability to afford protection to religious institutions during the fourteenth century.

From the above examination we may say that the situational pattern of *dēvadāna* revealed by inscriptions reflects changes in the landholding system and state revenue policy to a certain extent. This may suggest the usefulness of *dēvadāna* analysis for a broader study, such as that of the landholding system and state revenue

⁴² Karashima, *South Indian History and Society*, pp. 15–35; Karashima and Subbarayalu, 'Kaniyalur Old and New'.

⁴³ These are marked with an asterisk in the list.

⁴⁴ These are marked with two asterisks in the list.

⁴⁵ This is marked with a hash sign.

⁴⁶ Karashima, *Ancient and Medieval Commercial Activities in the Indian Ocean*, pp. 3–9; Karashima, Subbarayalu and Shanmugam, 'Nagaram during the Chola and Pandyan Period'.

⁴⁷ This is marked with an asterisk in the list.

⁴⁸ These are marked with two asterisks in the list.

policy, and consequently for a still broader study of social change. In this connection, one point may be worthy of remark here, namely, changes in motivation for *dēvadāna* grants or, more precisely, for becoming a *kuḍi* of *kuḍinīṅgā-dēvadāna*. Land grants usually come from a religious desire to gain merit by making such a donation, but voluntarily becoming a *kuḍi* of *kuḍinīṅgā-dēvadāna* by granting land to a temple, or buying land from a temple, reveals one's non-religious motivation.

A Tiruvidadaimarudur inscription, in which an *araiyan* converted his *jīvitam* to the *janma-kāṇi* of *kuḍinīṅgā-dēvadāna* by petitioning the king, clearly shows his non-religious desire. An Achcharapakkam inscription, recording the change of *kuḍi* status from *brahmadēya-kuḍi* to *kuḍinīṅgā-kuḍi* of temple land, seems to again suggest a non-religious motivation, as there are many inscriptions revealing the distressed conditions of *brahmadēya-kuḍis* in and after the twelfth century⁴⁹ as opposed to the comparatively favourable conditions of *kuḍinīṅgā-kuḍis* of temple land.

Though we do not have any statistical figures at present, the inscriptions referring to *kuḍinīṅgā* temple land seem to increase from the twelfth century, which again may suggest an increase in cases of non-religious motivation as a result of changes in the state revenue policy and of the socio-economic upheaval experienced by people in the succeeding centuries. In the early Chola period, it seems that *kuḍinīṅgā-dēvadāna* was used as a way of acquiring land by influential people, since private land sales and holdings seem to have been restricted.⁵⁰ The case of an *araiyan* who acquired *janma-kāṇi* land by becoming a *kuḍinīṅgā-kuḍi* of temple land illustrates this situation.

In the late Chola period, however, such restrictions were relaxed to a certain extent and people were able to acquire land by purchase rather freely, though the state tried to regulate land sales by issuing many restrictive orders for the protection of old *kāṇi*-holders.⁵¹ Influential people in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, therefore, do not seem to have been interested so much in themselves becoming *kuḍinīṅgā-kuḍis* of temple land.

Instead, they tried to patronise temples by granting land and/or remitting taxes. Commitments to temple management and rituals through such deeds or through the assignment of *kuḍinīṅgā-kuḍi* were more meaningful to them, particularly to the ex-hill-tribe leaders who became big landholders and as such commitments to temple affairs were thought to enhance their social status, giving legitimacy to their local rule. However, the politico-economic situation of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, during which the Cholas were overthrown by the Pandyas

⁴⁹ Subbarayalu, 'Inscriptions as Sources for History', pp. 229–241.

⁵⁰ Karashima, *South Indian History and Society*, p. 21.

⁵¹ Karashima and Subbarayalu, 'Kaniyalar Old and New'.

and Kakatiyas, who in turn were demolished by the armies of Delhi Sultans, caused tremendous damage and change to the whole of society, including local chiefs and temples.

While some large temples, such as Chidambaram, Srirangam and Jambukesvaram, acquired large areas of land and grew into big landlords,⁵² small local temples seem to have suffered much from heavy and arbitrary taxes imposed by the new rulers. Local assemblies were also in a distressed condition. Hence, many temples had to relinquish their land by sale. This situation continued till the establishment of *nāyaka* rule by the Vijayanagar state in Tamil country in the fifteenth century. Temples regained their strength only under the new policy of the *nāyakas* to encourage the activities of temples and artisans, who settled in temple streets, for the development of industries and commerce.⁵³

This is the picture we can draw of the changing situation regarding temple land in relation to the landholding system and revenue policy of the state. However, the information gathered in this study has been rather limited. In future studies,⁵⁴ therefore, we shall need to examine a larger number of inscriptions so that we can produce more detailed narratives concerning temple land known as *dēvadāna*, etc.

Appendix 1

Four English Translations of Inscriptions Referring to *Dēvadāna* or *Kuḍiñiṅgā-Dēvadāna*

1) Tiruvidaimarudur, 976, Tj, *SII*, xxiii, 257

King to the *nāṭṭār*, *brahmadēya-kiḷavar*,⁵⁵ and others in the sixth year and 280th day: While we were taking meals in the front hall in the Achchi palace at Palayaru, Chirukulatturudaiyan Araiyan Pirantkan, alias Choliyavaraiyan, represented to us as follows: 'The village Nalladi in Tirunaraiyur-nadu, which had been given to me as *jīvita*,⁵⁶ may be given to me as *janma-kāṇi*, after changing the previous *kāṇi-uḍaiyār*. Also it may be removed from the *veḷḷānvagai-mudal* and made a *dēvadāna iṟaiyili* of the Tiruvidaimarudil Mahadeva temple, and the land of the village, which was originally 15 *vēli*, may be classified as five *vēli* of

⁵² There are many inscriptions which show the acquisition of land by Jambukesvaram temple by purchase in the 13th century (Karashima, *South Indian History and Society*, pp. 15–25). *ARE* 1958/59–327 and 328 (13th century) record the inventory of the large extent of *dēvadāna* of Chidambaram temple (Karashima, 'Kīl in the Description of Land Extent').

⁵³ Karashima, *Towards a New Formation*, pp. 30–31.

⁵⁴ In the case of Tamil inscriptions, which are the most numerous among inscriptions in Indian languages, the publication of their text is the least advanced (more than half remaining unpublished), and this has been hindering our study. See Garbini, 'Software Development in Epigraphy' and Subbarayalu, 'Tamil Epigraphy—Past and Present'. Urgent attention should be given to solve this problem.

⁵⁵ *Brahmadēya-kiḷavar* means possessor of land in a *brahmadēya* village.

⁵⁶ *Jīvita* land means a prebend given to some officer for his lifetime.

maḍakku land;⁵⁷ and I may be permitted to pay for this land six hundred *kalam* to the temple at the rate of 120 *kalam* per *vēli* and enjoy it as *kuḍinīṅgā-dēvadāna* hereditarily, and also it may be exempted from the burden of the *antarāya-kuḍimai* dues if they are demanded on the *dēvadāna* lands.’

We have agreed to this representation and have given him Nalladi with *kārāṅmai* and *mīyāṭchi*⁵⁸ (rights) and as *kuḍinīṅgā-dēvadāna iraiyili* of the temple, and the income on the land shall be used for conducting a monthly festival during the days of our birth-day asterism Visaka.

2) Narttamalai, 1228, Pd, IPS, 283

We, the *nagaram* of Telingakulakalapuram, alias Kulottungachola-pattanam, give this inscription-document to Veliyarrurudaiyan Chenguli-aludaiyan, alias Irunetikkuberan, a *viyāpāri* of this town, as follows: We sell three *mā* of land as *kuḍinīṅgā-dēvadāna* of the Nagarisvarmudaiyar temple of this town lying in the tail-end lands (*kaḍaikkāl*) of this town: a field called Purkaraichey (which was to the south of a field called Pasumbiraikkulam in the middle sluice of the Nochchikulam tank, which we had earlier sold to him, with the stipulation that four *kalam* per *mā* should be measured out) measuring $\frac{1}{2}$ *mā* and another (adjoining) field called Periyangai-vayakkal measuring $1\frac{1}{2}$ *mā*; and to the south of these one *mā* of reclaimable *puṅṅey* land—thus the total being three *mā*. We undertake the responsibility of paying all government taxes—*irai*, *kuḍimai*, *antarāyam*, and so on. And the *kaḍamai* for these fields is fixed at eight *kalam* per *mā*, exempting him from previous payment for the field Pasumbiraikkulam. The *kaḍamai* shall be collected on actual standing crops during the time of floods and famine; the lands shall get the existing water rights. Further, we also have given to the same *viyāpāri* the field called Karukkuruvi, alias Choranei, with *kārāṅ-kiḷamai* right, taking its tax responsibility upon ourselves. This he can enjoy as the *kuḍinīṅgā-dēvadāna* of the same temple and renovate the temple and arrange for daily services. This land, which we had sold to his grandson, is given to this *viyāpāri* according to his request.

This is the signature of Iragembira-uttamachola-chilachetti—(signed by some sixteen more people).

3) Tiruppattur, 1320, Tp, ARE 1908, 598

We, the *nāṭṭavar* of both the divisions of Urrattur-nadu, have made this decision: That is, ever since the creation of Tiruppidavur in our *nādu* as a *dēvadāna-brahmadēya* a rate of 60 *kalam* per *vēli* had been levied on the *naṅṅey* crops, and out of this 40 *kalam* per *vēli* had been set apart for the *dēvadāna* (expenses) of the deities Tirumantavam-udaiyanayanar, Ilayapillaiyar, Subrahmanyapillaiyar, and Tiruveppanterri-udaiya-pillaiyar, and the remaining 20 *kalam* had been paid into the government treasury (*paṇḍāram*) for the *mākkalam*.

⁵⁷ *Maḍakku* land is land measured or calculated by a standard measure (Subbarayalu, ‘Classification of Land and Assessment of Land Tax’; Karashima, ‘*Kiḷ* in the Description of Land Extent’).

⁵⁸ Strictly speaking, *mīyāṭchi* was given to the temple and not to him.

Let this arrangement continue. Further, *mākkalam* shall be collected on the *turuviḍaiyāṭṭam* land of the temple of Purushottamattemperuman of this village and the tax-free grants given for the lamp service of the above temples and other categories of tax-free grants shall retain their status. For the *puñjey* crops raised in *nañjey* lands of the *dēvadāna*, half the full rate shall be collected. As for *turuviḍaiyāṭṭam* lands, *puñjey* lands shall pay 25 *kalam* of millet per *vēli*; for *tūtavari-sīkāriyappēru* five *kalam* per *vēli* of millet shall be paid to the government. For *tirappu* (taxable) *puñjey* land, 40 *paṇam* shall be collected towards *upāti* and *nāṭṭu-viniyōgam*. Signed Chattanur-udaiyan Gurukularayan, Kappuvay-kilan Vilupparayan, Kurukkai-udaiyan Viladarayan.

4) Elavanasur, 1333, SA, *SII*, xxii, 160

To the temple trustees of Urapagankondar temple at Iraivanaraiyur in Paranur-kurram in Maladu, alias Jananatha-valanadu, I, Panur-kilavan Atkondadevan Tondappillai, a *viyāpāri* of Tirunavalur in Tirumunaippadi-nadu, give as *tirunāmattukkāni* land measuring 1,250 *kuḷi*, lying in four plots, on the condition that you shall assign it to a *kuḍi* (cultivator), collect *vāram* on both *kār* and *paśānam* crops, and after paying the *kaḍamai*, the *irai-migudi* (surplus after paying tax), equivalent to 40 *pon*, shall be used for the expenses of the procession celebrations during the four *tiruvanantal* festival days. I purchased this land of a Brahmin in the *kaḍamai-parru* (taxable land) of Puttur, a *kuḍinīngā-dēvadāna* of this temple, which was put up for sale by the persons who had stood surety for the Brahmin as the latter had absconded without paying the *kaḍamai*.

Appendix 2

A List of 67 Inscriptions Affording Information on Temple Land

The 15 inscriptions from the tenth century are: *SII-viii-668**, *SII-xiii-51*, *SII-iii-203**, *EI-xv-5**, *SII-viii-687***, *SII-xiii-151*, *SII-xiii-236***, *TASSI-1958/59**, *SII-viii-692***, *SII-xxiii-257**, *SII-iii-151**, *SII-iii-142**, *SII-xiii-52*, *ARE1909-688*, and *SII-xiii-182**.

The five inscriptions from the eleventh century are: *EI-xxii-34*, *SII-ii-4 & 5* (these inscriptions are continuous and should be treated as one inscription), *TVMIZ*, *SII-iv-529* (this inscription records three different years' grants made by Rajendra I and one by Virarajendra), and *EI-xxii-35*.

The eight inscriptions from the twelfth century are: *SII-xxii-272**, *SII-xxvi-422**, *SII-vii-460***, *IPS-138**, *SII-xxvi-421**, *IPS-148**, *IPS-219*, and *IPS-151**.

The 27 inscriptions from the thirteenth century are: *IPS-170***, *SII-xxvi-754*, *ARE1909-679**, *IPS-271***, *IPS-279***, *IPS-280***, *IPS-281***, *IPS-283***, *IPS-195**, *ARE1908-589*, *ARE1914-160*, *ARE1926-267**, *ARE1908-591*, *ARE1908-592**, *IPS-350*, *SII-vii-402***, *SII-xvii-170#*, *SII-vii-401***, *SII-vii-456**, *SII-vii-465*, *ARE1922-203**, *IPS-393***, *IPS-403***, *ARE1944-295**, *SII-xxvi-43*, *ARE1944-300#*, and *ARE1908-594***.

The 12 inscriptions from the fourteenth century are: *ARE1944-291*, *ARE1944-292*, *SII-xxii-98***, *IPS-541***, *IPS-441***, *IPS-442***, *ARE1944-293*, *SII-vii-466*, *ARE1908-598*, *SII-xxii-160*, *ARE1944-297***, and *ARE1938-410**.

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IPS = *Inscriptions (Texts) of the Pudukkottai State Arranged According to the Dynasties*, anon., Pudukkottai, 1929.

KTSP = *Karandai Tamil Sangam Plates of Rajendrachola I*, by K.G. Krishnan, New Delhi, 1984.

SII = *South Indian Inscriptions*, Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi 1890–.

TASSI = *Transactions of the Archaeological Society of South India*, Madras, 1955.

TVMIZ = *Tiruvizhimizhalai kalvettugal* (Inscriptions of Tiruvizhimizhalai), ed. A. Padmavathi, Chennai, Tamilnadu State Archaeology Department, 1994.

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