Nagapattinam
to
Suvarnadwipa

Nalanda-Sriwijaya Series

General Editors: Tansen Sen and Geoff Wade

The Nalanda-Sriwijaya Series, established under the publications programme of the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, has been created as a publications avenue for the Nalanda-Sriwijaya Centre. The Centre focuses on the ways in which Asian polities and societies have interacted over time. To this end, the series invites submissions which engage with Asian historical connectivities. Such works might examine political relations between states, the trading, financial and other networks which connected regions, cultural, linguistic and intellectual interactions between societies, or religious links across and between large parts of Asia.

The **Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS)** was established as an autonomous organization in 1968. It is a regional centre dedicated to the study of socio-political, security and economic trends and developments in Southeast Asia and its wider geostrategic and economic environment. The Institute's research programmes are the Regional Economic Studies (RES, including ASEAN and APEC), Regional Strategic and Political Studies (RSPS), and Regional Social and Cultural Studies (RSCS).

ISEAS Publishing, an established academic press, has issued almost 2,000 books and journals. It is the largest scholarly publisher of research about Southeast Asia from within the region. ISEAS Publishing works with many other academic and trade publishers and distributors to disseminate important research and analyses from and about Southeast Asia to the rest of the world.

Nagapattinam to Suvarnadwipa

Reflections on the Chola Naval Expeditions to Southeast Asia

EDITORS

Hermann Kulke • K. Kesavapany • Vijay Sakhuja

ISEAS
INSTITUTE OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN STUDIES
Singapore

First published in Singapore in 2009 by
Institute of Southeast Asian Studies
30 Heng Mui Keng Terrace
Pasir Panjang
Singapore 119614

E-mail: publish@iseas.edu.sg
Website: <http://bookshop.iseas.edu.sg>

for distribution in all countries except India

ISEAS Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

Nagapattinam to Suvarnadwipa : reflections on the Chola naval expeditions to Southeast Asia / edited by Hermann Kulke, K. Kesavapany, Vijay Sakhuja.
1. Chola dynasty, 850–1279—Congresses.
2. India—Relations—Southeast Asia—Congresses.
3. Southeast Asia—Relations—India—Congresses.
4. Asia—Commerce—History—Congresses.
I. Kulke, Hermann.
II. Kesavapany, K.
III. Sakhuja, Vijay.
IV. Conference on Early Indian Influences in Southeast Asia : Reflections on Cross-Cultural Movements (2007 : Singapore)
DS523.2 N14 2009

ISBN 978-981-230-936-5 (soft cover)
ISBN 978-981-230-937-2 (hard cover)
ISBN 978-981-230-938-9 (E-book PDF)

Cover photo: Airavatesvara Temple at Darasuram, Tamil Nadu. Courtesy of Risha Lee.

The map appearing on the endpapers is based on an original map in K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, *The Cōḷas* (Madras: University of Madras, 1955), p. 212.

Typeset by Superskill Graphics Pte Ltd
Printed in Singapore by Chung Printing

CONTENTS

Foreword by Shashi Tharoor vii

Message by M. V. Subbiah ix

Preface by K. Kesavapany xi

Introduction by Hermann Kulke xiii

The Contributors xxi

1. The Naval Expeditions of the Cholas in the Context of Asian History 1
   Hermann Kulke

2. Medieval Commercial Activities in the Indian Ocean as Revealed from Chinese Ceramic-sherds and South Indian and Sri Lankan Inscriptions 20
   Noboru Karashima

3. The Military Campaigns of Rajendra Chola and the Chola-Srivijaya-China Triangle 61
   Tansen Sen

4. Rajendra Chola I's Naval Expedition to Southeast Asia: A Nautical Perspective 76
   Vijay Sakhuja and Sangeeta Sakhuja

5. A Note on the Navy of the Chola State 91
   Y. Subbarayalu

6. Excavation at Gangaikondacholapuram, The Imperial Capital of Rajendra Chola, and Its Significance 96
   S. Vasanthi

7. New Perspectives on Nagapattinam: The Medieval Port City in the Context of Political, Religious, and Commercial Exchanges between South India, Southeast Asia and China 102
Gokul Seshadri

8. South Indian Merchant Guilds in the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia 135
Noboru Karashima

9. Anjuvannam: A Maritime Trade Guild of Medieval Times 158
Y. Subbarayalu

10. Rajendra Chola's Naval Expedition and the Chola Trade with Southeast and East Asia 168
A. Meenakshisundararajan

11. Cultural Implications of the Chola Maritime Fabric Trade with Southeast Asia 178
Hema Devare

12. Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia during the Period of the Polonnaruva Kingdom 193
Anura Manatunga

13. India and Southeast Asia: South Indian Cultural Links with Indonesia 208
P. Shanmugam

14. Rajendra Chola's Invasion and the Rise of Airlangga 227
Ninie Susanti

15. Rethinking Community: The Indic Carvings of Quanzhou 240
Risha Lee

Appendix

I Ancient and Medieval Tamil and Sanskrit Inscriptions Relating to Southeast Asia and China 271
Noboru Karashima and Y. Subbarayalu

II Chinese Texts Describing or Referring to the Chola Kingdom as Zhu-nian 292
Noboru Karashima and Tansen Sen

Index 317

FOREWORD

I am delighted to welcome a valuable addition to the limited canon of books on India's interaction with Southeast Asia. Indian Ocean studies still remain unexplored, though the Indian Ocean and its "Maritime Silk Road" have been the main focus of global and in particular Asian history in recent decades.

The book titled *Nagapattinam to Suvarnadwipa: Reflections on the Chola Naval Expeditions to Southeast Asia* deals with several fascinating subjects, amongst them:

- the naval expeditions of the Cholas in the context of Asian history and Indian Ocean trade system;
- South Indian merchant guilds, whose fame is strongly associated with the Cholas and which are often regarded as a driving force behind the naval expeditions of the Cholas;
- developments in Sri Lanka and Indonesia, which were most directly affected by Chola expansionism.

India has been following a conscious "Look East Policy" since the early 1990s and India's present accentuated level of interaction with ASEAN is integral to this approach. There has been steady progress in the India-ASEAN relationship since this policy was initiated. India-ASEAN functional cooperation is diverse and includes cooperation in several sectors. As regards political and security issues, ASEAN also has expressed its desire to work with India to fight terrorism, transnational crimes and similar problems. Recently, India concluded a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with ASEAN, which will ensure lower duties and a freer flow of trade in goods. In the cultural, educational and religious fields, India's efforts aim to promote people to people contacts, religious tourism and linkages among institutions of higher learning. This volume fits well within these objectives.

The present book *Nagapattinam to Suvarnadwipa: Reflections on the Chola Naval Expeditions to Southeast Asia*, about the naval expeditions of the South Indian Chola Dynasty in the eleventh century, is a welcome contribution to Indian Ocean studies. I hope it will enhance its readers' awareness of a vital and sadly-neglected aspect of India's involvement with its broader neighbourhood.

Dr Shashi Tharoor
Minister of State for External Affairs
India
10 October 2009

MESSAGE

At a time when the Indian psyche is slowly losing touch with its glorious traditions and legacies of the past, ISEAS efforts to put together a conference and publish this book, *Nagapattinam to Suvarnadwipa*, is of great significance.

This particular volume throws light on the naval expeditions during the Chola Dynasty to Southeast Asia and its cultural impact on that part of the globe.

I am sure the informative deliberations in this volume will be of great interest to researchers, academics, scholars and students of history alike and inspire them to undertake further research in this domain.

We the members of the Murugappa family in Chennai, India, through our AMM Foundation are proud to be associated with this project, though in a small way.

M. V. Subbiah
Managing Trustee
AMM Foundation of the Murugappa Group
Chennai, India

PREFACE

The Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS) hosted an international conference on "Early Indian Influences in Southeast Asia: Reflections on Cross-cultural Movements" from 21 to 23 November 2007 in Singapore. We acknowledge the generous funding provided by the AMM Foundation of the Murugappa Group, Chennai, India, who co-sponsored the conference. Two volumes have emerged from the proceedings of the above conference: the current volume *Nagapattinam to Suvarnadwipa: Reflections on the Chola Naval Expeditions to Southeast Asia*, and one on the main theme of the conference, that is, *Early Indian Influence in Southeast Asia*.

The South Indian Chola kings had developed a sophisticated maritime enterprise centred on sea-based commerce with trading contacts in Malaya, Sumatra, and China. This had produced an ocean-going fleet that was dispatched by the Chola King Rajendra Chola I against the Srivijaya Kingdom. The essays in this volume reflect on the naval expedition, which is also mentioned in the inscription dated 1030–31 of the big temple of Tanjavur in South India.

The volume contains seminal contributions by eminent historians and scholars of Asian history who have meticulously presented their findings in these essays. Perhaps the most significant contribution of this volume to Asian maritime history are the translations of ancient and medieval Tamil and Sanskrit inscriptions relating to Southeast Asia and China, and of the Chinese texts describing or referring to the Chola Kingdom as Zhu-nian.

I am thankful to the contributors of this volume for sharing valuable insights into their understanding and interpretation of the Chola naval expedition to Southeast Asia. ISEAS is particularly indebted to Professor Hermann Kulke for the intellectual leadership he provided for the project. It is hoped that this volume will provide greater understanding of early Indian influences in Southeast Asia and generate further research on the subject.

My sincere thanks to Professor P. Ramasamy and other ISEAS colleagues who worked tirelessly towards the preparation and organization of this major three-day conference that attracted over a hundred synopses, and in which fifty-two short-listed papers were presented.

I am also thankful to Betty Kwan from ISEAS who worked very efficiently to take care of the finer details of the conference; Y.L. Lee, Head of Administration, for the administrative support and cooperation in the organization of the conference; and Triena Ong, Managing Editor of the Publications Unit, for the successful production of the current volume.

Ambassador K. Kesavapany
Director
Institute of Southeast Asian Studies

INTRODUCTION

Next to the study of the continental Silk Road, the Indian Ocean and its "Maritime Silk Road" have been the main focus of global, and in particular, Asian history in recent decades. But strangely enough, Indian Ocean studies still remain oddly bipartite. They emphasize predominantly the "classical" period, with its strong Mediterranean connections on the one hand, and the "early modern" period, with its rise of European dominance in the Indian Ocean on the other. The long millennium from the fifth to the sixteenth centuries, when the Indian Ocean finally emerged as an Asian Mediterranean Sea, still remains underrepresented in international studies. The present volume about the naval expeditions of the South Indian Chola dynasty to Southeast Asia in the eleventh century is meant as a modest contribution to fill this historiographical gap.

The great naval expedition of the Chola king, Rajendra I, who claimed in his inscriptions to have "despatched many ships in the midst of the rolling sea" and conquered more than a dozen harbour cities altogether of the famous Southeast Asian kingdom of Srivijaya in Sumatra, and on the Malay Peninsula in about AD 1025, was a unique event in the otherwise peaceful and culturally exceedingly fruitful relation of India with its neighbours in Southeast Asia. Already the last centuries of the first millennium BC witnessed increasingly extending trade activities between India and Southeast Asia, and the peacefulness of the spread of India's culture across the Bay of Bengal throughout the first millennium AD is unparalleled in world history. Buddhism and Hinduism alike left their deep and lasting imprint on the emerging cultures of mainland and maritime Southeast Asia. The first distinct South Indian influences are usually linked with the famous Buddhist art of Amaravati, and the Pallava Grantha of present-day Indonesia's earliest inscriptions in the fifth century AD, followed by the strong impact of Pallava and Chola art and architecture in Southeast Asia.

In view of these lasting peaceful relations of India, and of South India in particular, with Southeast Asia, the great Chola invasions of Srivijaya in 1025, followed by another smaller naval expedition in c. 1070, are an issue that still remains a conundrum for historians. In 1955, Nilakanta Sastri, the late doyen of South Indian historians, rightly asked in his magnum opus on the Cholas, "why was this expedition against the king of Kadāram [Srivijaya] undertaken and what were its effects?"[1] and he concluded his detailed analysis of the sources: "We have to assume either some attempt on part of Srivijaya to throw obstacles in the way of the Cōḷa trade with the East, or more probably, a simple desire on the part of Rājendra to extend his *digvijaya* ["world conquest"] to the countries across the sea so well-known to his subjects at home, and thereby add lustre to his crown."[2] The American historian G.W. Spencer, on the other hand, in 1983 speaks, in the only existing monograph on the Chola conquests of Sri Lanka and Srivijaya so far, of "politics of expansion",[3] and in a previous paper (1976), even of "politics of plunder".[4] More recent studies instead emphasize trade as the major incentive of Rajendra's unique naval expedition. In her study of the medieval merchant guilds of South India, Meera Abraham concluded that "the raid was undertaken partly at least to establish trading rights for Tamil-speaking merchants in those areas, a trade from which the ruler, the merchant and the Cōḷa bureaucracy could expect sizable profit".[5] In the most recent substantial contribution to India's medieval relation with Southeast Asia and China, Tansen Sen concludes that the examination of hitherto unexplored Chinese sources and reinterpretation of others "strengthens the commercial-motive theory shared by a majority of scholars".[6] However, he also refers to the often quoted passage of the Song work *Zhufan zhi* that those ships which tried to avoid the payment of taxes at the ports of Srivijaya were attacked and destroyed. "If true, then, both the Srivijayan diplomatic and military attempts to block direct maritime links between Indian ports and the Song markets may have been the principal factors for the Chola naval raids in 1025 and the 1070s."[7] Other scholars interpret Rajendra Chola's raid on Srivijaya's harbours in the wider context of the Indian Ocean trade system as the culmination of increasing tensions,[8] caused by the rise of new imperial Asian powers since the late tenth century and their struggle for their share in the lucrative maritime trade.

An important result of the Singapore conference at which these papers were presented was the confirmation of the cognition that the conundrum of the naval expedition of the Cholas has been and is still caused primarily by the scarcity of archaeological and literary sources. In fact, details of the expedition are known only from a single source, viz. the often quoted and, in

this volume, also frequently referred to Tamil *praśasti* (eulogy) of Rajendra's inscriptions.[9] And what is perhaps even more surprising, Chinese sources are completely silent about Rajendra's naval raid on Srivijaya. However, we do possess a considerably large number of contemporary Sanskrit, Tamil, and especially Chinese sources[10] about direct relations of the Cholas with Southeast Asian countries and China that allow us to "contextualize" their naval expeditions in the Indian Ocean trade system, and to draw relevant, though often still hypothetical, conclusions about their causes. But several of these sources are either difficult to access, or are not even translated yet. Scholars of Indian history and Indian Ocean studies, and in particular the editors of this volume, are, therefore, grateful to Professors Noboru Karashima, Y. Subbarayalu, and Tansen Sen for agreeing after the conference to prepare for the first time in two appendices to this volume a critical edition of the texts as well as (partly new) translations of all relevant Indian and Chinese sources of Chola activities in the Indian Ocean. Moreover, the editors are obliged to Professor Karashima and Professor Subbarayalu to have also contributed additional papers about the famous South Indian merchant guilds. Together with these and the appendices, the proceedings of the conference provide not only a state-of-the-art picture of the maritime activities of the Cholas but also sufficient critically re-evaluated source material and stimulating theories for future research on one of the most fascinating periods in the history of South India and the Indian Ocean.

The first three chapters locate the naval expeditions of the Cholas in the context of contemporary Asian history and the Indian Ocean trade system. H. Kulke's introductory chapter interprets Rajendra's raid on Srivijaya's harbour cities as the culmination of the systematic quest of Rajaraja and his son Rajendra for domination of maritime South India and its surrounding islands in order to control the trade between the new emerging maritime powers of the Fatimids in Egypt and the Song dynasty of China. The emerging dominating position of the "Imperial Cholas" in the central portion of the Indian Ocean trade system was bound to clash with Srivijaya's hegemony over the Strait of Malacca, the gate to the Chinese market. Another salient point of the chapter is Srivijaya's finally futile "ritual policy" to establish friendly relations with the Cholas through temple donations at Nagapattinam. Whereas Kulke focuses his deliberations on the rivalry and competition in the Bay of Bengal, Tansen Sen extends in his paper on the "Chola-Srivijaya-China triangle" the range of view further to the East by a detailed introductory description of China's rise to hegemony in the Indian Ocean trade system under the Song dynasty from the late tenth century. Contrary to most scholars working on the Cholas' naval expeditions, he bases his analysis

primarily on Chinese sources and argues that even initially the relations between Srivijaya and the Cholas were not as friendly as suggested by, for example, K.A.N. Sastri. On the contrary, the Srivijayans, as the main informants of Song scribes about the "barbarians of the Southern Sea", seem to have been systematically passing wrong information about the Chola kingdom to them. This may be the reason Chinese annals failed to mention the Chola raids, and later, even depict the Cholas as a tributary state of Srivijaya. Another important contribution is that Sen revitalizes R.C. Majumdar's theory (which had been rejected by Sastri) that Rajendra attacked Srivijaya for the first time by a minor invasion already in 1017. He concludes that the invasions were a "retaliation for Srivijayan interference in direct trade between southern India and Song China". Karashima's detailed summary of the results of his recent survey of Chinese ceramics on South Indian and Sri Lankan coasts sheds new light on Chinese trade with South India from the ninth century and its tremendous increase from the thirteenth century. The different discovery spots of Chinese ceramics which he surveyed on the Coromandel and Malabar Coasts (for example, Periyapattinam and Kayal; Kollama/Quilon, and Pandalayini-Kollam) are identified with toponyms mentioned in Chinese sources which are quoted. Of particular interest for this volume is his discovery of the *yingqing*-type porcelain sherds of the eleventh/twelfth centuries at Gangaikondacholapuram, Rajendra's capital, "which might have been pieces brought from China by the envoys sent by Rajendra." The paper moreover contains important information about merchant guilds that will be referred to below.

The following two chapters deal with nautical perspectives and the navy, two subjects of central importance in examining the naval expeditions of the Cholas. In their deliberations about the nautical aspects of Rajendra's great expedition in 1025, V. & S. Sakhuja are taking up an essential subject which, however, requires a lot of "professional imagination" to rectify the deplorable lack of historical source material. But they rightly point out that in 1025 the Cholas were not only endowed with the accumulated nautical knowledge of the seafaring Tamils of at least a millennium, but also with their own experience of having already successfully organized naval expeditions to Sri Lanka, the Maldives, and to the Andaman Islands at least, if not up to the Malay Peninsula. They refer to the sophisticated knowledge of the Chola seafarers of nautically relevant celestial bodies and important navigational marks, and discuss moreover questions of logistics and provisioning, possible shipbuilding centres, ports of departure, and the route followed. As for the "Chola armada", they rightly point out that it might largely have consisted of ships taken from trade. Y. Subbarayalu's paper on the Chola navy also brings

us back to the reason for the conundrum of the naval expeditions of the Cholas. As an epigraphist, he rightly reminds us that due to the predominantly donative character of the inscriptions, we get only very fragmentary pieces of information about the actual mode of land-based warfare — and even less about the navy of the Cholas. The only known epigraphical reference to it so far comes from an inscription of the year 1187 which mentions a commander of "the army of the seashore" which was certainly the navy. In Rajendra's inscriptions, only the term *kalam* occurs, which is the usual word for "ship". The famous 1088 inscription of the Tamil merchant inscription at Barus/ Sumatra refers to *marakkalam* or "ship made of timber".

The next two chapters deal with Rajendra's political and maritime centres at Gangaikondacholapuram and Nagapattinam. According to S. Vasanthi, Gangaikondacholapuram was founded by Rajendra probably after his sixth regnal year and remained the imperial capital of the Cholas until it was razed by the Pandyas in late thirteenth century. Apart from Rajendra's still existing monumental Brihadisvara temple, the fate of the architectural remains of the once flourishing capital, as known from contemporary Tamil poems, was sealed by the nearby villagers who even today take bricks from them for the construction of their houses. Excavations by the Archaeological Survey of Tamil Nadu, however, revealed important antiquities, decorative objects, and Chinese ceramics. G. Seshadri's article contains a comprehensive survey of the literary sources of the history of Nagapattinam. His critical re-evaluation of pre-sixth century sources (e.g. of the Sangam Age, Ptolemy, Pali literature, etc.) dismisses all previous attempts to trace Nagapattinam in these early sources. The earliest definite reference to it is provided by Saint Appar in the early seventh century. Particular emphasis is given to Narasimhavarman II's embassies to China and his construction of the "Chinese Pagoda" of which Seshadri publishes for the first time an eighteenth-century drawing held in the British Library when most of the building was still extant. The article concludes with the heyday of Nagapattinam under the Cholas, when it became the focal point of Srivijaya's attempt to establish friendly diplomatic relations with the Cholas through temple donations.

The following two papers are devoted to South Indian merchant guilds, whose fame is strongly associated with the Cholas and which are often regarded as a driving force behind the naval expeditions of the Cholas against Srivijaya. N. Karashima's article, to which the second part of his already introduced first article has to be added, is based on his research project on the South Indian merchant guilds. Together with his colleagues Y. Subbarayalu and P. Shanmugam, both of whom are also featured in this volume, he collected more than three hundred inscriptions relating to these guilds, thus

doubling the number of known inscriptions. The article focuses on the most important guild, the Ainurruva, also known as Ayyavole, which became active in Tamil Nadu from the middle of the tenth century. The detailed depiction of its organization and unique eulogies is followed by an analysis of the crucial question of its relation with the Cholas. Karashima explains the puzzling decrease in guild inscriptions in Tamil Nadu during the heyday of the Chola state in the eleventh and twelfth centuries (in contrast to their increase in Karnataka) not as an indication of a decline in the guilds' trade, but of their strong control by the Cholas, which restricted their own cultural activities that are the major theme of their inscriptions. The Añjuvaṉṉam guild is a smaller, but in the context of the Indian Ocean trade system, perhaps even more significant guild which Y. Subbarayalu defines in his paper as "a body of West Asian traders", consisting variously of Jewish, Christian, and Muslim traders and operating in the ports of the Malabar and Coromandel coasts and Java. Thus a Syrian Christian grant at Kottayam of c. AD 1220 bears signatures in Arabic, Hebrew, and Pahlavi scripts and a twelfth-century Tamil text refers to a group of Muslim Anjuvannam traders in Nagapattinam. Subbarayalu's deliberations about the various modes of local cooperation of "maritime" Anjuvannam traders with other South Indian guilds, particularly the Manigramam, which were more directly linked with India's "sub-continental" trade, are very informative with respect to the organization of South India's international trade.

These detailed studies of South Indian merchant guilds are followed by two more general chapters which also add new aspects to the debate. A. Meenakshisundararajan, too, concedes to the merchant guilds a great share in the trade policy of the Cholas. But he links their expansionism to a remarkable change in the Asian maritime trade system around AD 1000. Partly influenced by the rise of the Cholas, situated right in the centre of the Indian Ocean trade, the transoceanic pre-emporia trade from the Near East to China changed to a sectorial emporia trade, focusing on the Arabian Sea, the Bay of Bengal, and the South China Sea, together with the Java Sea. This development enhanced the importance of the harbour emporia in South and Southeast Asia and the need to control them and, at the same time, to ensure unrestricted access to them. H. Devare's paper contains an overview of various aspects of Indian influences on the cultures of Southeast Asia. Special emphasis is given to India's trade in textiles with Southeast Asia which Devare regards as "the binding factor in the cultural history of these two regions", particularly during the Chola period when weaving and dyeing industries saw great development.

The next three papers pertain to Sri Lanka and Indonesia, the two countries which were most directly affected by Chola expansionism.

A. Manatunga's article on Sri Lanka is an important complementary contribution to the study of early Indian influences in Southeast Asia, the grand theme of the conference, as it gives a comprehensive account of Sri Lanka's close cultural relations with Southeast Asia during the Polonnaruva period. Polonnaruva is relevant to this volume too, as it was the chief administrative centre of the Cholas after their conquest of Sri Lanka by Rajaraja. Situated near its eastern coast with the important harbour of Trincomalee, it played, as pointed out by Manatunga, an important role in Rajendra's naval policy against Srivijaya. P. Shanmugam begins his article with a short survey of the few clear literary and archaeological evidences of maritime trade relations between Tamil Nadu and Southeast Asia during the Sangam Age in the first centuries AD. He emphasizes that these friendly relations were only temporarily interrupted by Rajendra's naval expeditions. Then follows a report on his survey of Chola influence on architecture, sculpture, and iconography in Indonesia, particularly at Jambi, the Dieng Plateau, and Prambanan. Despite obvious similarities, he is careful to speak in all these cases only of "traces" and suggested "influence" as he rightly admits that "it is very difficult to identify the Chola idiom". N. Susanti traces the rise and rule of Airlangga in the age of increasing competition between Srivijaya and Java to control the lucrative spice trade with the new maritime powers of the Cholas and Song China. Rajendra's defeat of Srivijaya allowed Airlangga to reunite East Java and establish a flourishing kingdom, and to posthumously become early East Java's most famous king.

It is one of the ironies of the history of Indo-China relations that the extant Tamil inscriptions in China date only from 1281, two years after the final fall of the Cholas. They were the Indian dynasty that had not only been most actively involved in maritime trade with China, but were also the most productive one in issuing thousands of marvellous inscriptions in South India and a few in Southeast Asia too (see appendix I). In her article on the Indic carvings of Quanzhou, R. Lee links the foundation of a Shiva temple, about whose consecration the Tamil-Chinese bilingual inscription reports, with yet another important event of the year 1279 — Kublai Khan's final conquest of Southern China.

Under the Mongols of the Yuan Dynasty, who were themselves foreigners in China, the community of foreign traders in Quanzhou, which had actively supported them, gained greater privileges. Apart from a stylistic analysis of the nearly three hundred still existing fragments of the destroyed temple, the salient points of her deliberations are considerations about their authorship. Although many of the carvings are strikingly South Indian in style, they reveal according to Lee "conceptual and craft influences from multiple communities". Particularly the columns, in which "Indian and Chinese subject

matters are nearly interchangeable", might have been built by "collaborating Chinese and Tamil artisans" and the temple as a whole might be the outcome of "reliance on a shared community of local Quanzhou artisans".

The already mentioned appendices of Indian and Chinese sources of this volume by N. Karashima, Y. Subbarayalu and T. Sen speak for themselves. They are a most appropriate documentation of South Indian maritime activities in the age of the Cholas even beyond Nagapattinam and Suvarnadwipa, from Cochin to Quanzhou.

It is a pleasure for me to record my thanks to the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, its Director Ambassador K. Kesavapany, its staff and in particular to Professor Tansen Sen, Dr Geoffrey Wade and Ms Rahilah Yusuf for their unfailing help in the production of this volume.

Professor Hermann Kulke (emeritus)
Chair of Asian History
Kiel University
Germany

Notes

1. K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, *The Cōḷas*, 2nd revised ed. (Madras, 1955), p. 218.
2. Ibid., p. 220.
3. G. W. Spencer, *The Politics of Expansion: The Chola Conquest of Sri Lanka and Sri Vijaya* (Madras, 1983).
4. Idem, "The Politics of Plunder: The Cholas in Eleventh Century Ceylon", in *Journal of Asian Studies* 35 (1976): 405–20.
5. M. Abraham, *Two Medieval Merchant Guilds of South India* (New Delhi, 1988), p. 142.
6. Tansen Sen, *Buddhism, Diplomacy and Trade: The Realignment of Sino-Indian Relations, 600–1400* (Honolulu, 2003), p. 223; see also K. R. Hall, *Maritime Trade and State Development in Early Southeast Asia* (Honolulu, 1985); R. Champakalakshmi, *Trade, Ideology and Urbanization: South India 300 BC to AD 1300* (Delhi, 1996).
7. Sen, *Buddhism, Diplomacy and Trade*, p. 225.
8. For example, K. R. Hall, "International Trade and Foreign Diplomacy in Early Medieval South India", *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 21 (1978) 75–98; Sen, *Buddhism, Diplomacy and Trade*; and H. Kulke, "Rivalry and Competition in the Bay of Bengal in the Eleventh Century and Its Bearing on Indian Ocean Studies", in *Commerce and Culture in the Bay of Bengal, 1500–1800*, edited by Om Prakash and Denys Lombard (New Delhi, 1999), pp. 17–36.
9. See Appendix I, No. 6.
10. See Appendix II.

THE CONTRIBUTORS

Hema Devare has pursued varied cultural and literary interests, writing fiction and non-fiction in English, Hindi, and Marathi. For the past several years she has focused on Indian textiles, their history, and cultural traditions. She has researched and written extensively on the journey of Indian textiles to Southeast Asia. She has written a dance-drama "Baliyatra", an interlude on the ancient connection between Bali and Orissa, India. In 2005 she presented a paper, "Textile connection between India and Southeast Asia", at an international conference on cultural interaction between India and Southeast Asia in Hyderabad, India. She produced a documentary film "Threads that Bind", tracing the long-standing cultural links between India and Indonesia. It has been shown in India, Indonesia, and Singapore. In Indonesia, she edited a book *Saree Sutra* that illuminates the connection between Indian and Indonesian silk textiles. Hema Devare is currently working on a book highlighting the journey of culture from India to Southeast Asia through textiles.

Noboru Karashima is Professor Emeritus, University of Tokyo and has a D.Litt. from University of Tokyo. He has been President, Epigraphical Society of India (1985); President, Historical Society of Japan (1993); President, International Association of Tamil Research (1995); President, Japanese Association for South Asian Studies (1996–2000); and was awarded the Academic Prize of the Fukuoka Asian Cultural Prize (1995) and the Japan Academy Prize (2003). His publications include *History and Society in South India: The Cholas to Vijayanagar* (2001), *A Concordance of Nayakas: The Vijayanagar Inscriptions in South India* (2002), *In Search of Chinese Ceramic-sherds in South India and Sri Lanka* (ed.) (2004).

K. Kesavapany began his term as Director of the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS), Singapore, from 1 November 2002. Prior to his appointment

to ISEAS, Ambassador Kesavapany was Singapore's High Commissioner to Malaysia from March 1997. In his thirty-year career in the Foreign Service, he served as Permanent Representative to the United Nations in Geneva (December 1991–March 1997) and held key staff appointments in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, including Director of ASEAN, Director of Directorate II (North America and Europe) and Director of Directorate IV (International Organizations and Third World). Ambassador Kesavapany was an active participant in the final phase of the Uruguay Round negotiations. He was unanimously chosen as the first Chairman of the WTO's General Council in 1995. Subsequently, he played a key role in securing Singapore as the venue for the first WTO Ministerial Meeting in 1996.

Hermann Kulke is Professor Emeritus of Asian History, Kiel University, Germany. He did his Ph.D. in Indology on the temple city of Chidambaram in 1967 and D.Litt. (Habilitation) in Indian History on the Gajapati kingship of Orissa at the South Asia Institute in Heidelberg in 1975. He was Research Fellow at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies in 1987 and of the Asia Research Institute, Singapore University, in 2007. His fields of specialization are early and early medieval history of India and Southeast Asia, early state formation, Indian Ocean Studies, and historiography. Major publications include *The Devaraja Cult* (1978); *The Cult of Jagannath and the Regional Tradition of Orissa* (1978); *Kings and Cults: State Formation and Legitimation in India and Southeast Asia* (1993); *The State in India 1000–1700* (1995); (and with D. Rothermund) *A History of India* (4th ed., 2004).

Risha Lee is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Art History and Archaeology at Columbia University in New York. Her research interests include premodern South Indian architecture and sculpture, epigraphy, merchant guild networks, as well as artistic, religious, and political exchange between India and China. This year she is conducting fieldwork for her dissertation, which is tentatively entitled, "Tamil Merchant Temples in India and Abroad". She received her B.A. from Harvard College.

Anura Manatunga is Professor at the Department of Archaeology, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka. He is also the Director, Centre for Asian Studies, University of Kelaniya; Director, Polonnaruva World Heritage Site Project, Central Cultural Fund; Honorary Librarian, Royal Asiatic Society of Sri Lanka; and the Vice-President, Sri Lanka Council of Archaeologists.

A. Meenakshisundararajan is Reader in Economics at the S.T. Hindu College, Nagercoil. He has undertaken several research projects and has been Principal

Investigator for "Social Security Measures in Plantations", "Tourist Van Operations in the Kanyakumari District", "WTO's labour standards, Environmental Standards and their impact on India's Foreign Trade", and "Environment-Labour Linkages of WTO — A Threat to India's International Trade". He has presented several papers at national and international seminars and conferences. At present he is Principal, S.T. Hindu College, Nagercoil.

Sangeeta Sakhuja is an educationist at the Indian Navy's school in New Delhi. She holds a Masters degree in Indian History from Delhi University, New Delhi, India.

Vijay Sakhuja is Visiting Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore. A former Indian Navy officer, Vijay Sakhuja received his Doctorate from the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. He was Senior Fellow at the Observer Research Foundation, New Delhi, and Research Fellow at the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi, and at the United Service Institution of India, New Delhi.

Tansen Sen is Associate Professor of Asian history and religions at the City University of New York. He is the author of *Buddhism, Diplomacy, and Trade: The Realignment of Sino-Indian Relations, 600–1400* (2003). He co-edited *China at the Crossroads: A Festschrift in Honor of Professor Victor H. Mair* (special volume of *Asia Major*, vol. 19, issues 1-2, 2006) and guest edited a special issue of *China Report* (vol. 43, issue 4, 2007) entitled "Kolkata and China". His recent articles include: "The Yuan Khanate and India: Cross-Cultural Diplomacy in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries" in *Asia Major* (2006), "The Formation of Chinese Maritime Networks to Southern Asia, 1200–1450" in *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* (2006), and "The Travel Records of Chinese Pilgrims Faxian, Xuanzang, and Yijing: Sources for Cross-Cultural Encounters between Ancient China and Ancient India" in *Education About Asia* (2006). He is currently at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, on a visiting research fellowship.

Gokul Seshadri is one of the founders and a contributing editor of varalaaru.com, a monthly magazine dedicated to South Indian historic research. He specializes in South Indian temple architecture, iconology, and epigraphy and has published several articles in related areas. Gokul also pioneered a digital reconstruction effort to visualize the original grandeur of ancient Chola mural paintings at the Brihadeswara temple, Thanjavur. He works as a Software Architect in New York.

P. Shanmugam, formerly Professor and Head, Department of Ancient History and Archaeology, is the Director, Institute of Traditional Cultures of South and Southeast Asia, University of Madras, Chennai, from 2004. He has completed several research projects, one of which was a project on the Ports of the Tamil country. He has contributed numerous articles on South Indian Economic History, Epigraphy, and Coinage in several professional journals. His publications are *Revenue System under the Cholas* (1987) and a book on coinage of the Sangam period (2004). The work, *Recent Advances in Vijayanagara Studies* (2005), was edited by him. He has participated in several excavations in Tamil Nadu, including at Korkai, Kodumanal, Uraiyur, and Kanchipuram. For an integrated study of the cultural links of Southeast Asia with South India, he has participated in several archaeological field visits in South India and also in the countries in Southeast Asia.

Y. Subbarayalu is former Professor of Epigraphy and Archaeology, Tamil University of Thanjavur (1983–2001) and specializes in South Indian epigraphy and archaeology, historical geography, and history of South India. He was Research Associate in the Madras University project, "A Topographical List of Inscriptions in Tamil Nadu and Kerala" (1966–70) and Lecturer in Ancient History at Madurai Kamaraj University (1976–83). He has been the Chief Investigator for the Historical Atlas of Tamilnadu, Tamil University (2001–04) and Coordinator for the Historical Atlas of South India, French Institute of Pondicherry (2005–08). He has a number of publications to his credit, including *Political Geography of the Chola Country* (1973); *A Concordance of the Names in the Chola Inscriptions* (1978) (as Co-author); *Palm-leaf Documents of Tiruchirappalli District* (1989); *Studies in Chola History* (2001); and *A Glossary of Tamil Inscriptions* (2002–03).

Ninie Susanti is Professor at the Archaeology Department, Faculty of Humanities University of Indonesia. She is affiliated with the IAAI (Ikatan Ahli Arkeologi Indonesia — Archaeologist Association) and AAEI (Asosiasi Ahli Epigrafi Indonesia — Epigraphist Association) and specializes in epigraphy.

S. Vasanthi pursued her studies in Chennai. She obtained her M.A. Degree in Ancient History & Archaeology, Master of Philosophy in Ancient History & Archaeology, and her Doctoral Degree from Madras University, Chennai. She joined the Tamil Nadu State Department of Archaeology in 1982 as Archaeological Officer, and worked for three years in Chennai. She was then posted as Curator to the Pre-Historic Site Museum at Poondi (where the

world famous pre-historic sites in India are located), where she served for more than five years. She is currently working as an excavation cum exploration archaeologist. She has participated in the excavations by the Department at Alagankulam, Tirukoilur, Poompuhar, Maligaimedu, Andippatti, Marakkanam, Tranquebar, and Sembiyankandiyur. Vasanthi received the Best Student award from Madras University; won Second Prize for the Best Student award from Jawaharlal Nehru foundations, India; and was awarded a small grant by the Nehru Trust for Indian Collections at the Victoria and Albert Museum.

1

THE NAVAL EXPEDITIONS OF THE CHOLAS IN THE CONTEXT OF ASIAN HISTORY[1]

Hermann Kulke

In one of his inscriptions at the monumental temple at Tanjavur, King Rajendra Chola is praised for having dispatched in 1025 "many ships in the midst of the rolling sea and having caught Sangrama-vijayottunga-varman, the king of Kadaram, together with the elephants in his glorious army, (took) the large heap of treasures, which (that king) had rightfully accumulated; (captured) with noise the (arch called) Vidhyadhara-torana at the 'war gate' of his extensive city, Srivijaya with the 'jeweled wicket-gate' adorned with great splendour and the 'gate of large jewels' ".[2] The inscription enumerates likewise twelve other port cities on the Malay Peninsula, Sumatra, and the Nicobar Islands, which had been raided by the South Indian navy.

Rajendra's mighty overseas expedition against Srivijaya was a unique event in India's history and its otherwise peaceful relations with the states of Southeast Asia which had come under India's strong cultural influence for about a millennium. The reasons of this naval expedition are still a moot point as the sources are silent about its exact causes. Nilakanta Sastri concluded in his monumental work on the Cholas that "we have to assume either some attempt on the part of Srivijaya to throw obstacles in the way of the Cola trade with the East, or more probably, a simple desire on the part of Rajendra to extend his *digvijaya* to the countries across the sea so well known to his subjects at home, and thereby add luster to his crown".[3] The American

historian G.W. Spencer interprets the naval expedition of the Cholas as the culmination of their "politics of plunder" and expansionism which the Cholas had been employing for decades already in wars in South India and Sri Lanka.[4] In 1995 Tansen Sen pointed out that "the possibility of a 'trade war' cannot be completely ruled out because the *Zhufan zhi* [Description of the Barbarous People by Chau Ju-kua, AD 1225] records of Srivijayans forcing foreign ships to stop at their sea ports, and if the ships failed to do so, then, they would be attacked by the powerful Srivijayan navy and destroyed. Therefore, the Cola raid on Srivijaya can be concluded as an ambitious maneuver with a pretext to remove hindrance from the trade route."[5] In his more recent monograph of the year 2003, Sen went even a step further and suggested that "the Srivijayan diplomatic and military attempts to block direct maritime links between Indian and the Song markets may have been both the principal factors for the Chola naval raids".[6] Recently K.V. Ramesh, too, emphasized the unhindered and unthreatened trade between South and Southeast Asia as the primary purpose of the naval expedition, but also, as its second, the booty, as claimed in Rajendra's own inscription.[7] Another possible factor, particularly emphasized by Meera Abraham in her monograph on South Indian merchant guilds, is a direct influence of the famous Manigramam and Ayyavole merchant guilds on the politics of the Cholas.[8] All these explanations have their own truth value. But there are reasons to assume that Rajendra's naval expeditions against Srivijaya also have to be seen in the much wider context of Asian history and the contemporary political and economic developments in the Indian Ocean.

The late tenth century witnessed the synchronous rise of three new and powerful dynasties, the Fatimids in Egypt (AD 969), the Song in China (AD 960) and the Cholas (AD 985), which soon began to interfere in the Indian Ocean trade system. The decline of the Abbasids of Baghdad and the rise of the Fatimids in Egypt were major events in the Muslim world. Already in 985/86 al-Maqdisi wrote "Baghdad was once a magnificent city, but is now fast falling to ruin and decay, and has lost all its splendor… Al-Fustat of Misr (Cairo) in the present day is like Bagdhad of old; I know no city in Islam superior to it."[9] The rise of the Fatimids as the dominating power of the Muslim World not only caused the shift of Muslim trading activities from the Persian Gulf to the Red Sea,[10] but also increased considerably the importance of the Malabar coast in the hinterland of the emerging Chola power. Whereas the Persian Gulf trade with India followed mainly the coastal line to the great harbours of Gujarat, ships from the Red Sea and Aden, particularly during the summer monsoon, easily crossed the Arabian Sea directly to the Malabar coast of South India. This development is well documented by the famous

Geniza documents of Jewish traders of Cairo/Al-Fustat and Aden with the Malabar coast.[11] In the Far East the Song dynasty from the outset began to promote and control maritime trade more successfully than any other Chinese dynasty.[12] But India and Southeast Asia, too, emerged during these decades as active participants in the international power struggle and maritime trade between the Near East and China, the terminals of the Indian Ocean trade. The spectacular attack of the Cholas on Srivijaya has to be seen in this broader context of the rise of new powers, the shift of trade routes, and, as a consequence of these processes, a struggle for market share.

The rise of the Cholas from 985 to 1025 took place with breathtaking swiftness. From their dynastic core region in the Kaveri delta, King Rajaraja subdued all kingdoms of South India with their coastal regions, penetrated into central India, and conquered the offshore islands of Sri Lanka and the Maldives. In the twenties of the eleventh century, his son Rajendra undertook, as a culmination of this Chola expansionism, his two unique expeditions to Bengal and Southeast Asia. The Cholas appear to have followed a systematic plan, even though it might have evolved only stepwise. After the conquest of the whole of South India and its flourishing ports on the Coromandel and Malabar coasts, they occupied Sri Lanka and the Maldives as important maritime trading centres in the Indian Ocean, and then subdued all possible Indian opponents on the eastern coast up to Bengal (for example, the Somavamsa of Orissa) and finally attacked Srivijaya, which dominated Southeast Asia's trade routes through the Straits of Malacca and the Sunda Straits.

During the last centuries of the first millennium AD, India and Southeast Asia went through similar processes of state formation, which elsewhere have been subsumed under the term "from early to imperial kingdom".[13] The result of this development was an increased capacity of the state to extract socially produced surplus, and to mobilize men and means. Suffice it to mention here the rise of the Rashtrakutas in Central India in 752 and the state of Angkor in AD 802. More or less simultaneously with the expansionism of the Cholas under Rajaraja and Rajendra, the kingdom of Angkor for the first time extended its frontiers far beyond its dynastic homelands, and subjugated parts of Laos, central Thailand, and the northern part of the Malay Peninsula. It soon became the dominating power in the Gulf of Siam and Mainland Southeast Asia and was, therefore, bound to get into conflict with Dai-Viet and Champa who were competing for the control of the important maritime trade routes on the eastern coast of Mainland Southeast Asia.[14] And, most important in our context, Angkor penetrated very directly into the sphere of interest of Srivijaya on the

northern Malay Peninsula.[15] For centuries, Srivijaya had controlled the southern part of the Malay Peninsula up to Ligor and Chaiya and temporarily even the Isthmus of Kra. In this northern outpost of Srivijaya's influence on the Malay Peninsula, one of its most important inscriptions records the construction of a sanctuary in Ligor, dedicated to Buddha, Padmapani, and Vajrapani by a king of Srivijaya in the year 775.[16]

From the middle of the eleventh century, another "imperial kingdom" and important competitor arose in the northeastern Bay of Bengal. The kingdom of Pagan united central and coastal Burma with parts of the northwestern coast of the Malay Peninsula. Pagan was thus, perhaps for the first time in the history of Southeast Asia, able to link maritime trade in the northern Bay of Bengal directly with China, through its access to the land route to Yunnan. During this period Burma's relations with countries on the opposite side of the Bay of Bengal and with Sri Lanka appear to have been very strong as can be seen, for example, from the influence of Orissan architecture in early Pagan.

The Malay world of present Malaysia and Indonesia was divided between Srivijaya in the west and the kingdom of Mataram in Java. In the early tenth century Mataram had shifted its capital from near Yogyakarta in southern central Java to northeastern Java near Surabaya. The causes of the abandonment of one of Asia's most impressive sacred spaces around the Borobudur and Prambanan are still unknown.[17] But there are good reasons to assume that this shift aimed at the control of the fertile rice-growing plains southwest of Surabaya, and at a more direct access to, and perhaps even control over, the spice trade route from the Moluccas which passed along the northern coast of Java. The west of the archipelago and its important trade routes were, since the late seventh century, under the control of Srivijaya. Sometimes termed as a thalassocracy or "Ocean State", Srivijaya appears to have been a confederation of harbours and their respective hinterlands rather than a centrally administered agrarian state,[18] but its richness was proverbial. In the year 956, on the eve of the above mentioned rise of the new great powers of the Indian Ocean, the Arab geographer Ma'sudi reported that even the fastest ship would not have been able to visit in two years all the islands of this kingdom whose Maharaja extracts more profit from his own country than any other rulers of the world.[19] Srivijaya, however, was also known for its military strength and piracy-like activities. An early twelfth-century Chinese account reports "They [the Srivijayans] are skilled at fighting on land or water. When they are about to make war on another state they assemble and send forth such a force as the occasion demands. They appoint chiefs and leaders, and all provide their own

military equipment and the necessary provisions. In facing their enemy and braving death they have not their equal among other nations…. If a merchant ship passes by without entering [their harbour], their boats go forth to make a combined attack, and all are ready to die [in the attempt]. This is the reason why this country is a great shipping centre."[20]

The relations of the Southeast Asian states with their great neighbours, India and China, were intensive, but of very different natures. India was for Southeast Asian countries the holy land of Buddhism and Hinduism and certainly an important trading place. But politically and increasingly, economically too, China was the undisputed "Middle Kingdom". All kingdoms of Southeast Asia and particularly those that were small and harassed by their neighbours sent tributary missions to the imperial court of China.[21] For Southeast Asian historiography and, of course, for the historiography of the Indian Ocean trade system, it is of the greatest importance that Chinese officials reported meticulously about these missions, their gifts, requests, etc. China's own interest in the "southern barbarians" of Kunlun, the countries of Southeast Asia, increased considerably under the Tang dynasty (618–907).[22] Their rule coincided with the early heyday of transoceanic trade of Arab and Near Eastern merchants in China.[23]

The reunification of China under the Song dynasty and the rise of the Fatimids and the Cholas in the second half of the tenth century initiated a new era in the maritime history of Asia. Shortly after his accession to the throne, the first Song emperor issued orders for the regulation of maritime trade and revenues. About two decades later, a "Bureau of Licensed Trade" was established for buying up foreign goods which were then sold as a state monopoly. In 987 the Chinese government gave an instruction which appears to have been one of the major causes of the struggles in the Bay of Bengal during the eleventh century. In this year, China dispatched four missions vested with imperial authority and gifts to foreign countries to induce "foreign traders of the South Sea and those who went to foreign lands beyond the sea" to come more frequently to the Chinese ports on the promise of special facilities and import licences.[24]

Srivijaya was the first country to react to the Chinese offer and sent a tribute mission already the following year. But during its stay in China the mission was informed that its country had been attacked by the east Javanese kingdom of Mataram. During a stopover in Champa the mission received the news that Mataram was still continuing its war against Srivijaya. The mission, therefore, returned to China and Srivijaya was placed under imperial protection. But a Javanese embassy to China in 992 confirmed that the war was still going on.[25] The reasons for this conflict are unknown. But in this case too, we

may assume that it was caused by competition between these two states which were most directly involved in the spice trade with China.

We are informed that during these years of increasing tensions, a number of peculiar "rituo-political" donations of Southeast Asian rulers to China and India. The annals of the Song dynasty report that in 1003 the king of Srivijaya "sent two envoys to bring tribute. They told that in their country a Buddhist temple had been erected in order to pray for the long life of the emperor and that they wanted a name and bells for it by which the emperor would show that he appreciated their good intentions. An edict was issued by which the temple got the name of *Ch'eng-t'en-wan-shou* ('ten thousand years of receiving [blessings] from heaven [that is, China]') and bells were cast to be given to them."[26] The next year Srivijaya again sent envoys to China who were followed up by four embassies until 1018. Obviously Srivijaya was most eager to win China's favour.

In exactly the period when Srivijaya's king had a temple constructed for the welfare of the Chinese emperor, Srivijaya also entered into the same type of diplomatic relations with the Chola state in South India. The famous larger Leiden grant of the year 1005 records the Chola king Rajaraja donating the revenue of a village for the maintenance of the Buddhist shrine Cudamani Vihara, which Sri Maravijayottungavarman, the Sailendra king of Srivijaya, had constructed in the name of his father at Nagapattinam, the major port of the Chola state.[27] The foundation stone of this shrine in the South Indian harbour might have already been laid about two years earlier in 1003, the year when the king of Srivijaya informed the Chinese emperor about the construction of a Buddhist shrine for his welfare. It is tempting to assume a direct connection between these two unusual and more or less synchronous deeds of Srivijaya's king whose name is clearly mentioned both in Chinese and Indian sources. Srivijaya obviously tried to establish friendly relations with the two big powers of East and South Asia in order to maintain and strengthen its privileged position in the maritime trade in eastern Asia. Previously China might have been more important for Srivijaya than South India. But after their conquest of South India's ports, the Maldives, and Sri Lanka, the Cholas controlled the central section of the Indian Ocean trade routes in a way very similar to how Srivijaya dominated its southeastern section. During this period of incipient trade rivalry in the Bay of Bengal, both states obviously still tried to maintain their friendly relations.[28] After his accession to the Chola throne in 1014, Rajendra continued this policy. In 1015 he confirmed his father's donation to Srivijaya's temple at Nagapattinam by a new inscription. That same year and in 1018, he received large gifts of "China gold" (*Cina-kanakam*) from Srivijaya for a Hindu temple and its Brahmins in the Chola harbour.[29]

During these years, Angkor, Mainland Southeast Asia's major power, also entered into this kind of ritual diplomacy with the Cholas. Shortly after 1012 King Suryavarman I under whom, as already mentioned, Angkor became the dominating power in the Gulf of Siam, chose a very unusual gift for the Chola king. For the protection of his own royalty (*atma-laksmi*) he presented to Rajendra a war chariot with which he had defeated his own enemies.[30] In this case too, it is left to us to speculate on the reasons for the truly royal gift by the king of Angkor to his colleague on the Chola throne. It is likely that Angkor had entered troubled waters with its penetration into Srivijaya's sphere of influence on the Malay Peninsula. The Isthmus of Kra had always offered an alternative to the long and often dangerous maritime trade route to the Gulf of Siam through the Straits of Malacca, particularly for those merchants who wished to avoid the rather restrictive staple rights of Srivijaya about which we are informed by a Chinese account of the early twelfth century: "In recent years San-fo-ch'i [Srivijaya] has established monopoly in sandalwood. The ruler orders merchants to sell it to him. The market value of the product therefore increases several times. The subjects of that country do not dare to sell it privately. This is an effective way of governance. The country is exactly [at the center of] the southern sea. The Ta-shih [Arab] countries are far away to its west. Chinese going to Ta-shih reach San-fo-ch'i, repair their ships, and exchange goods. Merchants from distant places congregate there. This country is therefore considered to be the most prosperous one."[31] It is quite possible that in the early eleventh century, Angkor tried to reactivate the land route at the Isthmus of Kra in order to divert the maritime trade between the Bay of Bengal and China directly through the Isthmus of Kra and the Gulf of Siam which now had come under its control.

Our sources are silent about a direct conflict between Srivijaya and Angkor in the eleventh century. But in the late eighth century, several inscriptions in Champa reported that people from Java and other islands, "men living on food more horrible than cadavers, frightful, came in ships" and desecrated temples and idols.[32] In the mid-eleventh century, Sadasiva, Suryavarman's *purohita* (royal chaplain) and brother-in-law, claims in his famous Sdok Kak Thom inscription that his forefather Sivakaivalya had consecrated Angkor's "state cult", the Devaraja cult, in AD 802 in order "to prevent his land of Kambuja from ever being [again] dependent (*ayatta*) on Java".[33] This reference in an inscription of the year 1052 shows that in eleventh-century Angkor there still existed an awareness of a possible threat from Java, which in the eleventh-century context, certainly also referred to Srivijaya. It might have been this wish never to become "dependent on Java" again which induced the king of Angkor to present to the ruler of South India his own war chariot for the sake of his *atma-laksmi*. Obviously

the Cholas, too, meanwhile had become rivals of Srivijaya and thus potential allies of Angkor.[34]

It is not surprising that in this period of hectic diplomatic activities of the various states of the Bay of Bengal, the Cholas sent their first embassy to the Chinese court. It had a stopover in Srivijaya for several months and reached China in 1015. As this happened only ten years before the swift attack of the Chola navy on the ports of Srivijaya, one may assume that the South Indian envoys had done excellent intelligence work in view of a possible future conflict with Srivijaya. As for the reception of the mission at the imperial court of China we have a detailed report in the Chinese encyclopedia *Wenxian tong kao* of the year 1319: "The kingdom [Chu-lien] which in antiquity never had communications with the Empire, sent ambassadors for the first time under the dynasty of the Song." In a letter handed over by the chief of the mission, Rajaraja, who meanwhile had passed away, informed the Emperor: "My age, the stretch of the seas which separate us, and the great difficulties on the route to traverse, do not permit me to go, in order to carry myself the tribute that I wish to offer you. … [This will therefore be done by] my envoys, to the number of fifty-two, arriving at the foot of your throne. I have ordered them to offer you a robe and cap decorated with pearls, pearls of different sizes weighing about 21,000 liang, sixty pieces of ivory and sixty pounds of incense."[35] The mission to China was a great success. The large number of its members seems to have prompted the Chinese prefect of Guangzhou to request the Song court, as early as by the following year, to limit the members of embassies from these "Big Four", the Cholas, Arabs, Srivijaya, and Java, to not more than twenty people,[36] a plea which, however, went unheard. As emphasized by Tansen Sen,[37] throughout the eleventh and twelfth centuries it remained Srivijaya's major diplomatic aim to lower the Cholas in China's esteem.

As already mentioned, Rajendra Chola initially seems to have continued his father's policy of friendly relations with Srivijaya as he reconfirmed his father's grant to Srivijaya's Buddhist temple at Nagapattinam, and in turn received valuable presents from the king of Srivijaya. But there are reasons to assume that during these years the competition between the major powers of the Bay of Bengal and the Javanese Sea had increased considerably. In 1016 the east Javanese kingdom of Mataram was attacked and its capital ransacked by west Javanese troops with the obvious approval or even support of Srivijaya.[38] For more than a decade Mataram ceased to be Srivijaya's rival in the spice trade of the eastern islands. As if aware of its precarious position after having become the sole big power of maritime Southeast Asia, Srivijaya sent envoys regularly to China in 1016, 1017, and 1018.

The Cholas did not remain mere spectators of Srivijaya's rise to an unchallenged regional power with control over the vital maritime trade routes in Southeast Asia. They, too, started a new round of eliminating possible rivals in the offshore islands of South Asia. In 1017 the last remnants of the ancient kingdom of Sri Lanka were destroyed. Polonnaruva, with its easy access to the eastern coast and its ports, became the new Chola capital of Sri Lanka. In the same year, a first small naval expedition of the Cholas might have reached Kadaram, Srivijaya's major outpost on the Malay Peninsula. In case it really occurred, Srivijaya's mission to the Cholas in 1018 might have been intended to calm down the Chola's increasing suspicion against Srivijaya's intentions.[39] In the same year Kerala with its important Malabar ports was finally subjugated, and the "many ancient islands", the Maldives, were again attacked. In 1020, only five years after their first embassy had reached China, the Cholas again sent envoys to the Imperial Court.[40] A few years later, in 1022/23 the Cholas accomplished their grand design by their victorious march through Kalinga up to the Ganges, eliminating all possible rivals on the eastern coast of the subcontinent and finally undertaking their great naval expedition against Srivijaya in 1025.

It appears as if the Cholas had initially been trying to copy the Srivijayan model, that is, to gain undisputed control over ports and the maritime routes which passed through their sphere of influence. The exact reasons for abandoning their quest for regional hegemony and extending their expansionism across the Bay of Bengal to Southeast Asia are still unknown. But apparently their competition with Srivijaya had reached a level where traditional means of settling conflicts were no longer valid. In the year 1023, the competition between the Cholas and Srivijaya might have even further increased when the Chinese Emperor urged Arab envoys to shift their trade from the Central Asian Silk Road to the Silk Road of the Sea.[41] In this situation, the immensity of the stake in the maritime trade might have induced the famous South India merchant guilds of the Ayyavole and Manigramam to play a more active role in this maritime big power game.[42] They might have tried to influence the Chola court in a way similar to how the (British) Rangoon Chamber of Commerce exerted pressure on the British Government on the eve of the annexation of Upper Burma in 1885. But, of course, this is mere conjecture as our sources are totally silent on this point.

The Chola raid of fourteen flourishing port cities on the Malay Peninsula and in Sumatra appears to have shocked the countries of Southeast Asia as none of them sent envoys to China for three years. In 1028 the Song Emperor, therefore, complained that "in recent years foreign shipping rarely came to Canton". He sent instructions to the fiscal superintendent of Canton

to invite the merchants to return to Canton.[43] Already a few weeks later, a mission from Srivijaya arrived and was treated with great honour. O.W. Wolters, therefore, rightly remarks that "Srivijaya was still in business"[44] and J. Wisseman Christie even came to the conclusion that "the effects of the Chola raids appear, for the most part, to have been minimal and transitory: Srivijaya sent a well-received mission to China in 1028".[45] Although hampered by internal struggles between several port cities — most likely a result of the Chola raid — Srivijaya regained its dominant position in the western Malay world with its important Straits. It returned to its traditional means of diplomacy in order to improve its position at the Chinese court. In 1079 it donated the unbelievable amount of 600,000 gold pieces for the repair and maintenance of a Taoist shrine in Canton.[46] From a Chinese report of the twelfth century we know that Srivijaya had again become "the most important port-of-call on the sea-routes of the foreigners, from the country of Java (She-p'o) on the east and from the countries of the Arabs (T'a-shi) and Quilon (Ku-lin) in the west; they all pass through it on their way to China".[47]

After their naval expedition the Cholas seem to have confined themselves to only one other mission to China in the year 1033. Obviously they were reluctant to convert their military success into more permanent political dominion, by, for instance, the establishment of a fortified settlement of Tamil merchants in the Straits of Malacca. In fact, such a fortified settlement of Manigramam merchants seems to have already existed at Takuapa in the Isthmus of Kra during Pallava rule in the late ninth century.[48] But as a result of Rajendra's naval expedition, the Cholas became equated with South Indian foreigners in Javanese inscriptions. Until the rise of the "Imperial Cholas", only Klings or "Kalingas" were mentioned in Javanese inscriptions as foreign visitors from the eastern coast of India. In 1021, when South India had already emerged as a maritime power, an inscription added Drawidas to this list and they were then replaced by the Colikas in an inscription of the year 1053.[49] The trade of South Indian merchants continued to flourish also in the realm of Srivijaya. This is well documented by the famous inscription of the Ayyavole guild of the year 1088, discovered in Barus in West Sumatra. Only recently completely edited by Y. Subbarayalu,[50] it reports a grant of "Captain of the town, the merchant of the locality" (*nakara-senapati nattu chettiyar*) and depicts an obviously flourishing social life of an autonomous quarter of the Tamil community in Barus.

From the eleventh century the impact of South Indian trade in Southeast Asia was accompanied by a new wave of cultural influence from South India. It emanated primarily from the realm of the Cholas and replaced the strong influence of Pallava art and architecture of previous centuries. But it

soon underwent the interesting process of "localization", particularly in Sumatra. This is well depicted by a bronze sculpture from Gunung Tua and stone sculptures from Kota Cina in North Sumatra. Whereas the locally made bronze sculpture of Lokanatha and Tara with its dated Old Malay inscription of the year 1039 still depicts an excellent classical Chola style,[51] the later stone sculptures of Kota Cina reveal a thoroughly localized Chola style of northern Sumatra.[52]

Towards the end of the eleventh century, particularly under the reign of Kulottunga I (1070–1118), the Cholas renewed their activities in the Bay of Bengal.[53] In 1067–68 they interfered again in Srivijaya with a naval expedition on behalf of a pretender to the throne of Kadaram, Srivijaya's second capital on the Malay Peninsula. At the Chinese court, however, this assistance to a prince of Srivijaya did not enhance the reputation of the Cholas. For several years the Chola state was wrongly termed in official Chinese annals as a tributary or "vassal" state of Srivijaya. This obviously false estimation might have been deliberately caused by Srivijaya's envoys at the Chinese court. The "misunderstanding" was corrected only by a new mission of the Cholas to China under Kulottunga in 1077. It consisted of seventy-two persons, most of whom were traders. They were accorded two exceptionally high privileges of protocol. Srivijaya had to send two missions in 1079 and 1088 in order to receive the same honours.[54] However, about twenty years later, the "anti-Chola faction" of Srivijaya seems to have regained the upper hand again at the imperial court of China. As pointed out by Tansen Sen, the President of the Council of Rites in 1106 objected to the imperial intention of receiving envoys from Pagan in accordance to the status given to envoys of the Cholas by saying: "The Chola [Kingdom] is subject to Srivijaya, this is why during the Xining reign period (1068–1077), we wrote to its ruler on a coarse paper with an envelope of plain stuff. Pagan, on the other hand, is a great kingdom and should not be perceived as a small tributary state. It deserves a comparable status [as given to] Arab, Jiaozhi (present-day Vietnam), and other [similar] states."[55]

The involvement of the Cholas, and in particular, of Kulottunga, in Srivijayan affairs during these years is a controversial matter. It is most likely that Kulottunga's name (*Di-hua-jia-luo*) occurs as the name of the ruler of Srivijaya in a Chinese transliteration in the above mentioned Cantonese inscription of the year 1079, since the same name occurs in the Song annals as the name of the Chola king who sent the mission in the year 1077.[56] From this evidence, the renewed naval activities of the Cholas in 1067–68, and other scattered evidence, one may infer that the Cholas supported one faction of the Srivijayan court or one port city of its

confederation. Another faction might then have spread the news that the Chola kingdom had become a "vassal state" of Srivijaya. After all, this was a period of intensive power struggle in Srivijaya. Only a few decades later Srivijaya-Palembang lost its dominating position among the port-cities of Srivijaya to Jambi. Tan Yeok Seong, the editor of the Srivijayan inscription of Canton, even came to the conclusion that Kulottunga might have stayed in Kadaram after the naval expedition of 1067, and reinstalled its king before he returned to South India to occupy the Chola throne in 1070.[57] In about 1090, Kulottunga, at the request of the king of Srivijaya renewed, via his famous smaller Leiden grant, the donation of the villages, which Rajaraja had granted in 1005 for the maintenance of the *vihara* at Nagapattinam, built by the then ruler of Srivijaya.[58]

Kulottunga also maintained friendly relations with the two great kingdoms of Mainland Southeast Asia. In 1114, soon after his enthronement, King Suryavarman II, the famous builder of Angkor Wat, sent a mission to the Chola court, which presented a precious stone to Kulottunga. And in an inscription at Pagan, the Burmese King Kyanzittha (1077–1112) even claims to have converted the "Choli prince" to the teachings of the Buddha by a personal letter written on gold leaves in which he praised the greatness of the Buddhist *triratna*.[59] These rituo-political missions and donations also appear to have been connected with the promotion of trade as Kulottunga is praised for abolishing tolls (*sungam*)[60] and he is the only Chola king whose name is associated with a harbour. The renaming of Vishakhapattanam in Andhra Pradesh as *Kulottungacolapattanam* indicates Kulottunga's interest in trade with countries on the opposite side of the Bay of Bengal, that is, with Burma and Cambodia via the Isthmus of Kra.[61]

The decline of the Chola power from the late twelfth century by no means caused a decrease in South Indian trade in the Bay of Bengal and China. The twelfth and thirteenth centuries were a period of the greatest activities of the two South Indian guilds of the Ayyavole and Manigramam merchants, mainly in South India itself of course, and in Sri Lanka.[62] But Burma and the southern Thai peninsula too remained regions where South Indian merchant guilds were active during this period. An inscription of the thirteenth century at the only Hindu temple at Pagan, which was most likely built for Indian merchants, reports a donation by a member of the South Indian *nanadesi* merchants.[63] The Tamil stone inscription of Nakhon Si Thammarat in the Wat Boromadhatu reports a Brahmadeya grant by Danma Senapati, most likely a merchant from Cholamandala.[64] The weakening of the Chola state from the mid-thirteenth century allowed other kingdoms in the Bay of Bengal and their harbours to participate more actively in the Indian Ocean trade. This can be inferred from the famous Motupalli

inscription of King Ganapati of the Kakatiya Kingdom in northern Andhra Pradesh who offered in the year 1244 "safety to traders by sea starting for and arriving from all continents, islands, foreign countries and cities".[65] Recent excavations at Manikapatnam, an ancient maritime harbour in the Chilka Lake in Orissa, corroborate the increase in Chinese trade in this region of the Bay of Bengal during this period.

Particularly impressive is the thirteenth-century evidence of the presence of a large South Indian merchant community in China and of Chinese traders in South India. More recent discoveries in Quanzhou (which under the Southern Song dynasty had gradually surpassed Canton as China's main port and as a place of large colonies of foreign merchants) have brought to light a well-preserved lower portion of a Hindu temple and about 300 sculptures, all in purely late but localized Chola style.[66] This temple and the large number of Hindu sculptures are the earliest known infallible evidence of the existence of a large South Indian colony in China.[67] A bilingual Tamil-Chinese inscription of the year AD 1281 reports the dedication of a Saiva statue in yet another Hindu temple in Quanzhou. Its author might have been the son of the last Chola king, Rajaraja III, who would have sought the help of the Chinese emperor two years after the eclipse of his dynastic fortune.[68] Two months before this dedication, a Mongol envoy, Yang Tingbi, had already been dispatched to India — most likely to South India, "underscoring the reciprocal nature of this relationship".[69]

The evidence for the presence of a Chinese merchant community in South India during these years is equally impressive. Until 1867 the ruins of a three-storeyed Chinese pagoda existed in Nagapattinam. From Chinese sources we know that it was constructed in AD 1267. China thus seems to have followed the example of Srivijaya and its Buddhist monastery at Nagapattinam. Moreover, altogether 1,838 Chinese coins have been discovered in the neighbourhood of Nagapattinam, most probably belonging to a coin hoard. They are dated from the second to the thirteenth centuries. The most recent among these belong to a time bracket of 1265 to 1275, which corresponds exactly with the date of the construction of the Chinese pagoda. If we add to this evidence the findings of Chinese ceramics in South India, the greatest amount of which belong to the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries,[70] it becomes obvious that these centuries were a period of intensive and mostly direct trade relations between South and Eastern India and China.[71]

The establishment of the Delhi Sultanate in 1206, its temporary extension to Central and South India in the early fourteenth century, the subsequent establishment of the Deccan and Madurai Sultanates, and the spread of Islam in India's ports and along the maritime trading routes in Southeast Asia,