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PART II.—APRIL

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An Unidentified Territory of Southern India

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FREE intercourse with Malabar was long denied to the rest of Southern India by the formidable natural obstacle of the Western Ghats with their impenetrable fastnesses and few passes. Owing chiefly to this circumstance that part of the country remained to a great extent isolated and secure from frequent invasions by other southern powers. This isolation, coupled with the conservative nature of the people of this tract, accounts for the preservation intact of several ancient customs of the Indians. Even in later times, whenever there had been any general disaster affecting the whole of the Dekhan, such as an invasion by the Muhammadan kings of the Khilji and Taghlak lines, the west coast afforded a safe asylum to the rest of the south. There is nothing unnatural in the following exclamation of the poet-composer of the Tiruvālangādu plates of the eleventh century A.D. :—

“Excepting Paramēśvara, who else in this world could contemplate even in mind the humiliation of that country which is protected by the glory of the crest jewel of the Bhrgu race (i.e. Paraśu-Rāma) and the austerities of its chiefs, and which had not been injured by enemies.”

It was given to that sturdy warrior of the Chōla line, Rājarāja I, who braved and courted danger, to invade this tract and to conquer the country of Kollam and Kolla-dēsam, breaking for once the naval supremacy of the Chēras by destroying many of their ships at a place named Kāndaḷūr. Leaving open the question of the identity of the two places Kollam and Kāndaḷūr, about whose existence in Malabar there is not the least doubt, we may proceed to point out that the Chōla king was accompanied in his expedition and assisted by his valiant son, Rājēndra-Chōla I, who later on carried further the intention of his father. There is every justification for declaring that Rājēndra-Chōla was the greatest of the Chōla sovereigns, greater even than many of those who stand prominently forth in the ancient history of India. By the success of his arms he was able to leave the Chōla empire much more extended than could have been thought possible. When his activities ceased, Chōla supremacy was acknowledged everywhere in the Dekhan. Chōla arms were felt in the Gangetic region, in the island of Ceylon, in distant Burmah, and in the several islands of the Indian Ocean. He even sent an embassy to far distant China, though what his intentions in that direction were it is not at present possible to fathom. The wars of Rājēndra-Chōla were mostly conducted by his eldest son, Rājādhirāja I. The latter, as is natural, records in the historical introductions of his inscriptions all the military feats performed by him, though in truth they were effected for Rājēndra-Chōla I and during that king's reign. The nomination of Prince Rājādhirāja to succeed Rājēndra-Chōla I appears to have taken place in A.D. 1018, although he actually came to rule in about A.D. 1045 and held the reins of government till A.D. 1050. It is impossible to conceive that in the short period of his actual rule of four or five years he could have done all that is claimed for him in his inscriptions. The isolation of which we have spoken accounts for the want of references to the political history of the Chēras in the historical documents of other

parts of southern India. There is thus dearth of information in early Chōla and Pāṇḍya records regarding the territorial divisions of the west coast.

One such division that still remains to be identified occurs in the historical introductions of the inscriptions of the Chōla king Rājākēsarivarman Rājādhirāja I. After conquering the Pāṇḍyas this Chōla sovereign is said to have marched against the Chēra country. The feats performed by him in that quarter are described in the following words¹ :—

Olgaḷ-il Vēṇāṭṭ-araśai-chchēṇāṭṭ-oduḷki
mēvu-pugaḷ-Irāmakuḍa-mūvar-keḍa-muṇindu
viḍaḷ² -keḷu-Villavan kuḍar-maḍi-kkoṇḍu taṇ-
nāḍu-viṭṭ-ōḍi = kkāḍu-pukk-oḷippa
vaṇṇiy-am-puḍu-malar malaṇḍ-āṅ-eṇṇal-il
vēlai-keḷu Kāndaḷūr-chchālai kalam aruttu.

The whole of the passage extracted here relates to a distinct campaign of the king. A translation will show the order in which the events of this campaign took place :—

“Having despatched the irreducible king of Vēṇāḍu to heaven (or to a distant country) and having fought (so fiercely) as to destroy the three (kings) of the famous Irāmakuḍam, and the powerful Villavan (i.e. the Chēra) having run away carrying his folded bowels, abandoning his country, and hid himself in forests, (the Chōla king) put on (a garland of) beautiful fresh *vaṇṇi* flowers (as token of his victories) and then destroyed the large (number of) ships (floating) on the sea at Kāndaḷūr-chchālai.”

In his *South-Indian Inscriptions*³ Dr. Hultzsch has translated the passage as under :—

“(He) sent the undaunted king of Vēṇāḍu to the country of heaven and destroyed in anger the three (princes) of the famous Irāmakuḍam. While the strong Villavan (i.e. Chēra)

¹ *South-Indian Inscriptions*, vol. iii, pt. i, No. 28, text-ll. 2 ff.

² Another reading of this word is *miḍal*.

³ See vol. iii, p. 56.

was attacked by pains in the bowels, fled from his country and hid himself in the jungle, (the Chōla king) destroyed (his) ships (at) Kāndaḷūr-Śālai on the never-decreasing ocean as (easily as he) would have put on a beautiful fresh flower of the Vañji (tree).”

It will be seen that my rendering of the passage differs in some respects from that given by Dr. Hultzsch. I take *oduḷḷi*, *muṇḍu*, *malaindu*, and *aṟuttu* as past participles; consider that *kalam* has two adjuncts, viz. *vēlai-keḷu* and *Kāndaḷūr-Chchālai*; and regard *maḍi* as an adjective qualifying *kuḍar*. The material difference is that the Chēra king did not run away from the field of battle, abandoning his country, because he had pains in his bowels, but that he fled, not being able to stand against the enemy. Though it may not be incorrect to take *malaindāṅgu* to mean “as he would put on”, it is more appropriate to separate the compound and make *malaindu* a finite past participle. Being left without opponents, the Chōla king put on the garland of *vañji* flowers as token of his victory. *Aṅgu* means “when”, i.e. “at the time or place”.

The proper names that occur in the passage extracted above are Vēṇāḍu, Irāmakuḍam, Villavaṇ, and Kāndaḷūr-Chchālai. Though difference of opinion exists as regards the derivation of the word Vēṇāḍu, there is so far none as to what it denotes. It signifies the country comprising the Tranvancore State. The late Mr. Sundaram Pillai made the following note on Vēṇāḍu¹ :—

“Vēṇāḍu is one of the twelve districts of low or vulgar Tamil according to Tamil grammarians. The *Kēraḷōḷpatti* makes it one of the divisions of Kēraḷa. It is derived from *vēḷ* ‘love or desire’, either directly or through *vēṇ*. Vēṇāḍu would mean, therefore, ‘the land of love or the lovely land.’”

The late Mr. Gopinatha Rao expressed the view that Vēṇāḍu should be divided into *vēḷ* and *nāḍu*, and that it means

¹ *Ind. Ant.*, vol. xxiv, p. 254, n. 21.

the country of the Vēls. He was of opinion that there was no justification for taking Vēnmaṇṇaṅ as the ruler of Vēn.¹

Though it is not improper to regard Vēṇāḍu as a compound of *Vēl* and *nāḍu* and interpret it as the country of the Vēls, yet the special application of the term Vēṇāḍu to a particular country ruled by one of the several families of Vēls—and not to others—would clearly indicate that the proper division of the compound Vēṇāḍu is *Vēn* and *nāḍu*. If it is incorrect—and it is so—to call by the term Vēṇāḍu the country of Kōṇāḍu, of which Koḍumbāḷūr was the principal town, of Milāḍu, of which Tirukkoilur was the capital, of Parambunāḍu and several others which were ruled by Vēl chiefs, its separation into *vēl* and *nāḍu* is open to serious objection. In this connexion it is also worthy of consideration that the Tamil grammars call the country by the mere name Vēn.

Of the other names, *Villavan* stands for the Chēra, whose emblem was the bow; and *Kāndaḷūr-Chchālai* for a port town in the Chēra territory.

Now as regards the country indicated by the term Irāmaḱḍam. The word may be split up into either *Irā* and *maḱḍam* or *Irāma* and *ḱḍam*. The first does not yield much sense, while the second admits of a better meaning, as will be shown below. In the latter case, the Sanskrit equivalents of the two words, of which the name is the compound, are *Rāma* and *ghaṭa*. Hence, Irāmaḱḍam of Rājādhirāja's inscriptions may answer to Rāmaghaṭa. It is not unlikely that in the numerous collection of the king's epigraphs in the Madras Epigraphist's office we may meet with another possible variant Irāmakaḱdam, in which case *kaḱdam* may be regarded as a simple adoption of the Sanskrit *ghaṭa*. And it may be noted that even in Tamil *kaḱdam* is a synonym for *ḱḍam*.

Having shown that Irāmaḱḍam is the same as Rāmaghaṭa, we proceed to point out that the country indicated by the term Irāmaḱḍam is the Mūshaka territory and to find out its modern representative. But, before doing so, it is

¹ *Travancore Archaeological Series*, vol. i, p. 188.

necessary to consider here a few statements in the *Mūshakavāṁśa*, from which extracts have been given in the *Travancore Archaeological Series*¹, which are of help in identifying and locating the country in question. It says :—

A Kshatriya having been killed by Paraśu-Rāma, his queen attempted to undergo *sati*; but the *purōhita* of the family dissuaded her and took her to a mountain cavern, where he kept her concealed. Here a rat, as big as an elephant, appeared to devour her, but was killed by the fire of her anger. The soul of it then appeared in the form of a Parvata-rāja and explained its behaviour. The queen soon brought to bed a male child. When he came of age, Paraśu-Rāma was pleased with him and crowned him king of the country in which the rat-mountain stood, and performed the *paṭṭābhishēka* ceremony by pouring potfuls of consecrated water on his head. On this account the prince acquired the name Mūshaka-Rāmaghaṭa. He chose for his minister Māhānāvika, a native of Māhishmatī, and made Kōla his capital. On his way to the capital he learnt that the town of Māhishmatī, which belonged to him and which is described as the capital of the Haihayas, had been taken by Mādhavavarman, the king of Magadha.

Shorn of the legendary garb in which it is clothed, the above account reflects the fact that at a remote age the Mūshakas were obliged by some stress of events to leave their country and to take shelter in the mountain fastnesses of the south. There may be a kernel of truth in the statement that Rāmaghaṭa's mother was a queen of the country in which Māhishmatī was situated, and that she was taken for safety to a southern hill where Rāmaghaṭa was born. This account of the queen-mother reminds us of what inscriptions state concerning the Chālukyan ancestor Vijāyaditya and of the Purāṇic account concerning the feud between Kārtavīry-ārjuna and Paraśu-Rāma. Since the husband of Rāmaghaṭa's mother, who was a ruler of a province, is said

¹ Vol. ii, pp. 87 ff.

to have been killed by Paraśu-Rāma and since Māhishmatī was a city in Mid-India, it may be thought that the city was included in his kingdom and that he was one of the hundred sons of Kārtavīrya and a brother of Sūrasēna.¹ The Purāṇas state that the town of Māhishmatī was founded by Mahishmat the fifth in descent from Haihaya, who was the fourth descendant of Yadu. This reference is only of use as indicating that the Mūshakas, who traced their line from one of this branch, must be Yādavas. So were the Kōlādīri kings of Irāmakuḍam.

The name Rāmaghaṭa, as applied to a king, may be regarded as a pure invention; and the story that Paraśu-Rāma anointed him king by pouring potsfuls of water may have been woven simply to account for the origin of such a queer name. We cannot consider that Rāmaghaṭa is anything more than an eponym, similar to Pallava, Chōḷa, or Pāṇḍya. It is not improbable that the name of the country was Kuḍam or Rāmakuḍam, as distinguishing it from Kuḍamalai-nāḍu (i.e. the Coorg Province), another southern territorial division. Further, it may be pointed out that Kuḍam is mentioned in Tamil grammars as the name of one of the outlying provinces where vulgar Tamil was in use; it figures along with Kuṭṭam (in Malabar) and Vēṇ (Travancore). With respect to the name Elimalai also the poet has similarly introduced the story of the huge rat, and its subsequent transformation into a king of mountains. The fact may be that the hill in whose cavern the Mūshaka queen was hid came to be called Elimalai by the Tamil inhabitants of the place. This substratum of fact may have excited the imagination of the poet to account for its names in the ingenious way he did. It is quite significant that, as soon as Rāmaghaṭa was anointed king of the region in which his mother was sheltered, his first thought was to

¹ That there is little possibility of this will be shown by the fact that the date of the movement of the Mūshakas from Mid-India to the W. Ghats, if it really occurred in early times, must have been after the reign of Khāravēla and before the date of the *Bharata-nāṭya-sāstra*.

recover Māhishmatī, which, he was informed, had been taken by Mādhavavarman, the king of Magadha. This statement makes the facts appear in their proper light. When a prince newly installed as ruler of a small territory on the west coast of the Deccan lays claim, all of a sudden, to the possession of a principal city in Mid-India, there must be a tale behind it. The fact seems to be that the town belonged to him originally, and the country whence his mother came, after her husband's death, lay in the Vindhyan region and had for its capital Māhishmatī. Kālidāsa¹ refers to Māhishmatī, and his reference takes us to the Narmadā river. Mr. Pargiter identifies it with Mandhata.² We have enough reason to believe that in early days the Mūshaka territory was located near the Vindhya mountains not far from the southern Kōsala and the Kalinga countries. From what is stated in the *Mūshakavamsa* it is clear that the Haihaya and the Chēdi countries were included in that of the Mūshakas. Another fact that is made plain is that the southern Mūshaka territory on the Malabar coast was not due to a gradual expansion of the original Mid-Indian territory. The establishment of the southern Mūshaka is in several respects analogous to the foundation of the Pallava power in the Deccan. In both cases the emigrants came from the north and were governors of provinces and held dependent positions under some suzerain power and were forced by circumstances to quit their homes. The truth of that part of the mythical account which states that the southern Mūshaka kings were able to get back the Haihaya and Chēdi countries which once belonged to them cannot be guaranteed.

Now a word about the time when the kingdom of Irāmakuḍam or the southern Mūshaka may have come into

¹ Verse 43 of canto vi of the *Raghuvamśa* runs as under:—

अस्याङ्गलक्ष्मीर्भव दीर्घबाहोर्माहिष्मतीवप्रनितम्बकाञ्चीम् ।
 प्रासादजालैर्जलवेगिरम्यां रेवां यदि प्रेषितुमस्ति कामः ॥

² Colonel Todd identifies Māhishmatī with Chuli Maheswar.

existence supposing the statements of the book are based upon facts. In the second century B.C. the Kalinga king Khārāvēla (173-160 B.C.) is said to have invaded the Mūshaka country, which lay to the west of Kalinga.¹ As we do not find a Mādhavavarman in the list of kings who ruled over Magadha down to the time of the Kalinga king Kharāvēla, the aggressor who caused the uprooting of the Mūshakas from their original home must be regarded as having flourished later than 160 B.C. It could not be much later. Since the Mūshakas are described in the *Bharata-nāṭya-śāstra*,² as Kalingas, it appears that the territory of the former had been annexed to, and was included in, that of the latter. Hence it may be concluded that the dispossession alluded to in the *Mūshakavamsā* had taken place some time prior to the date of the composition of Bharata's work and not long after the reign of Khārāvēla. In the *Vishṇupurāṇa*, Mūshaka is mentioned along with Strīrājya and several other kingdoms of the Vindhyan region.³ It may be that the original Mūshaka country lay to the west of the southern Kōśala and extended along the Narmadā as far as the sea. In the Mahākūṭa pillar inscription (A.D. 601) of the Western Chalukyan king Maṅgaḷiśa Raṇavikrānta, it is said that Kīrtivarman I, who reigned at the end of the sixth century A.D., defeated, among others, the kings of Kēraḷa, Gaṅga, Mūshaka, Pāṇḍya, Dramiḷa, and Chōḷa.⁴ It is not unlikely that the Mūshaka herein referred to denotes a southern power as it is mentioned along with the Kēraḷa, Gaṅga, and Pāṇḍya. The Mahābhārata groups the Mūshakas with distinctly southern countries, such as the Drāviḍa, Kēraḷa, Prāchya, and Vanavāsika.⁵

From the foregoing it may be observed that the Mūshakas originally occupied a territory in the Vindhyan region and subsequently moved southwards and permanently settled in

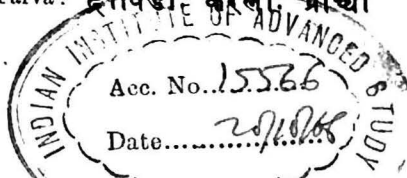
¹ *Journal of the Bihar Research Society*, vol. i, p. 425.

² *Ibid.*, p. 148.

³ p. 148.

⁴ *Ind. Ant.*, vol. xix, p. 16.

⁵ Verse 58 of ch. 9, Bhishma-Parva: द्राविडा करुण प्रथ्या
मूषिका वनवासिकाः



the Deccan ; that the Elimalai was the spot to which the Mūshakas repaired after they had been overthrown in Mid-India, and that over a small region a prince of the original Mūshaka line was installed king and the new kingdom came to be known as Rāmaghaṭa or Irāmaḥaḍam ; and the kings themselves were styled Mūshikēśvaras or Rāmaghaṭa-Mūshikēśvaras. The hill of Elimalai was included in this new country of Irāmaḥaḍam. As a rule, the chieftains of the Deccan were lords of one or more divisions (*nāḍu*), possessed a favourite hill (*malai*) and a capital city (*ūr*). The principal hill of the Mūshaka king was the Elimalai, his *nāḍu* was Irāmaḥaḍam, and his capital Kōlam. Here it may be noted that the *Kēraḷōlpatti* gives four divisions of Malai-nāḍu. These are the Tuḷu, Kūpaka, Kēraḷa, and Mūshaka, whose other name, as we have now shown, was Irāmaḥaḍam. In the description of these there appear two versions, according to one of which the Mūshaka kingdom would extend from Kannetti to Cape Comorin, while according to the other it would comprise all the tract of land lying between Perumbulai and Pudukpaṭṭanam. That the first of these versions is wrong and that the second correct will be evident from what has been said already and from what follows also.

A few points of geographical and historical interest are found in the *Mūshakavaṁśu*. We note them below. An attempt will be made at the same time to trace the modern representatives of places mentioned in the *Mūshakavaṁśu*, in the very tract of country where we located the ancient territorial division of Irāmaḥaḍam, as nothing else would prove better the correctness of the identification.

Kōlam, the capital of the kingdom, was on the bank of the river Prathanā. Starting from here, one has to cross in succession the two rivers, the Vaprā and the Kiḷḷā, and proceed along the sea-coast to reach the mountain Elimalai. The temple at Chellūr, dedicated to Śiva, was built by one of the Mūshaka kings, Śatasōma by name. At Śambarapura, a suburb of this place, there is a famous temple of Viṣṇu.

The temple of Vaṭukēśvara at Ālasuddhi and that of Ahīraṇēśvara on the west bank of the Prathanā were constructed by Vaṭukavaraman and Ahīraṇa, two kings of the Mūshaka line. At the foot of the Elimalai, the city of Achalapattana was founded by Achala, another Mūshaka king. On the bank of the Parushūī river a battle once took place between the Kēraḷa king Raghupati *alias* Jayarāga and the Mūshaka king Īśānavarman II. A town named Nārāyaṇapuram was founded by king Kundavarman. One has to go southwards to reach the Kēraḷa country, and in this route lies the temple of Sugata (Buddha) at the holy and religious town of Mūlavāsa. Bhaṭasthalī and Marupura are two other places in the Mūshaka country. Religions with dreadfully opposed doctrines flourish harmoniously in the country of Rāmaghaṭa-Mūshikēśvara. Vaḷabha, another king of the Mūshaka dynasty, built the town of Mārāhi at the mouth of the Killā river. This place became replete with articles of merchandise brought in ships from distant lands by foreign merchants. The king also erected high fort walls and cut a deep moat round the city of Vaḷabhapatṭanam, which was on the bank of the Prathanā river.

The Tamil equivalent of *mūshaka* being *eli*, the country indicated by the term must be the tract of land surrounding the Elimalai hill. As will be pointed out presently, this hill was known to early European and Muhammadan navigators and traders by various names more or less connected with the term *Eli*. The dental *l* of the word was sometimes changed into the lingual *ḷ* which gave rise to the name *Ṣaptaśāila* applied to the same territory in some of the Sanskrit works such as the *Kēraḷa-māhātmya*. Local tradition also perpetuated this name. The rulers of the country were called *Kōlātiri-rājas*, i.e. kings of *Kōlam*. The suffix *tiri* is nothing but an adaptation of *śrī*.

Albērūnī (A.D. 970-1039) mentions the country of *Eli* and places it on the Malabar coast, immediately after *Manjarūr* and before *Sadarsa*. According to him the people of the place

were Śamaṇas, by which he may have meant either Bauddhas or Jainas. The position assigned by this authority is the same as that furnished by another Muhammadan historian Rashid-ud-din. In the latter case Col. Yule observed that Sadarsa was a clear misreading for Fandarina. The correction is applicable to the reading of the passage from Albērūnī. The identity of Manjarūr, Hili, and Fandarina with Mangalur, Elimalai, and Pandalāyani, which are all stations in the Shoranur-Mangalur branch of the South Indian Railway, is beyond doubt. The most handy map that indicates the exact situation of all the three places with distances marked between them is the South Indian Railway map. Here it will be found that Pandalāyani (429 miles from Madras) is 58 miles south of Elimalai (486 miles from Madras), and that the latter is 66 miles south of Mangalur (551 miles from Madras). It may be noted that Pandalāyani is not different from Kōlam, the capital of the Mūshaka kingdom. In fact, there having existed in ancient times two famous cities bearing the same name Kollam, the distinction seems to have been made by terming the one Pandalāyani-Kollam and the other Kurakkēṇi-Kollam. Since the *Mūshakavaṃśa* says that Kōlam was on the bank of the Prathanā, the latter must be identical with the Agalappuālai river, at whose mouth Pandalāyani is situated. Al Idrisī, writing about the eleventh century A.D., describes Fandarina as a town built at the mouth of a river where vessels from the Sindh cast anchor. The temple of Ahiraṇēśvara, which is said to have been built by the Mūshaka king Ahiraṇa on the west bank of the Prathanā, must therefore be looked for in the vicinity of Pandalāyani-Kollam.

Albērūnī observes that the people of this country were Śamaṇas, by which he must have meant that there were many Buddhists in the land. We have for consideration a few important references in this respect. The *Mūshakavaṃśa* states that a famous temple of Sugata (i.e. Buddha) existed at Mūlavāsa, which lay on the route to the Kēraḷa country from

Kōlam, the capital of the Rāmaghaṭa-Mūshakaśvaras. This temple was in a very flourishing condition in the time of king Vikramāditya Varaguṇa, belonging to the Yādava lineage, who ruled in about the ninth century A.D., and by whom it was greatly patronized. The plates from which we gather the above information give us also to understand that that king had a strong leaning to the cardinal points of the Buddha religion, Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. After making a grant of land to the Buddhist temple at Mūlavāsa, the king, with a bowed head, implored his successors and the friends of their devotees in the following words :—

“This meritorious dynasty of yours should not be ruined and this land should always be kept in heart and personally safe-guarded by you from time to time from the possibility of enjoyment by others. The God of Death, terrible with mouth wide open, is roaming near, awaiting his time ; and, as if to show him favour, his father, the lord of day, with quick marches, hurriedly leads away the remainder of your lives.”¹

The discovery by Monsieur Foucher, in distant Gandhāra, of an image of Buddha with an inscription engraved on its pedestal, stating that it was the figure of “Lōkanātha of Mūlavāsa in the Dakṣiṇāpatha ” proves how widely known and in what great esteem this Buddhist *vihāra* was held in ancient times throughout the Buddhist world.² China’s trade with the Malabar coast, especially with the region near about Elimalai and Quilandy, led to a settlement of Chinese Buddhists in that part of the country and to the foundation of Buddhist *vihāras*.

A word more has to be said regarding other religions that found favour among the people of Irāmakuḍam in early days. The *Mūshakavaṃśa* says, “Religions with dreadfully opposed doctrines flourish harmoniously in the country of Rāmaghaṭa-Mūshakēśvara.” In this connexion, we have to draw attention to the fact that besides Hindus and Buddhists,

¹ *Travancore Archaeological Series*, vol. i, p. 193.

² *L’Iconographie Bouddhique*, par A. Foucher, pt. i, p. 105, pt. iv, No. 5.

there was a large number of Jews, Christians, and Moors settled in the country. The Cochin Jews' grant of Bhāskara-Ravivarman of the tenth century A.D., the Kōṭṭayam plates of Sthāṇu-Ravi of the ninth century A.D., granting concessions and privileges to the founders of early Christian Churches at Quilon, and the Virarāghava-Chakravartin's tablet, allowing similar favours to Ravi-Korttan of Mahōdayarpatṭinam, reflect the tolerant spirit of the kings of Malabar and the establishment in the land of foreign settlements and religious institutions. Of early Muhammadan settlements and the Arab trade with the west coast, which continued without much obstacle till the appearance of Europeans any book relating to early European settlements will give an idea. Thus the statement as regards the religion of the country is amply borne out by facts that could be well established in history. Nothing needs be said concerning the antiquity of Christianity on the Malabar coast.

Marco Polo (A.D. 1293) states that Eli is a kingdom towards the west about 300 miles from Comari (Comorin). The people are idolators; pepper, ginger, and other spices grow in abundance; the kingdom is strong by nature; there is no proper harbour, but there are many great rivers; the ships of Manzi (China) and other countries come hither. Abul-Feida calls it Ras Haili, and says that it is a great mountain projecting into the sea and discerned from a great distance. Ibn Batuta (A.D. 1342-4) reached it after leaving Manjarūr (Mangalore). He describes it as a great and well-built city, situated on a large estuary accessible to great ships, and says that Chinese vessels call at it. Vasco De Gama, Nicolo Conti, and others visited the place. It was burnt by the Portuguese under Simon De Melo. This mountain city of Elimalai contains one of the oldest palaces of the ancient line of Kōlāttiri Rājas, at a very short distance from its northern shore, and is almost surrounded on all sides by water. The Nilēśwar and Elimalai rivers unite together immediately to the north of the mountain, flow southward, and then, taking

a turn, enter the sea. In its neighbourhood is the town of Cāchal-paṭṭaṇam—a settlement of foreign traders—which we may identify with the Achalapaṭṭaṇa of the *Mūshakavamśa*, said to have been founded by Achala at the foot of the Eli mountain. The abode of Paraśu-Rāma referred to in the same work is probably represented by the modern Rāmantalli temple, lying close in under the mountain on its western or sea face. The town of Mārāhi, built by the Mūshaka king Vaḷabha at the mouth of the Kiḷḷā River, retains its name in the slightly altered form of Mādāyi. Colonel Yule has the following very interesting note on the place:—

“ When De Gama was on his way from Baticola (in Canara) to Cannanore, in his second voyage, a squall having sprung his mainmast, the Captain-major anchored in the bay of Marabia, because he saw there some Moorish ships, in order to get a mast from them. Indeed, the name of Marabia, or Marawi, is still preserved in Madavi or Madia, corruptly termed Maudoy, a township upon the river which enters the bay about 7 or 8 miles south-west of Mount De' Ely, and which is called by De Barros the Reo Marabia. Mr. Ballard informs me that he never heard of ruins at Madai; but there is a place on the river just mentioned and within the Madai township, called Payaṅgādi which has the remains of an old fort of the Kōlātiri Rājas. A palace at Madai is alluded to by Dr. Gundert in the Madras journal, and a Buddhist *vihāra* is spoken of in an old Malayālam poem as having existed at the place. He gives an extract from Barbosa, wherein it is stated that Moors, gentiles, and Jews have long dwelt there.” We have only to note here that Palayangadi is a station in the South Indian Railway only 2 miles off Elimalai. It is situated on the bank of the Taliparamaba river, which must be the modern representative of the Kiḷḷā river referred to in the *Mūshakavamśa*.

From the above account it will be seen that Irāmakuḍam is the name given to the ancient Mūshaka kingdom on the west coast of the Dekhan, extending from Tulu or South Canara to the Keraḷa dominion.

