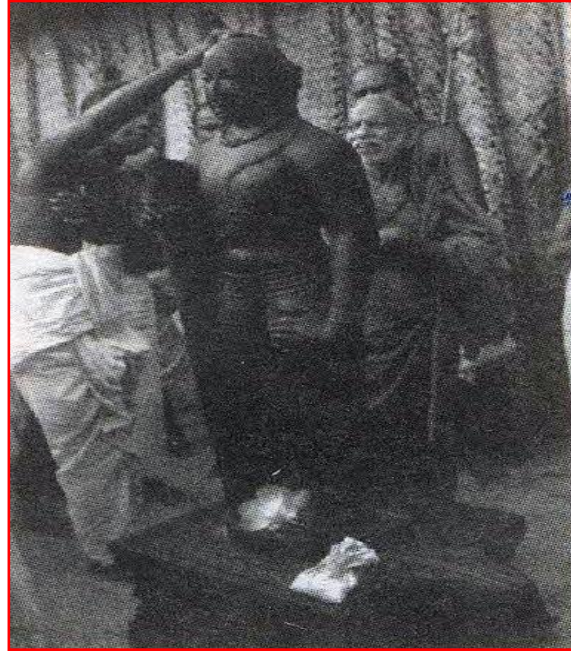


Divinity in the Excavated Stone, Revealed by H.H. Kanchi Paramacharya



H.H. Paramacharya anointing the



H.H. Paramacharya watching the idol with vibhuti final touches

Silpa Kala Shastras categories stones fit for sculpturing the sacred idols of temples into three kinds :- (a) masculine ,(b) feminine and (c) neutral. Masculine and feminine varieties of rocks are considered fit for sculpturing Vighrahas of Gods and Goddesses and the neutral stones are not to be used for such purpose. The silpa shastras aver that the stones are categorised by the sounds emanating from them when they are struck by rods. Stones that emanate a particular type of metallic sounds shastras , are only to be used for sculpturing male deities . Stones that emanate a slightly different type of metallic sound are to be used for sculpturing female deities . Stones that emanate sounds fir for sculpturing male deities can be used for sculpturing female deities. Neutral stones that emanate no . sound are to be used only for general construction purposes.

The excavated piece of stone, dug up from the bed of the Tamraparni river, for carving the idol of Lord Swaminatha Swami, was found to be neutral, as it was being sculptured: it was not emanating any sound at all, after it was sculptured for some time. It caused much concern and anxiety to Shri V.Ganapathi Sthapati. He was on the horns of a dilemma. He could not discard the stone as it would go against the ordains of H.H. Kanchi Paramacharya and H.H. Sri- La-Sri Arul Nambi Tambiran Swamigal of Tiruppanandal. Their Holinesses had specifically determined the particular part of the stone on the bed of River Tamraparni for the purpose. If, however, the Sthapati continued with his work of sculpturing the neutral stone, he would be acting against the time honoured dicta of the Silpa Shastras.To clear his ambiguity, he sought an audience with H.H Parmacharya At.



President observing Lord's idol.

the time of the Kumbhabhishekam, in June, 1973, Shri Ganapathi Sthapati recalled the gist of the earlier observations of His Holiness at the audience he had with him at the temple, to all the persons present. It seems he was waiting for his turn for the audience, at some distance, amongst others. On observing him, waiting for the meeting, His Holiness, suo moto, sensed the purpose, called him near and observed--"Do not worry about the sound not coming out of the stone when you are chiselling. Continue chiselling. The sound will automatically come SOON. Go ahead"-- With this permission, the Sthapati told the persons present, that he continued chiselling the same neutral stone. To his complete surprise, after a few days of chiselling, the neutral stone emanated the sonorous sound of a male stone, considered fit for making idols of male Gods. It was undoubtedly a divine sonorous sound resembling the ringing of a bell. The neutral stone transformed itself into a right choice stone for carving the sacred idol of Lord Siva Skanda that adorns today, as the Presiding Deity of the Temple complex of the Samaj. The Sthapati himself, who had considerable experience of sculpturing stones into the idols of various temples, all his life, was wonderstruck. Strange indeed are the Leelas of the Lord!

Expressing his gratitude to His Holiness the Paramacharya, Shri Ganapathi Sthapati completed his task. The carved idol was then taken from Mahabalipuram to Kanchipuram to be shown to His Holiness. His Holiness passed his fingers and felt the Vighraha from head to foot. He enquired from the Sthapati whether the Rudraksha carved in stone round the neck of the idol itself, was intentionally done to differentiate the idol of the Lord to be consecrated at Uttara Swami Malai, from the idol of the Lord earlier consecrated at Dakshina Swamimalai. At Dakshina Swamimalai the Rudraksha is tied separately in a silver chain round the neck of the Lord. Shri Ganapathi Sthapati was aghast at the keen power of observation of His Holiness and keen memory of the minute historical details. His Holiness kept the sacred Vighraha, in his chamber, for a whole day and night and offered Sacred Vibhuti Abhishekam to it. He, thus, sanctified the Vighraha. He appreciated the Vighraha. He appreciated the artistic sculpture of the

Sthapati in sculptuting the Vighraha so skifully, that suo moto ingrained it with divinity. Thus, by the infinite Grace Thus, by the infinite Grace of the Lord, the Samaj was able to prepare the sacred Vighraha of the Lord to be consecrated as Lord Siva ,Skanda the Presiding Deity of the Uttara Swami Malai Temple Complex.



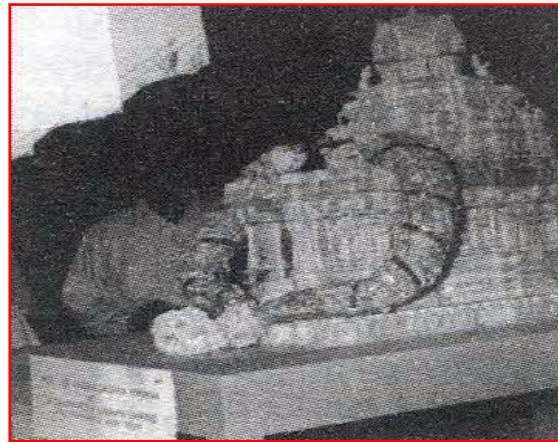
Lord ideol with a model of the temple



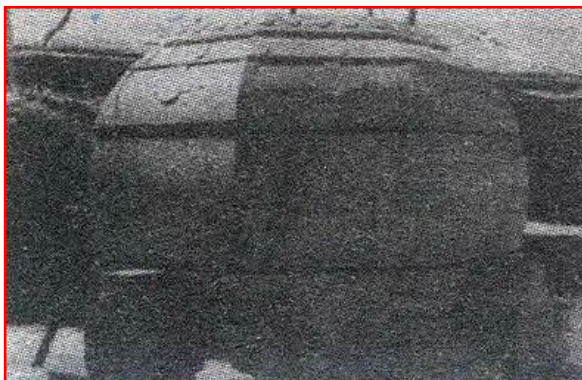
A beautiful carved idol



Abhishekam prior to establishment
Of the temple



Soft stone model of
the temple



Asembly of the top Vimanam
Of temple



Foundation stones at the foot of
the hillcock before being moved
Up. Deveotees watching.