

Rudravarman in the sixth century (C. 72; C.73A).<sup>25</sup> The temple's destruction by fire, accidental or otherwise, had led Rudravarman's successor, king Śambhuvarman to re-establish the *liṅga* of Śiva as Śambhubhadreśvara. In all likelihood, the first temple at Mý Sơn would have been an open-air temple-type built in wood. We also know that at Trà Kiệu, the political centre of the same line of kings, king Prakāśadharman had directed the rebuilding (*punastasya krte*) of the temple of Maharṣi Vālmiki (C.173) in the seventh century after an earlier one had presumably been destroyed.<sup>26</sup> Often, as also is evident from archaeological investigations, surviving remains of earlier temples were used while fashioning newer ones, suggesting a recurrent history of temple restoration, reuse, and rebuilding.

Even as temples proliferated in the Mý Sơn valley, the site of the destroyed fifth-century first temple of Bhadreśvara continued to enjoy special status. Successive kings restored, rebuilt, and patronized the memory and profound sacrality of this first temple, proudly proclaiming their pious acts through stele engravings. Cycles of building, destruction and rebuilding of this temple by Cham kings are known from the fifth, sixth and seventh century records (C.72 of Bhadravarman, C.73A of Śambhuvarman, c. late sixth century, and C.73B of Prakāśadharman Vikrāntavarman).<sup>27</sup> And the vestiges of the Mý Sơn A1 temple, as these survive today, can be dated to the 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> centuries CE, pointing to at least one further cycle of rebuilding – the fourth – at the same sacred *sthāna* or place, sometime between the late seventh and tenth centuries CE.<sup>28</sup> From the late-eighth/early-ninth century, there appears to be a decline in the construction of new temples at Mý Sơn following a decline in power of the Mý Sơn line of kings as is also suggested by a marked reduction in the number of inscriptions from the site. For about a century a half, Mý Sơn and Trà Kiệu register a hiatus in temple-building.<sup>29</sup>

From the end of the 10<sup>th</sup> century, Champa inscriptions reveal the recovery of power in the region with a line of kings leaving records and temples at Mý Sơn once again.<sup>30</sup> Cycles of building, destruction and rebuilding of temples continued the earlier narrative. Conflicts with the Khmers and Viêts, the destruction and plunder of temples, and their subsequent rebuilding is clearly recorded in the inscriptions. A Mý Sơn pillar inscription in the Cham

language, for example, records donations of a prince-commander (*yuvarāja mahāsenāpati*) to the temple of Śrīśānabhadreśvara in the year 1056 CE (C.95).<sup>31</sup> The epigraph exalts the prince who is said to have defeated the Khmers by conquering Śambhupura, destroying its temples, and offering its wealth to the Cham temples of Śrīśānabhadreśvara. The Cham king then made gifts to temples, monasteries, houses of charity, and celebrated the installation of *liṅgas* in his land.

A 12<sup>th</sup>-century Mý Sơn stele inscription of king Jaya Harivarman narrates his victory over the Khmer and Viêt armies, and the re-erection of Śiva's temple that they had destroyed (C.100 ;1157 CE).<sup>32</sup> Again, a 12<sup>th</sup>-century Mý Sơn pillar inscription of king Jaya Harivarman I speaks of the rebuilding of the temple of Śrīśānabhadreśvara, the sun among temples, formerly destroyed by the enemies (C.84 A).<sup>33</sup> Having killed the destroyers in a battle, the king speaks of himself as an incarnation of the local deity Uroja, destined to rebuild Champa's lost glory.

While temple destruction by fire, especially in the case of early temples in wood, may or may not have been accidental, there is also ample evidence of wilful destruction and plunder as the narrative proceeds. The most significant among these speak of foreign invasions with the motive of looting the temple's wealth. Temple raids were motivated by the acquisition of temple bounty and the destruction of the symbol of the king's divine and political authority. Re-establishing the profound sacredness of the patron deity through the enactment of Hindu ritual observances also re-established and reaffirmed the temporal power and authority of the kings. The ultimate destruction at Mý Sơn was wrought by the American-Vietnam war in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Contemporary restoration efforts by international archaeological conservation missions now carry forward the cycle of architectural renewal of these temples of yester-centuries.