



South Indian Processional Standard

South India, 17th - 18th century

88cm high, 45cm wide

Brass

Stock no.: A5770

Large brass standards were used in India as part religious or royal processions in South India. Miniatures from Tamil Nadu depict standard bearers leading processions. An example in the San Diego Museum of Art (accession no. [1990.1417](#)) dating to c. 1780 has a peacock standard, carried in front of a Shavaite procession. The form is derived from large ornamental fans, such as the ones illustrated in two c. 1820 miniatures from South India in the British Museum, London (accession nos [2007.3005.6](#) and [2007.3005.38](#)).

This standard was likely used for Shavaite processions, as depictions of Nandi, the vahana of Shiva, and the *lingam*, an aniconic representation of Shiva, are positioned above the central parrots. The confronted parrots are typical of South Indian metalwork. An 18th-19th century plaque made in Karnataka, held in the British Museum (accession no. [1853.0108.8](#)), is topped with similar parrots. Similar parrots are also seen on the hilts of Thanjavur katars, such as a 17th century example in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (accession no. [36.25.1022](#)).