

HISTORY AND SCULPTURES



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ABSTRACT:

Sculptures are carved in sand, stone, metal and Ivory. They are carved after seeing something and grasping it in mind. Sculpturing of this sort in course of time began to grow in accordance to the mental caliber and the weapons that they procured. During the Sangam age the art of sculpting was in a developed stage. As we all know, Cholas, Cheras and Pandyas played an important role in creating them and providing them to the world. Like many great civilisations, the origins of the Chola, a Tamil Hindu dynasty in southern India, are shrouded in the temporal mists of uncertainty and obscurity.. This showed that Cholas and Pandyas followed the same Dravidian style of architecture. They used stones and rocks to create the marvelous and significant sculptures. Meanwhile Cheras had a different way of architectural style. They used woods to build the temple which makes their style in a unique way. The aim of the research is to compare the important sculptures of chera, cholas and Pandyas dynasty.

KEYWORDS:

Cholas, Cheras, Pandyas, Moolavar, Uchavar, other Deities, Structure of temples, Gopuram..

INTRODUCTION:

Tamil language, which is a member of the Dravidian language family, is spoken primarily in India. There are three periods that have been distinguished through analyses of grammatical and lexical changes: Old Tamil (from about 450 BCE to 700 CE), Middle Tamil (700–1600), and Modern Tamil (from 1600). The Tamil writing system evolved from the Brahmi script.

THREE GLORIFIED BY HEAVEN:

The three crowned kings of Tamilakam ruled and fought over the southern region of the Indian subcontinent for centuries. At the beginning of the Common Era, South India and Sri Lanka were home to three Tamil dynastic tribes or kingdoms, each ruled by kings collectively known as the "Muvendar". The Pandya, Chera and Chola dynasties ruled the Tamil people during ancient and medieval India and fought with each other and other powers for dominance of the region. Despite this disturbance, they were decisive in the promotion of South Indian art, architecture and literature. The first Tolkappiyam among Tamil literature to name them Three Glorified by Heaven (Tamil: வான்புகழ் மூவர், Vāṇpukal Mūvar).



CHOLA TEMPLES:

India's remarkable ruling and building Chola dynasty ruled for over 1,500 years, keeping temples at the center of their work. During their reign, they built many magnificent buildings and temples, which today are considered to be the "Great Living Chola Temples". Many temples like the Gangaikonda



Cholapuram temple in South India and temples like the Brihadishwara temple in Thanjavur have been built and continue to be the center of attraction for many tourists and local people of the region. UNESCO recognizes it as an ancient creative achievement and a center of attraction for cultural, economic and political activity.

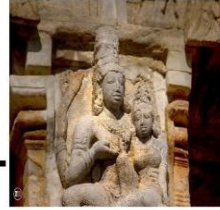
1. MOOVAR KOIL

- MOOLAVAR:None
- URCHAVAR:None

Moovar Koil or "Three Temples" is a Hindu temple complex in the village of Kodumbalur, 36 km from Pudukkottai in Tamil Nadu, India. These temples were built by the Chola feudal lord and thirukkuvalai chief Boothi Vikramakesari, according to the letter. Only two of the three temples survived.



MOOVAR KOVIL



- **ARCHITECTURE OF THE TEMPLE;**

According to the chief's writings, he built three temples in the complex, one for himself and the other two for his wives, namely Nangai Varaguna Perumanari and Karrali. Only the basement of the northern sanctuary was preserved. The basement is designed in a fully blown lotus flower (padma pushkala adisthanas).

The other two sanctuaries, namely the central and the southern, are more or less intact. Each central shrine is 6 square meters in the north and all face west. The walls are full of details and there is a small Nandi shrine in front of the Maha mandapa. Two circular pilasters with circular shafts on the four sides of the vimana indicate the antiquity of the temple.

- **TYPES OF ARCHITECTURE USED:**

These temples follow Pallava architecture and are relatively small in size. All of them have a good sized porch locally called Ardha mandapa attached to the sanctum sanctorum. Both are slightly underground in a pit-like structure. The structures are also mostly built of stone.

Near Moovar Koil, slightly to the west, is the Hindu temple of the early Chola temple of Muchukunda Eswarar. The temple complex is preserved and managed by the Archaeological Survey of India as a listed monument.

2. KORANGANATHA TEMPLE:

- **MOOLAVAR:**Ganesh
- **URCHAVAR:**None



- **HISTORY OF THE TEMPLE**

This small but majestic temple is considered one of the best examples of early Chola art. However, in the absence of a foundation marker, neither the building nor its royal connection with the Cholas can be firmly established. There are two legends associated with the temple. First it is mentioned that the temple was built by a sanyasi and during the consecration a monkey was found on top of the temple. As Seeing a monkey was considered a bad omen and the temple remained empty. Another legend says that it was originally a Hanuman temple worshiped by the Madhavas, then they replaced Hanuman with Ganesh. In the temple inscription it is called Tirukkurakkutturai - Perumanadigal.

- **ARCHITECTURE OF THE TEMPLE**

Some historians believe that the temple is equivalent to Nagara-style vimana architecture. According to Reddy, the typical Chola art temple was probably built by Parantaka I. The total length of the temple deck is 15.3 m (50 ft) and the size of the Shikara is 15.3 m (50 ft). The shrine is square, 3.7 meters (12 ft) in size, with a small vestibule leading to a four-pillared hall.

The Koranganatha Temple is located in Srinivasanallur village on the Trichy - Salem road. The temple is dedicated to the Hindu god Vishnu in the form of Ranganatha. The temple has a sanctum surmounted by a vimana and a four-pillared hall. According to temple records, the temple has several inscriptions dating back to the Chola Empire, none of which speak or describe the origin and construction of the temple.

There are several images of Dakshinamurthy, Bhikshatana, Vishnu and some other legends that are related to various Hindu legends. These temples follow the Pallava architecture which is relatively small in size. All of them have a good sized porch locally called ardhha mandapa attached to the sanctum sanctorum.

Both are slightly underground in a pit-like structure. The structures are also mostly built of stone. There is an inscription on the southern wall of the temple which indicates that Kachuvan Jatadeva of Nilan Thottiyam village donated 1.5 m of garden for continuous lighting of the temple.



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CHERAS TEMPLES:

The Chera dynasty played an important role in the administration of Kerala and Tamil Nadu. They are from Kerala Polis as a clan, that power was part of their lineage and land. Although how and where the word "Chera " was found is a mystery, many say that Cheral meant the Chiral Hills, the muddy land, there is another meaning. In Tamil they were called cheralamdiru which means Chera kings.



THIRUVANCHIKULAM SHIVA TEMPLE

- **MOOLAVAR:**Mahadeva,Umadevi.
- **URCHAVAR:**None

Thiruvanchikulam Shiva Temple (medieval Thiruvanchikulam Temple) is a Hindu temple situated in Kodungallur in Thrissur district of Kerala state, India. Constructed in the Kerala style of architecture, the temple is believed to have been built during the Chera period . Shiva is worshiped as Mahadeva and his consort Parvathi as Umadevi. There are 33 sub-deities in this temple, the highest number in Kerala.

The presiding deity is revered in the 7th century Tamil Saiva canonical work, the Tevaram, written by Tamil saint poets known as the Nayanmars and classified as Paadal Petra Sthalam, one of the 276 temples that find mention in the canon.It is the only temple in Kerala in the list. As per Periyapuranam, Sundara Murthi Nayanar, one of the four great saints in Tamil Shaivism ascended to heaven from this place.

- **ARCHITECTURE:**

The temple is built in Kerala style of architecture with entrance towers on all four sides. The sanctum occupies the center portion of the temple, which is fortified. The sanctum is approached through a flagstaff, which is axial to the entrance tower and the sanctum. The flagstaff has images of Asthavidyesavara. The presiding deity is in the form of lingam. The image of Narasimha is sculpted on the vimana. The images of Sundarar and Ceramanperuman are maintained at Bhagavathi temple and brought to the temple during Svati festival during July - August. There are two temple tanks in the temple, located in the second precincts.

CHOTTANIKKARA BHAGAVATHI AMMAN TEMPLE

- **MOOLAVAR:**Kadamba Vaneswarar
- **URCHAVAR:**Somaskandar

The Chottanikkara (correction of Jyotiannakkara) Devi Temple is a temple dedicated to the Hindu mother goddess Bhagavati, a form of Mahalakshmi.She is believed to be residing in Chottanikkara along with her husband Maha Vishnu. The temple is located at Chottanikkara, a southern suburb of the city of





Kochi in Ernakulam district, in the state of Kerala, India and is one of the most popular temples in the state. The temple is also known for conducting exorcism.

In terms of temple architecture, the Chottanikkara temple stands out to be an ultimate testimonial to the ancient vishwakarma sthaphthis (wooden sculpture) along with Sabarimala temple. Sree Mahamaya Bhagavati (Adi Parashakti), the goddess of Saraswathi, Lakshmi, and Parvati is one of the most popular deities in Kerala and the supreme mother goddess in Hinduism. Chottanikkara Devi (Melekavu Bhagavathi) is worshiped at the temple, in three different forms: as Mahasaraswati in the morning, draped in white; Mahalakshmi in noon, draped in crimson; and as Mahaparvati in the evening, decked in blue. Devotees used to chant "Amme Narayana, Devi Narayana, Lakshmi Narayana, Bhadre Narayana" in this temple. Goddess 'Keezhkkaavu bhagavathi' is believed to be Bhadrakali, in her fierce form or Ugra form. Bhadrakali, is a form of mother Kali, supposed to be born from the third eye of lord Shiva, to kill the demon king Darika. People suffering from mental illnesses commonly visit the temple, as Chottanikkara Devi is said to cure her devotees. Guruthi pooja is a ritual done in the late evening to invoke the goddess Mahakali. Earlier 'Guruthi Pooja' was done only on Fridays. But nowadays, it is performed every day.

The Divine Mother known as Rajarajeswari (Adhiparasakthi) is worshiped here in three forms Saraswathy in the morning, Lakshmi at noon and Durga in the evening. There is an Idol of Mahavishnu on the same pedestal and so the Deity is called Amme Narayana, Devi Narayana, Lakshminarayana and Bhadrenarayana also. Along with Lakshmi & Narayana there are idols of Brahma, Siva, Ganapathi (Ganesh), Subramanya and Sastha on the same pedestal.

• OTHER DEITIES:

Apart from the main deity, the temple complex consists of Kizhukkavu Bhagavathy temple, temples for Sastha, Siva, Ganapathi, Nagas and other Upa-Devas. The pleasant atmosphere in the temple gives mental peace and harmony to devotees.

"MAKAM Thozhal" (worship on the Makom day) is the most important festival of the temple which is celebrated in the month of Kumbham. (Feb / March) It is believed that Bhagavathy in her full attire gave darshan to Vilwamangalam Swamiyar on the Makom day and appears on the same day every year for giving darshan to the devotees in her special appearance. The Bhadrakaali at Kizhukkavu is believed to exorcize evil spirits from devotees, after conducting bhajanam.



PANDYA'S TEMPLES:

The Pandyan dynasty had its own unique temple style which followed the Chola style temples between 1000 and 1250 AD. The architectural features of the Pandya temples reflected the wealth and social



status of the kingdoms compared to other South Indian dynasties of the time. A typical temple consists of a hall and a square shrine (garbhagriha).

SUBRAMANIASWAMI TEMPLE:

- **MOOLAVAR:**Subramaniaswami
- **URCHAVAR:**Shanmugha



Arulmigu Murugan Temple, Thiruparankundram is a Hindu temple dedicated to deity Murugan (also known as Kartikeya and Murugan) in Thiruparankundram, Tamil Nadu, India. It is considered one of the "Six Residences of Morgan". The temple is built in rock-cut architecture and is believed to have been built by the Pandyas during the 6th century. According to legend, it is the place where Murugan killed the demon Surapadman and married Devayanai, daughter of the King of Heaven, Indra. Also, Murugan is said to have worshiped his father Shiva here as Arunagirinathar

The temple is located 8 kilometers (5.0 mi) from Madurai in India. In the main shrine, apart from Murugan, are the deities Shiva, Vishnu, Vinayaka (Ganesha) and Durga. The temple follows the Shiva tradition of worship. Six daily rituals and three annual festivals Tamil month of Aippasi (October–November).

• ARCHITECTURE OF THE TEMPLE:

The temple is located 8 km (5.0 mi) from Madurai, on the Madurai - Tenkasi road. The temple is built of rock-cut architecture dating back to the Pandya period of 6th century and the life sized sculptures in the mandapas of the Nayaka period during the 16th century. An Aasthaana Mandapa with several artistically carved pillars lead one to the towering 150 feet (46 m) high seven-tiered rajagopuram at the entrance. The granite hill behind the temple is 1,050 ft (320 m) has a shrine of Kasi Viswanatha (Shiva) at the top. The image of Vinayaka (Ganesha) in the temple holds sugarcane and fruits. The inner rock cut image is made from a single stone.

The Kambathadi Mandapam, Ardha Mandapam, and Maha Mandapam, the three halls leading to the sanctum, are situated at varying elevation. The main shrine is an early rock cut temple which has cells that house the sanctums of Murugan, Durga, Vinayaka, Shiva and Vishnu. All the statues are carved on the wall of the parankundram rock. Shiva is worshiped as Parangirinathar with his wife Parvati as Aavudai Nayaki. Panels depicting Shiva's dance of bliss are seen outside the sanctum.

• FEATURES OF THE TEMPLE:

A notable feature of this temple is that Shiva and Vishnu face each other in the main shrine, considered a rare thing in ancient Hindu temples. Outside the temple there is a water tank, where the fishes are served with salt and rice flakes by the devotees. There is also a Vedic school on the banks of the temple pond. In front of the Dwajasthambam, the flag staff, there is a carved Nandi (bull), Mayil (peacock) and mouse, the Vahanas (vehicles) of Shiva, Murugan and Vinayaka. There is a flight of six steps called the "Shadashara Padigal", before Ardha Mandapam. The rock carvings of Mahisshasura

Mardini (Durga), Karpaga Vinayagar (Ganesha), Andarabaranar and Uggirar are seen in the hall. There are five water bodies, namely, Saravana Poigai, Lakshmi Theertham, Saniyasi Kinaru (well), Kasi Sunai, and Sathiya Koopam.

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- **DEITIES OF THE TEMPLE:**

The main shrine is an early rock cut temple which has cells that house the sanctums of Subramanya, Durga, Vinayakar, Shiva and Vishnu. All the statues are carved on the wall of the parankundram rock. The presiding deity shiva is known Parangirinathar and the female deity his consort Parvathi is known as Aavudai Nayaki. Panels depicting Shiva's dance of bliss are seen outside the sanctum granite hill behind the temple is 1,050 ft (320 m) has a shrine of Kasi Viswanatha at the top. The image of Vinayaka in the temple in the temple is sported holding sugarcane and fruits.

MEENAKSHI AMMAN TEMPLE:

MOOLAVAR:Sundareswarar

URCHAVAR:Somasander

AMMAN:Meenashi

The Meenakshi Sundareswarar Temple in Madurai was built by the Pandaya Emperor Sadayavarman Kulasekaran I (1190-1205 AD). He built the main parts of the three-storied Gopuram at the entrance of the Sundareswarar shrine and the central part of the shrine of Goddess Meenakshi are the oldest surviving parts of the temple. The central deity was made up of Emerald.



- **CRAVINGS:**

Carvings in a 1,000-pillared mandapam (poultry), circa 1895. The temple was rebuilt by the Hindu Nayaka dynasty ruler Vishwanatha Nayak in the 16th-17th centuries. The Nayaka rulers followed the Hindu texts on Shilpa Shastra architecture in redesigning the temple city plan and the Meenakshi Temple. The city is laid out as concentric squares and circular roads around it, with radiating streets culminating in the Meenakshi-Sundarsvara Temple. These streets use the names of traditional Hindu Tamil months, such as Adhi, Chitrai, Avani-moola, Masi, and others. In each of these months, Hindus begin their tradition of ceremoniously taking the temple's bronze statues across the street of the same name. The temple and city were again facing east to salute the ascension of Surya (the sun god).



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The work done by Vishwanatha Nayaka in 1560 was greatly expanded to include the present structure during the reign of Tirumala Nayaka (1623-1655). The Hindu king Tirumala Nayaka took care to set up many complexes inside the temple. His major contributions are the Vasantha Mandapam to celebrate Vasanthotsavam (Spring Festival) and the Kilikoodu Mandapam (Passage of Parrots). The temple tank walkways and Meenatchi Nayakar Mandapam were built by Rani Mangammal. The initiative to make some changes in the structure was under the direction of Aryanata Mudaliar, the chief minister of the Nayaka dynasty.

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| 1.Meenakshi Amman (Main Goddess) | 2.Sundareswarar (Main God) |
| 3.Mukkuruni Vinayagar | 4.Irattai Vinayagar |
| 5.Dakshinamurthy | 6.Mahalakshmi |
| 7.Saraswathi | 8.63 Nayanmars |
| 9.Sapthamatrikas | 10.Kasi Vishwanathar |
| 11.Lingodbhava | 12.Sahasralinga |
| 13.Subramaniyar with Deivayanai and Valli | 14.Chandrasekhar |
| 15.Chandikeswarar | 16.Siddhar |
| 17.Durgai Amman | 18.Bhairavar |
| 19.Kalyana Sundareswarar with Meenakshi Amman | 20. Appar |
| 21.Sambandhar | 22. Sundarar |
| 23.Manickavasagar | 24.Suryanarayanan with Usha and |
| 25.Prathyusha | 26.Sangam poets |
| 27.Vibhoothi Vinayagar | 28.Navagrahas |



CONCLUSION:

During the sangam period, the three kingdoms used different techniques and engaged themselves in different art and architecture activities which significantly contributed in showing their magnificent and glorious past.

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