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## Spiritual Heritage Mounuments In Villupuram District – A Study

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### Abstract

Temple is the most prominent place which not only the religious place but also administrative place during kingship. By contributing the kings, and families even the merchants both land and donation for the temple. Naturally, they are attributed toward the temple premised and prove their glory to the region. On the consequences, the temples are depicted the heritage and culture to the modern society. Hence the ASI and State Archaeology has to implemented several schemes to protect the heritage monument and safeguard for long years to the future. "Heritage building" means and includes any building of one or more premises, or any part thereof, and/or structure and or artifact that requires conservation and or preservation for historical, architectural, or artisanal, aesthetic, cultural, environmental, or ecological purposes, as well as any portion of land adjoining such building or part thereof that may be required for fencing, covering, or preserving the historical, architectural heritage.

**Keywords:** Heritage building, State Archaeology, Cultural attributes, Spiritual heritage, Kingship.

### Introduction

Tamil Nadu has a rich spiritual heritage, natural heritage, cultural heritage, and well-known tourism centers.<sup>1</sup> This fact draws numerous heritage sites in Tamil Nadu's coastal region and hinterlands. For its nature and heritage, culture has given it the name "Soul of the South."<sup>2</sup> Tamil Nadu is the ever-fascinating land where Dravidian civilization flourished and was glorified. Its historical value reflects the continuous progress of art and culture over a two thousand year period. Thousands of temples with towering gopurams are situated in the region of Tamil Nadu. The Architectural features, sculpture are most prominent masterpiece in the temples which other historical monuments. The royals and their families were all avid supporters of art and culture. The lives of the Tamil people have evolved around the sacred shrines dotting the entire state.<sup>3</sup>

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historical, architectural, or artisanal, aesthetic, cultural, environmental, or ecological purposes, as well as any portion of land adjoining such building or part thereof that may be required for fencing, covering, or preserving the historical, architectural, aesthete. The term "Heritage Precincts" refers to and includes any space that needs to be conserved and/or preserved for historical, architectural, aesthetic, cultural, environmental, or ecological reasons. A wall or other boundary of a specific area, place, or building may enclose such space by drawing an imaginary line around it.

### Territorial Names of Villupuram through the Ages

Villupuram (formerly South Arcot District) has been known by many names, including Nadu Nadu, Thirumunaipadi Nadu, <sup>4</sup>Aruva Nadu, Sedi Nadu, Jagannatha Nadu, Sannatha Nadu, Gadila Nadu, Maladu, and Islamabad. The Union Territory of Pondicherry (alias Puducherry) and Cuddalore District were once part of a separate region called Nadu Nadu. The Sangam literature mentioned this region as Nadu Nadu. <sup>5</sup>The land between Tondai Nadu

and Chola Nadu is called Nadu Nadu. The land was administered by the "Munaiyanar" from Thirunavalur, who are called Thirumunaipadi Nadu.<sup>6</sup> The Thiruthondar Puranam has mentioned the rulers of Thirumunaipadi<sup>7</sup>. Furthermore, the inscriptions mention *Thirumunaipadi Nattu Thirumudiyur* <sup>8</sup>Villupuram was a part of Aruva Nadu, one of the thirteen Nadus in ancient times.

### Spiritual Heritage Monuments

Tamil Nadu is renowned as "Land of Temples", which depicted the culture and heritage of the people. <sup>9</sup>Temples are found every region in this region which having large monumental structures to small stone edifices. Each contains significance and soundly influencing the life and livelihood of the people who attributed the Hindu region. Hinduism is the religion followed by the Hindus, which are the dominant faith, practiced by over eighty percent of the population in Indian sub-continent. The Hindu philosophy has a huge strong influence on the people, governing various aspects of their lives also play the role of a social, cultural and economic centre. The wonderful monuments from a part of the Indian cultural heritage Pilgrimage is an important part of spiritual life returning to God. The pilgrim seeks to separate himself from every day concerns of the world. <sup>10</sup>

### Ennayiram

It has 300 acres of land, students, and teachers. An inscription from the reign of Emperor Rajendra Chola I (circa 1023 A.D.) <sup>11</sup>records a village's endowment of certain charities, which included the establishment of a Vedic college at Ennayiram in South Arcot District, providing for the free board and tuition of 340 students, distributed as follows among the various subjects of study: 75 for Rigveda, 75 for Yajur-Veda, 20 for Chhandoga-Saman, Ten teachers worked at the college, three for each of the two Vedas, two for Miasma, and one for each of the other subjects. The cost of boarding for a student, the college was maintained by an endowment of 45 *velis* (about 300 acres) of land. Each student of Veda cost 6 *Nalis* (34 *Karuni*) of paddy per day and 12 *Kalanju* of gold (25 grains = Rs.2/-) per year, which probably covered the cost of his clothing. A student of the more advanced subjects like Mimamsa, Vedanta, and Vyakarana was given a 66 percent additional allowance <sup>12</sup> salaries of Teachers. A went forcer god the daily

allowance of 1 kalam (=12 karuni) of paddy, while the cost of a daily meals was 3\4 karuni. Thus he was given the cost of food for sixteen persons per year.<sup>13</sup> Ennayiram contains a wealth of information for the modern educator in the areas of educational specifications, methodology, and outcomes.

Another Chola record<sup>45</sup> mentions the purchase of 72 *veli* of land with a paddy yield of 12,000 kalam per year for feeding pious Brahmans (Uttamugram) for Rajendra Chola's health. Wishing pious Brahmans (Uttamugram) for the health of Rajendra Col. Various offerings to gods and the expenses of festivals took 2,475 *kalam*, and the balance of 9,525 *kalam* was spent on educations. The educational endowment was disposed of on almost the same lines at Ennayiram. There were Sama Vedaha Chandogya, Rig and Yajur-for-the ash, sutras (Sama Veda, Chgya, and daily kara), and Baudhayana sutra places daily, as Vyakarana at Ennayiram. Again, in addition to Vedanta, Rupavatara, the Mahabharata, the Ramayana, and the Vaikhanasa Sastra were taught. The last is the first instance; I believe priest craft is intended for temple service as a regular subject of instruction. There were 60 students in total, compared to 270 at Ennayiram. The land of 72 vli was exempt from taxation, and the teachers and students enjoyed special exemptions.<sup>14</sup>

### Mandagapattu

Tamil Nadu is rightly called the "Land of Temples," with thousands of temples of various Tamil dynasties adding to the beauty of the land. A trip down south takes us through the memory land of the great Tamil rulers who have built the magnificent stone structures, brick temples, and cave temples across Tamil Nadu had the reached highest position to posses the temples which belongs to the ancient regime. Also this temples were survived more number of years with good condition. Temple were depicted the ancestral past and the architectural significance, and technical development of the period. We admire the Tamil kings for their creativity, architecture, urban planning, administration, and practices, but their foresight in inscribing valuable information in temples for future generations deserves special recognition. In March 2017, around 20 of us from the Chennai Trekking Club signed up for a heritage trip. During our trip, Sasidhar and Ananth from "Walk with Us" shed some light

on the evolution of temples in Tamil Nadu. "Walk with Us" is a group of Tamil history enthusiasts who organize Tamil walks to create awareness about Tamil heritage and are also actively involved in the promotion and conservation of various places that hold significance in Tamil history.

The early form of Pallava shows the doorkeeper dwarapalas carved at the ends of the rock-cut cave. In early Pallava architecture, the Pillars are plain, with no stone carvings adorning the walls or Pillars. Not many in our group had heard of this temple before, and we were astounded by the face shared with us during this temple visit. As the history goes, the early Pallava rulers of the 2nd–6th centuries who were followers of Buddhism, Jainism, and Saivism built the temple with bricks. However, in the 7th century, King Mahendra Pallava devised a revolutionary idea to carve a temple structure out of a rock mountain and create a rock-cut cave temple (in Mandagapattu) that can outlast brick structures by thousands of years. The Ajanta/Ellora caves and the Badami caves were built even prior to the 6th century; however, it did take some time for the idea and concept to travel down south. In the age of brick masonry temples, Mahendra Pallava I, the 'Vichitrachita,' took on the task of carving a temple out of a 140-foot hillock.

This temple is thought to be Pallavas' first attempt at rock-cut forms. Hence, the pillars are plain, and there are no stone carvings adorning the walls or pillars. The lone inscription in the temple in Pallava Granta (Sanskrit) suggests that this could probably be the first of its kind: a timber less, brick less, mortal less, meatless monument built for Brahma, Vishnu, and Ishwara. Here is the Sanskrit translation of the grantha inscription discovered in the temple. There were no idols present inside this monolithic rock-cut cave temple. However, there were three cells, one for Lord Shiva, one for Lord Vishnu, and one for Lord Brahma, with traces of paintings seen in the back wells of paintings on the walls, which possibly implied that deities could have been painted in walls instead of being worshipped, as idol worship would not have been practiced in the 5th century and may have begun only later.

#### **Mukthialeeswarar Koil and Seetha Cave, Perumukkal**

The Mukthialeeswarar koil including seetha cave located in Perumukkal is a heritage temple belongs to the Cholas dated

around 10<sup>th</sup> century B.C. The large portion of this hill was covered by the fort and fortification. Mukthialeeswarar temple was constructed by Kulothunga. In and including the stone structure belong to the Vikrama Cholas. Seetha cave inscription from 'Tamil Vattezhu' form and belongs to the sixth and seventh century A.D. These temple has more than sixty inscription told the history of temple, and how important in the region. This place is protected by the Government of Tamil Nadu through State Archaeology. (See Appedix-1) This cave only having *vattezhu* inscription out of four inscriptions in Tamil Nadu in petro glyph form. These petro glyph are similar to the Egyptian Hieroglyph letters and also believed dating back to 7<sup>th</sup> century A.D

#### **Conclusion**

Temple is the most prominent place which not only the religious place, but also administravie place during kingship. By contributing the kings, and families even the merchants both land and donation for the temple. Naturally, they are attributed toward the temple premised and prove their glory to the region. On the consequences, the temples are depicted the heritage and culture to the modern society. Hence the ASI and State Archaeology has to implemented several schemes to protect the heritage monument and safeguard for long years to the future.

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