

THE HINDU TEMPLES IN SRI LANKA

(The History and Legends)

Pon Kulendiren



Hindu Temples in Sri Lanka

Pon Kulendiren - Canada

About This Book

Hinduism in Sri Lanka dates back to many centuries BC. The epic Ramayana says King Ravana ruled Sri Lanka and was a staunch Shiva worshipper. As per the legends, he built many Temples for Lord Shiva. Subsequently, due to the influence of South Indian Kings in Sri Lanka Hinduism grew on the Island and temples have been constructed. The five Ishwarams were built in the North, East, South, North West and Western coastal areas to protect the island from Tidal waves (Tsunami). Out of the 63 Hindu Saint poets who were mainly Shiva worshippers from South India, few have visited the Hindu temples in the Island and sang poems about the temples. There are about 400 Temples in Sri Lanka of which 50% are in the Northern Province where Tamil Hindus predominately live.

The majority Buddhist Sinhalese community in Sri Lanka also worship at Hindu temples as they believe that Buddha was an incarnation of Vishnu. Since South India is located not too far from Sri Lanka and separated by the Gulf of Mannar, invasion from the Tamil Cholas and Pandiya monarchs were

frequentThe Cholas rule in Sri Lanka began in the 2nd BCE. Manu Neethi Cholan became the King of Anuradhapura. Subsequently, Singhalese monarchs ruled Anuradhapura. In 993 AD Raja Raja Cholan invaded Sri Lanka and conquered the Anuradhapura Kingdom. Rajendra Chola conquered most of the island other than Uva and made Polonnaruwa the capital. He built many Hindu temples in Polonnaruwa. Chola rule lasted until 1077 for about eighty years.

In addition to Shiva worship, Ganapathy, Sakthi, Pathini, Murugan, Vishnu and other village deities worship prevail in the Island. This book deals with the héritage of these temples; destruction caused and the legendary stories connected with them. This book is a continuation of the Book titled "Hinduism & Science." The book aims to enlighten the present generation of the expatriate population living in North America, Europe, Australia and in many countries about the history of Temples in Sri Lanka.

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PREFACE

It's the naked truth that Hinduism is the oldest and realistic religion, which emphasize the worship of the powerful natures called (Energies) '*Sakthi.*' There are five natural elements called '*Pancha Poothangal*' which are water, wind, fire, earth & sky. According to Hinduism God is eternal, omnipotent and omnipresent in the form of '*ask thy.*' Infinite means no birth or death ('*Athi, Anthem*'). So, the authentic pre-natives of India worshiped these five elements as God at the beginning. Later, they invented the Sun as the route for all these five elements and started to worship the sun which called '*Sooriya Namaskaram.*'

Gradually when they developed the knowledge, they drew the picture of an imaginary superpowered character with four hands named '*Shiva*' bearing all those five elements and carved the statue too. Hinduism forbade five serious sins *such as* telling a lie, stealing, gambling, arguing and killing. "Every action has an opposite reaction" is the scientific law of dynamics invented very lately. But Hinduism specified in very ancient time the '*Karma,*' the action which we commit in this birth will react in the next birth. Next birth is designed by '*Karma.*' Hinduism is the only religion mentioned about the rebirth and reincarnation right from the beginning. Now day's scientists have accepted as there is a renaissance. Also, it's preached human beings should be strict vegetarians. Later it was proved scientifically that the human's internal organs

were designed to digest only the vegetables, not like carnivorous animals. Hinduism says killing of any lives even for meals is a sin. But all other religions say killing of any animals for food is not the sinner.

Few people started to meditate for several hours and days by completely forget about themselves and the food called fasting '*Viratham*.' By doing so, they gained extraordinary knowledge and power called '*Gnanam*.' Through '*Gangnam*' they had supervision and their soul could able to fly from one continent to another, cured the uncured chronic sick people and did many miracles. They were called as '*Grannies*' '*Trishies*' and '*Gurus*.' They wrote many worthy books about the basic principles and logic of the Hinduism called '*Vietnam*,' '*Vethantham*,' '*Upanidatham*' etc. Still, there are many '*Grannies*' doing meditation in the undisturbed caves in Himalaya mountain. Even though they were ordinary men, they gained extensive spiritual knowledge to find out the answers to their questions '*who am I, from where did I come and where will I go?*' That's the fundamental principle of the Hinduism – if a person I realized who am I then he could able to recognize the God. '*Gnannies*' could able to calculate the movements of the planets without any particular types of equipment like the present day's scientist uses and also predicted how it would affect the individuals - that process called '*Astrology*.'

Few '*Gurus*' shared their knowledge with their disciples and taught to them about Hinduism to become '*Gnannies*.' In the meantime, one particular group, called

'*Brahmanas*' (Brahmins) studied only the '*mantras*' in 'Sanskrit' language claimed themselves as '*Gurus*' and started to do '*Pooja*' in the temples for their living and compelled others to worship the idols in the temples and pay for them '*Thadchani*' (colly), with rice, vegetables and clothes to their services. They know nothing about Hinduism at all. Making money is their only motive as the author of this book Mr. Kulendiren pointed out.

The Gurus and disciple teaching system gradually vanished. The school teachers taught nothing about Hinduism but just the *Thaevaram*, *Thiruvacakam* and the life history of the *Samaya Kuravars* who sang those. So the current generation believes Hinduism is just the idol worship and gets satisfied by doing that from the birth till death. Mistakenly the Hindus think that they are offering to the God and offering everything to the Brahmins. But not offer a penny to the poor people begging on the street. The Hinduism says "See the God from the smile of the most impoverished." The God is desire less at all ('*Ethel Mae Patru Illaathavar*'), though love only the true love. Thiruvalluvar said '*Patruka patru train patronage patruka part vidatku.*'

The author has touched on the importance of Energy in Hinduism. He diagrammatically explained how energy is applied to human living and nature and the scientific laws related to Energy.

But the philosophical thinker and well-known writer Mr. Pon Kulendiren wrote this book "Hinduism is a Scientific Religion' in English at the right time to enlighten the younger

generations of this twenty-first century. Hope he will write more and more books about Hinduism with profound conceptions.

Some years ago, the author wrote in Tamil about Hinduism, and at the request of many people he wrote in English, this book touches on different aspects of science in Hinduism, and He focuses in this. This book touches on Nature, Energy, and interpretation of idol worship in Hinduism, which the younger generation is keener in knowing. The book also covers the historical background of five Siva Temples (Ishwarams) in Sri Lanka and Murugan temples such as Nallur, Kathirgamam, Mavitapuram.

Buddhism also touches on Rebirth and Karma and is an offspring of Hinduism, and it has a link to Hinduism. In Sri Lanka, Buddhist Viharas contain Hindu idols like Vishnu, Ganapathy, Karthikeyan, and Pattini. I wish that the writer of this book will write more and more books about Hinduism with in-depth analysis for youths to understand.

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Mississauga, Ontario, - Canada – 12th June 2012

FROM THE PEN OF THE AUTHOR.

Hinduism in Sri Lanka dates back to many centuries BC. The epic of Ramayana says that King Ravana ruled Sri Lanka and was a staunch Shiva worshipper. As per the legends, he built many Temples for God Shiva. Subsequently due to the influence of South Indian kings in Sri Lanka Hinduism grew on the island and temples have been constructed. The five Iswrams have been built in the North, East, South, North West and Western coastal areas to protect the island from Tidal waves (Tsunami). Out of the 63 Hindu Saint poets who were mainly Shiva worshippers from South India, few have visited the Hindu temples in the Island and sang poems about the temples.

The majority Buddhist Sinhalese community in Sri Lanka too worship at Hindu temples as they believe that Buddha was an incarnation of Vishnu. South Indian Chola dynasty when it invaded and ruled Sri Lanka it built many Shiva temples. In addition to Shiva worship, Ganapathy, Sakthi, Pathini, Murugan, Vishnu and other village deities worshipping prevail in the Island. This book deals with the heritage of these major temples; destruction caused to them and the legendary stories connected with them. This book is a continuation of the Book titled "Hinduism & Science."

There are legendary historical stories associated with several temples. In some temples, miracles have happened which influenced the respect people had for them. Some temples do

not have a historical record of the date it was established and the person who constructed it. The main structure of the temple is the triangular shape Gopuram. Each temple has its temple tree called Thal Virutcham. A Muslim Mosque could be identified by the architecture and the icon of a crescent. A symbol of a cross could identify a church. Red and White stripes could identify the Hindu temple on the Temple walls. The white signifies the male energy, Shiva. Red color refers to Female energy Sakthi. In most of these temples, the annual festival is held for weeks.

Temples such as Nallur Murugan Temple, Mavittapuram Temple, Vallipuram temple, Thondamanaru Sanathi temple, Kathirgamam, the Murugan temple located in the southern province of Ruhuna, the five Shiva temples called d Ishwarams, and the Hindu Devotees well patronize many Ganapathy temples.

During Portuguese and Dutch rule, many temples were destroyed. Then again when communal riots broke out after the independence in 1948, it affected the Temples. When Tamil migrated to other countries, they sent money back to Sri Lanka to renovate the temples.

There hardly few records o these temples in English. This book provides some information about traditional temples in Sri Lanka. It will serve to those Sri Lankan Tamils living abroad to know about the heritage and pass it on to future generations. Some of the information related to the temples in

Jaffna are available in Tamil in the Our Jaffna web page. I am grateful to that web pages for providing the required information.

When comes to siddhars in Sri Lanka there were 18 siddhars lived on the island. Yoga Swamy, Kadaiyl Swamy, Kadait Swamy, Navaneetha Swamy, Periya Kutti Swamy, Sellachi Amayar, Sadaiyamma are few of them. Their biographies are available on record. Many Hindus still narrate stories about their activities and predictions. There are several books published about them.

CHAPTER 1

Hinduism in Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka is an Island with an area of 65,610 km² and population of about 21 Million, located at the tip of South India. Sri Lanka has maritime borders with India to the northwest and the Maldives to the southwest. Its documented history spans 3,000 years or more. There is evidence of prehistoric human settlements dating back to at least 125,000 years. Its geographic location and deep harbors made it of large strategic importance from the time of the ancient Silk Road. Nay traders from different countries such South East Asia, Middle East, India, China, and Europe visited the island and was partly instrumental in establishing temples. The Hindu saints called Nayanar from too visited temples in the island and sang songs about them.

A diverse and multicultural country, Sri Lanka is home to many religions, ethnic groups, and languages. In addition to the majority Sinhalese, it is home to large groups of Sri Lankan, and Indian Tamils, Moors, Burghers, Malays, Kaffirs and the aboriginal Vedda have a long tradition in Sri Lanka. Hindus currently make up for 12.60% of the Sri Lankan population and are almost exclusively Tamils apart from small immigrant communities from India and Pakistan such as the Sindhis, Telugus, Kannadigas, and Malayalee's. In the 1915 census, they made up almost 25% of the population, which included the indentured laborers the British had

brought. Due to assimilation, emigration (over 1 million Sri Lankan Tamils have left the country since independence), today they are a smaller and still dwindling minority. Hinduism is dominant in the North and Eastern provinces, where there is a significant number of Tamil people. Hinduism is also practiced in the central regions (where there are scores of people of Indian Tamil descent as well as in the capital, Colombo. Per the government census of 2012, there are about 3.0 million Hindus in Sri Lanka. During the Sri Lankan, Civil War, many Tamils fled to other countries. There are Hindu temples abroad which were built by the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora to maintain their religion and culture.

Most Sri Lankan Hindus follow the teaching of Saiva Siddhanta. Sri Lanka is home to the five abodes of Shiva, which are known as Pancha (Five) Ashrama. Murugan (Karthikeyan) is one of the most popular Hindu deity in Sri Lanka. He is not only venerated by the Hindu Tamils but also by Buddhist Sinhalese and aboriginal Veddas who believe that Karthikeyan's second wife Valli was from Veddah community.

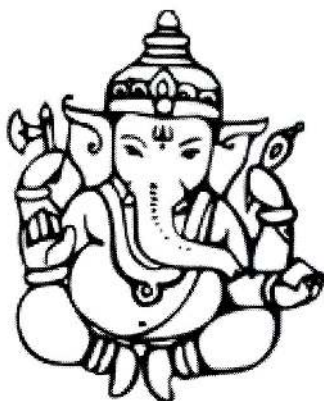
Evidence states the earliest inhabitants of the island were the Nagas and Yakkas. The Nagas practiced an early form of Hinduism that worshiped Lord Shiva and serpents. This form of animistic Shaivism is common in Tamil Nadu and other parts of India. The Nagas, who inhabited the Jaffna Peninsula, were probably the ancestors of Sri Lankan Tamils. The Nagas started in the 3rd century BCE to assimilate to Tamil language

and culture and lost their separate identity. The Nainativu Nagapooshani Amman Temple in Nainativu is believed to be one of the prominent 64 Shakti Peedams.

Hinduism was probably the dominant religion in Sri Lanka before the arrival of Buddhism in the 3rd century BC. Buddhism was introduced into Sri Lanka by Mahinda, the son of Emperor Ashoka, during the reign of King Devanampiya Tissa. The Sinhalese embraced the Buddhism and Tamils remain Hindus in Sri Lanka. However, it was activity from across the Palk Strait that set the scene for Hinduism's survival in Sri Lanka. Shaivism (devotional worship of Lord Shiva) was the dominant branch practiced by the Tamil peoples thus most of the traditional Hindu temple architecture and philosophy of Sri Lanka drew heavily from this view of Hinduism. Thirugnanasambanthar mentioned the names of some Sri Lankan Hindu temples in his works.

Most other Sri Lankan Hindus follow what is commonly known as folk Hinduism without the baggage of philosophical school of thought They usually worship a village, clan or tribal deity within or outside the accepted pantheon of Hindu gods. Some local Deities are Kannaki, Mariamman, Draupadi, Ayyanar, Vairavar and worship of weapons such as Vel or the lance. They might pray it in a formal temple structure, forest grove or an open plain. They might or might not use the help of Brahmin priests. Localized rituals are employed but share common features across India, specifically South India. Some such rituals are Kavadi Attam or penance dancing, Tee Midi or fire

walking trance due to possession by local gods and animal sacrifices to appease local gods or spirits.



CHAPTER 2

Ganapathy worship & the Temples

There are many major deities in Hinduism. Separate sects are formed to worship these deities. Each brings forward a philosophical concept for a human being with a hidden scientific explanation. Ganapathy worship is for promoting wisdom. When any new venture is undertaken, Ganapathy is worshiped. He is prayed to prevent and remove obstacles faced in life. It is also believed that failure to worship Ganapathy will lead to problems. The elephant has the strength to remove any heavy objects that block progress.

Many legendary stories explain the creation of Ganapathy. The stories are questionable. Ganapathy was created from the body of Ambal by herself. She made him her bodyguard. In a battle, his head was cut off. Siva replaced it with an elephant's head onto the body. So, he became named as Gajaanana. Ganesh emerged a distinct deity in the recognizable form in the 4th and 5th centuries. During the Gupta period, although he inherited traits from Vedic and pre-Vedic precursors. It is

generally assumed that Ganesh was brought to Tamilnadu by Siruththondar from Vaathapi in the North. Siruthondar was the army commander of Pallava king Narasimha Varman. He was called Paramsothy. He went North and fought the battle against Challukiyas king at Vaathapi and won the battle. When he returned to Tamil Nadu, he brought a statue of Ganesh from Vaathapi. His popularity rose quickly, and he was formally included among the five primary deities in the 9th century. Thiruchengattankudi is mentioned in Sivakamiyin Sabatham

because Pallava Commander Paramjothi, after conquering Vathabi got permission from Pallava king Narasimha Varman to go back to his native Chozha land to become Sivanadiyar and afterward he was known as Siruthondar Nayanar. Though name "Ganapati" appears in Rigveda, he is not the same God who is worshiped as elephant-headed God today. "Gana" represents a clan and "Pati" is considered chieftain. In Vedic times, image worship did not exist, and "Ganapati" stood for Brihaspati or Brahmin. This God of wisdom has two wives, "Siddhi" and "Buddhi." --

Siddhi is achievement and Buddhi are intellect. Some Hindus misinterpret it. The Elephant has these two characteristics.

Before commencing the ritualistic worship, rice (grain) is spread over the seat on which the idol of Ganesh is to be installed. Either a fistful or a mound of rice is used, depending on the local custom. On invocation of Ganapati and his ritualistic worship, energy is generated in the idol. This energy saturates the rice on which the icon is placed. If there are two

strings of a musical instrument (a stringed musical instrument) of the same frequency, when sound is generated by one the same is produced by the other. We call it resonance. Similarly, when frequencies of energy are produced in the rice below the idol, this power is transmitted to the rice stored in the house. Thus, one can eat rice saturated with energy as a sacrament of food (prasada) throughout the year.

When performing each of the following rituals a mantra is recited. Each animal in nature exhibits an unusual philosophical concept. The big head of Ganesha's symbolism signifying to think big. The two large ears explain that listening is vital in life. It develops knowledge. Hence, first, listen to what others say and think analytically. The two small eyes for a big head is something which is peculiar and disproportionate. Although the eyes are small, it implies that concentration through observation is vital. The symbol carries an ax to break away the bond of attachment in life. Attachment slows progress. What about the rope he carries. It is to pull you nearer to the highest goal and prevent you from moving away from your objectives. The smallmouth implies that one should talk less and show capability in action. The trunk explains high efficiency and adaptability. Big belly is to swallow the sins committed by human beings and peacefully digest the good and bad in life. The sweet Modhakam is a reward for Sadhana. One broken tusk explains the sacrifice made to write fast when Vyasa was dictating the Mahabharata quickly. For a big animal, the small mouse is disproportionate, but this has a meaning. The mouse can travel

quickly to overcome obstacles. Different explanations are given about the symbolism of Ganesh. The bottom line is that it contains a tremendous amount of energy that leads to a happy, successful life.

Ganesh is the Lord of success and destroyer of evils and obstacles. He is also worshiped as the God of education, knowledge, wisdom and wealth. Before starting to write in examinations, interviews or writing reports the symbol of Ganesh is written on the top of the paper. People believe that He guides you and makes your project a success. In temples, the puja is done first for Ganapathy and then only to the other deities. In fact, Ganesha is one of the five prime Hindu deities (Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva, and Durga being the other four)

There is another significance in the Ganesha form. Ganesha's head symbolizes the *Atman* or the soul, which is the ultimate supreme reality of human existence, and his human body signifies *Maya* or the earthly existence of human beings. The elephant head denotes wisdom, and its trunk represents Aum, the sound symbol of cosmic reality. In his upper right hand, Ganesha holds a goad, which helps him to propel humanity forward on the continuous path and remove obstacles from the way. The noose in Ganesha's left hand is a gentle implement to capture all difficulties. The broken tusk that Ganesha holds like a pen in his lower right hand is a symbol of sacrifice, which he broke for writing the Mahabharata. The rosary in his other hand suggests that the pursuit of knowledge should be continuous. The Modakam (sweet) he holds in his trunk indicates that one must discover the sweetness of the *Atman*.

His fan-like ears convey that he is all ears to our petitions. The snake that runs around his waist represents energy in all forms. And he is humble enough to ride the lowest of creatures, a mouse.

Gaja is found on the seals discovered at sites (like Harappa and Moehenjodaro of the Indus Valley Civilization (3000 BC – 1700 BC). Some scholars believe that when elephants had been tamed and domesticated and used for peaceful and possibly for other purposes. When Alexander the Great tried to invade India through Indus valley, he was amazed at the elephants used in the battlefield. That was the first time he saw elephants. In the Vedas, there is no direct reference to elephants. But during the Vedic period when Alexander came to India from Greece to the Indus valley, he was surprised to see the power of the elephants used in war.

Ganesha is also the destroyer of vanity, selfishness, and pride. He is the personification of the material universe in all its various magnificent manifestations. The very purpose of Ganesh's fat belly is to swallow everything, which comes in front of us. It doesn't mean that we eat a lot. It does not matter, if the event, the situation, the problem, the dialogue or the conversation is pleasant or unpleasant, accept and swallow it, Hear everything with wide-open ears. Do not react to it. Let us keep quiet and swallow the words! Learn to look into any matter very minutely with the small eyes. Smell it again and again with the big trunk like an elephant. Then whatever may be of any use, of any help, of any assistance, keep only that

and throw away the rest of it. It is said that the elephant will swallow the innermost part of coconut and throw away the outside shell. However, when mangoes are concerned, it throws away the inner seed and eats only the pulp and the external skin! What an incredible understanding!

To worship Lord Ganesh is to confine in concentration, contemplation, and finally, abide in the supreme or the blessedness or the absolute, by focusing the mind initially at the individual level and then from individual to cosmic level. When we keep on persuading and observing this science of management of the self, every day, systematically, scientifically, regularly, without fail and with interest, we will win the grace of Lord Ganesh. We receive and achieve Riddhi, and Siddhi & nothing will be impossible because in the word impossible there lies the, nothing will be impossible because in the word impossible there lays the word possible, too!

Another traditional aspect of Ganesh worship in some parts of Sri Lanka can be observed along the main roads, especially in the North-Central Province, where his statue is placed near trees and prayed by travelers so that they may have a safe journey. A typical example is Murugandy Ganesh temple in the A9 highway in Vanni. The ritual usually consists of breaking a coconut in his name and offering a coin (*pandura*), etc.

In predominantly Tamil areas as well as in upcountry estates, a black stone or a black stone statue of God Pillaiyar is placed at the foot of trees at some locations, generated similarly, and

this God is also known as Gana Deviyo among Singhalese. Per Hindu believers, Gana Deviyo had been commanded by God Shiva to stand by a roadside, and it is this command that the Gana Deviyo is faithfully adhering. Vows made to Gana Deviyo seeking his protection are followed by boiling of milk and offering it to the God-seeking protection and grace from Him. In the Jaffna, Pillaiyar was regarded as the "guardian of the crops," and many shrines were erected by the agriculturists in the neighborhoods of their fields and are a common deity in Vanni area in the north, which is predominantly an agricultural area. According to local tradition, a temple dedicated to Ganesha was erected at Innuvil, in Jaffna, by Karunakara Thondaiman, the commander of Kulathunga Chola I (1070-1118 AD), and it is now known as Karunakara Pillaiyar Temple in Innuvil.

In the mountainous area of Nuwara Eliya, one finds such Ganesh small shrines, located at road crossings, often under trees. The statues display the typical South Indian style (black colored by cult smoke, dressed in a piece of tissue). Some colorful folk statues of Ganesh are also located scattered near road crossings in jungle regions between Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa. The main reason is that paddy and sugarcane cultivators believe that Ganesh will protect the farm from destruction by elephants.

Other Ganesh representations in the south of Lanka are much older ones. They can be seen in some Buddhist temples, where they are displayed. Some are mural paintings, with other Hindu deities (Vishnu, Indra, Karttikeya), paying homage to

the Buddha. One is in a Dambulla temple Cave and another one in a cave of the Alu Vihara temple. Other statues: one small white standing Ganesh can be found in a Buddhist shrine at Embekke Devala, but the best and biggest is hidden in an ancient part of the Lankatilaka temple, both near Kandy. There are ancient Ganesh representations in other places too.

The only temple which openly displays Ganesh is the well-known Kelaniya temple in a near suburb of Colombo. There, on the southern wall, a large sculpture of the benevolent God is displayed. He is seated on His huge rat.

Near Mihintale, the stupa Karnataka Cetinga is surrounded by a decorative frieze which inscriptions say to date from the 1st or 2nd century A.D. On this frieze; the elephant-headed god is undoubtedly carved. Indeed, one can see a twofold Gana procession moving towards an elephant-headed personage with a left-turned trunk. We can be sure that this is a Ganapathi representation, despite the antiquity of the idol.

In Museums, one can remember some old stone Ganesh statues in the National Museum (Colombo); however, we regret that no information is given about their age and the place where they were found. On the other hand, two best pieces, one stone-made, one bronze-made (both from the 12th century), are presented in the excellent Polonnaruwa Museum. In the catalog of the exposition in Paris describes a large splendid sitting bronze Ganesh from the 11th century (Polonnaruwa period, which has been found in the Shiva temple in 1960. The author writes that this unique specimen would be on display in the Anuradhapura museum. According

to the picture, no doubt that this piece is the Ganesh now displayed in Polonnaruwa. The Ganesh statue in the Raja Maha Vihara in Kelaniya is very noticeable.

There are several ancient Sinhala texts written for beginners during the time of Pirivena education before the establishment of schools by the British. One such early book is 'Ganadevi Hella.' As the name indicates, 'Ganadevi Hella' was a collection of verses referring to the Hindu God Ganesh, popularly known as Ganadevio in Sinhala. There are 49 verses in this book. A typical verse in the book accessible even today reads: There are several Pillaiyar (Ganesh) Temples in Northern area, Jaffna. To name some of them:

Chulipuram: Kannaikothikakkai Pillaiyar temple

Innuvil : Karunakara Pillaiyar temple – A favorite old temple

Manipay: Maruthadi Vinay agar temple - A favorite old temple

Murukandi: Murugandy Pillaiyar temple in Vanni, patronized by travelers on highway A9. Many years ago, in the trunk of a Tree, on the roadside, the symbol of Ganapathy appeared.

Nallur Kailaasa Pillaiyar and the Ganesh temple

Veiyilugandha Pillayar are another Pillayar temples with an old heritage located near the Nallur temple in Jaffna. The rays of the sun enter the main shrine is called Moolasthanam of Veiyilugandha Pillayar (Temple exposed to sun rise). Hence, it got this name. These two act as Guardians of Nallur Temple.

Neervely: Arasakesari Pillaiyar temple

Neeraviyadi Pillayar temple This temple is located un

Brown road

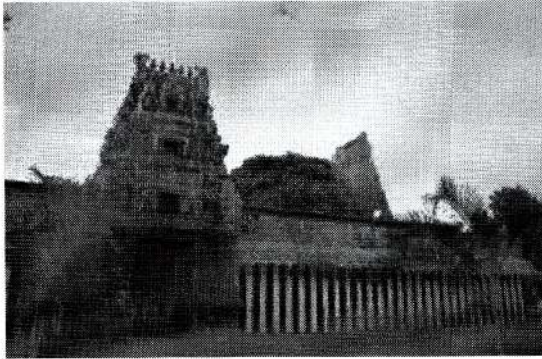
main shrine called Moolasthanam. The meaning of the name of the temple signifies its exposure to the rays of the sun. There are several explanations given why the temple got its name. Since the idol was brought from India, the name of the icon linking the name of the village from where it was brought was given to the temple. Even when it rained, the sun rays fell on the Pillayar statue. Hence, the name was given. 'Muthirai Santhai' (Market) is the focal point at the city layout of the ancient Nallur Rajasthani. The piece of land that falls close to the Veiyilugandha Pillayar is called Kottai Vaasal (Fort entrance). Another piece of land in the Southeast Regions is called kottai adi. The fact that a piece of land called by the name 'Kottai adi' is near the Veiyilugandha Pillayar temple gives room to believe that the Eastern entrance of the Nallur Rajasthani must have been in that region only. Veiyilugandha Pillayar temple and Sattanaadhar temple are equidistance from 'Muthirai Santhai.'

Because 'Muthirai Santhai' was the center of Nallur Rajasthani, we can reasonably contend that the temples which were in all the four directions must have been somewhat at equidistance from the marketplace. The temple of Veiyilugandha Pillayar, who is the defending God of farmers, is in the area adjacent to Semmani, which is full of agricultural fields.

Neeraviyadi Pillayar Temple.

It is an old temple not too far from Jaffna Hindu College. The tank next to the temple is completely neglected and filled with shrubs. A Sithar named Kadail swami passed away in the area

near the temple. No one knows the date or place of his birth, the details of his parentage or even the name given to him. However, it is known that Kadai Swami hailed from the state of Karnataka, that he was called Swami Mukti Ananda and that he had mastered English, Sanskrit, Kannada, and Tamil.



Maruthadi Pillayar Kovil:

It is one of the popular Ganapathy temples in Manipay, a town located not too far from Jaffna. However, the town is a Christian dominated one because of the influence of The American Mission in the past and because of Jaffna College and Uduvil Girls College. Maruthadi Pillayar became popular among the Hindus living in Manipay and villages surrounding Manipay. The temple festival takes place over 18 days. The car festival is held on the day of the Tamil New year. The tree Marutham is the temple tree, and the legend says that long time back Ganapathy appeared as a statue in the Marutham Tree. Hence, the temple got its name. It is located opposite the famous Green Hospital, and the patients worship there.

Innuvil Pararajasekeran Vinayakar temple is one of the sacred Hindu temples in Jaffna. Innuvil village is located a

Alaveddy : Kumbalavalai Pillaiyar temple

Batticaloa : Mamamanga Pillaiyar temple

Colombo: Shri Muthu Vinayaga temple, Chetty Street

Bambalapitiya: New Kathiresan temple

Kandy: Selva Vinayaka temple. This was built during Nayaka rule in Kandy.

Kataragama: Maanikka Vinayaka temple. It has a link to the Murugan Valli love it is located three miles from the main temple by the side of Maanicka garage affair as Karthikeyan's brother Ganesh helped him in his love affair so says the epic

Ganesh Temples in Sri Lanka

India has the highest Hindu population of about 900 Million. 82 % of the total Indian population. Himachal Pradesh has the largest Hindu population, and Tamil Nadu has 55 Million Hindus with many Saiva temples. It is estimated that there are about 4800 temples in Sri Lanka. There are 2495 temples in the Eastern province and 775 temples in Upcountry. The Northern province has the largest number of temples of about 2495.

Nallur is the capital of a Hindu kingdom in the Jaffna Peninsula and the Murugan temple as the most popular one located few miles from Jaffna town. Around this temple, there are many famous Ganapathy temples as protectors, the concept on which the previous kings who ruled the Jaffna Kingdom built temples for Lord Shiva's family. Nallur Sivan temple, followed by the Veerakaali Amman temple representing Sakthi and Kailasa Pillayar Kovil in the South, Veiyilugandha Pillayar Temple in the East, surround the

Nallur Murugan temple. All these temples were badly destroyed when the Portuguese invaded Jaffna. Each temple has a history behind it. In addition to these temples the most popular ones with a legend are:

In 948 A.D, Chief Minister to Chola Kulatunga Aarya, called Bhuvanekabhahu, first built a temple for Lord Kumaran in Kurukkal Valavu in Nallur. In 1450, Senbahap Perumal, the General of Parakramabahu came from Anuradhapura to conquer Jaffna and destroyed the temple. Regretting his action, in 1457, he tried to make amends by building the temple in Muthirai Chanthai, a few kilometers from the present temple. During the Portuguese invasion, in 1619, it was again destroyed. In 1734 it was constructed again in Muthirai Chanthai.

Kailasa Pillayar Kovil is located walking distance south of Nallur temple. When Nallur temple was destroyed this Pillayar temple too was also destroyed. The Pillayar statue along with Ambal and Perumal statues were hidden from the main shrine of the temple. The aim if the invaders were to stop the Hindus from practicing the religion. Hence they to plundered the wealth of the temple. When the Nallur temple was renovated, Kailasapillayar temple too was restored, and the pujas for Pillayar recommenced. Ten days festivals now take place starting on the full moon day in April. The Pillayar temples surrounding the Murugan temples were destroyed.

Veiyilugandha Pillayar is another Pillayar temple with an old heritage located in the East where the rays of the sun enter the

few miles from Jaffna Town on the Jaffna Palaly road. The history of the temple goes back to the period of Ariya Chakkaravarthees in Jaffna. It was during the rule of Ariya Chakkaravarthees that the worship of Ganesha became popular in Jaffna. There is evidence that several Vinayaka temples such as Karunakara Pillayar temple, Paralai Vinayakar temple, Veyilil Uhantha Pillaiyar temple and Kailasa Pillayar temple were established during this period. Similarly, it can be concluded that Pararasasekara Vinayakar temple, too, was erected during the rule King Pararajasekeran.

Per a verse of ancient times, King Pararajasekeran, who belonged to the eleventh generation of the Ariya Chakravarthies, had worshipped at this temple. A picture in the main Mandapam of the temple depicts King Pararajasekeran praying at the temple in the company of his ministers.

The main deity installed in the sanctum sanctorum (Karbagraham) is the Vinayakar. This statue was made by reputed Indian sculptors and installed there. The Poojas are performed per agama principles and traditions.

There are separate shrines for Gaja Laxmi, Santhana Gopalar, Valli Theivanai Sametha Subramaniyar, Bala Ganapathy, Bala Murugan, Four Samaya Kuravars, Nava Graham, Vairavar, Maha Luximi and Sandeswarar.

The annual temple festival commences in the month of Vaikasi in the auspicious hour of Sathaya Natchthiram with the hoisting of the flag. It is a 9-day festival. The chariot

festival is on the tenth day, while the water cutting ceremony is on the eleventh day- in the punarpoosa natchathiram. Before the hoisting of the flag, the Kodi Kavi composed by Umapathy Sivacharyar is recited.

The first Kumbabishekam is said to have been in 1939. The second was in January 1961. Raja Gopura Kumbabishekam was built on 04-09-1972. There was another in 1984, followed by another in 1997. A unique ceremony of the temple was the 1008 Kalasa abishekam on the lines of poojas and rituals. It was performed in July (Adi) in 1998.

The story of Pillayar recitation is carried out according to Hindu traditions on the days that Vinayakar Shasty fast is observed. This tradition has been continued in the temple for years because this will help devotees to imbibe faith in Lord Ganessa. Devotees are not enlightened about the scientific concept of Pillayar deity.

Legend says that princess Maruthapuraveehavalli built seven Pillayar temples in the villages Kollankalatty, Varathalam, Alankollai, Kumpalavalia, Permakkadavi, Kalvalai, Alankulai. Although the-the princess Maruthapuraveehavalli's face which appeared like that of a horse changed, for her view it remained the same and did not disappear from her thought. When she inquired the reason for it, she was told that she should have worshipped Ganapathy before worshipping his brother Murugan. To worship Ganapathy she built seven temples for Ganapathy in the vicinity Mavitapuram Murugan Temple.



CHAPTER 3

Sivalingam Worship and Siva Ishwarams

Shiva, the lord of the erect Phallus, is traced to the ithyphallic figure of Indus Valley civilization or the phallic images found more generally in prehistoric India. Lord Shiva's other form is 'Ardhanariswara, half man, and half woman. Lord Shiva, with his consort Parvati, is always in a celestial dance of procreation and destruction of the worlds.

1. Physical attributes of Linga

a. Ganga: Just as the sun is the focal point of the solar system and the soul that of the body, the focal point of divine consciousness (Chaitanya) in every object and pure particles (pavitrakas) is ga-aum. The flow from which ga-aum originates is gan gaha = Ganga. Ga-aum flows from Shiva's

head. (this called the descent of the Ganga from Shiva's head. Since the river, Ganga has a fraction of the principle of the spiritual Ganga, no matter how polluted it becomes, its purity is perpetually retained. Hence, when compared to any other water in the world, the water from the Ganga is the purest. This is realized not only by those who can perceive the subtle dimension but also by scientific researchers.

b. Moon: Shiva wears the Chandra (moon) on His forehead. The point where the three frequencies - affection (Mamata), mercifulness (kshamashilata) and motherly love (vatsalya) originate is referred to as the Chandra (moon). Thus, one can conclude that chandrama (the moon principle) is the state in which the three attributes of affection, mercifulness, and motherly love are present.

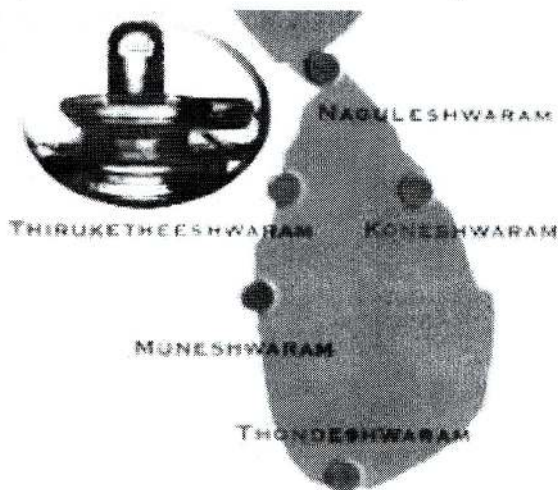
c. The Third eye: Shankar is three-eyed, i.e., He can perceive events of the past, present, and future. According to the science of Yoga, the third eye means the Sushumna nadi (channel).

Serpent: One of the Names of Lord Shankar is Bhujangapatihari. Bhujang means a serpent or pure particles (pavitrakas), Pati means the nurturer and hari means one with a garland around His neck. Bhujangapatihari thus means the One, who nurtures pure particles and wears them like a garland. Various serpents represent groups of pure particles. Though externally they appear like serpents, internally they are a kind of ladder. To make spiritual progress one must climb up holding onto the tail of the snake. Lord Shankar

adorns serpents at nine points on His body - one on the head, one around the neck, one on each arm, one on each wrist, one around the waist and one on each thigh. It implies that his body is comprised of pure particles or those serpents of pure particles play all over the body of Lord Shankar, who has the universe as His form.

Ardhanariswara

Lord Shiva is called ardhanariswara. The term 'Ardhanatishvara' is a combination of three words- 'Ardha,' 'Nari' and 'Ishvara,' meaning respectively, 'half,' 'woman' and 'Lord' or 'God,' that is, Ardhanarishvara is the Lord whose half is a woman. It is Shiva and Shakti who are inseparable. There is no existence in absence one or other. In brief Shiva and Shakthi combine to form a human. It could be compared with Wave-Particle duality plays a significant role in modern physics and Quantum Mechanics in particular.;



The Five Eeswarams - Five Important Shiva Temples in Lanka

Ishwran signifies Sivalingam. There are five Ishwarams in Sri Lanka located in the coastal areas of the island. Sri Lanka was severely affected by the Tsunami in December 2004 due to the earthquake in Indonesia. There is a history of Tsunamis that impacted the island. The legend says the story of how Viharamaha Devi, princess of Kelaniya was sent by boat by her father to prevent tsunami taking place on the western coast. Being an island and open to the sea in the south it is susceptible to Tsunamis caused by earthquakes in South East Asia, The Tsunami that hit the Western coast created many islands near Puttalam and the Jaffna peninsula. The five Ishwarams were established to protect the island from Tsunamis and other natural disasters like cyclones. They are named Naguleswaram near Keerimalai in the North, Thirukoneswaram in the top fort Fredrick in Trincomalee on the east coast, Thiruketheeswaram in the West coast near Mannar, Muneeswaram near Chilaw and Dondeswaram in the Southern coast in Dondra near Tangalle. Each of these Ashrams has a long history.



Naguleswaram

Naguleswaram temple is situated close a mineral water spring called *Keerimalai Springs* reputed for its curative properties. There is also a cave complex nearby believed to have been used for meditation by a mythical sage called Nagulla Muni. Further, a local myth states that an Indian Pandyan princess named *Maruthapura Veeravalli* built the nearby **Mavitapuram** Murugan temple after the Keerimalai springs cured her. After 1505 ACE, the Portuguese colonialists destroyed it. The final destruction was recorded in 1621 ACE. The local Brahmin priests are said to have hidden the main icons before fleeing the temple. *Nagula* in Sanskrit means mongoose. *Keeri-malai* in Tamil means *Mongoose-Hill*. The legendary sage Nagulla Muni, shrunk by age and austerity while meditating at a cave in Keerimalai was likened to mongoose that frequented the area. The sage bathed in the springs and was cured of his mongoose face. In gratitude, Nagulla Muni constructed a small shrine and worshiped the Lingam enshrined there. It became known as the Thirutambaleswaram Kovil of Keerimalai and the Naguleswaram Kovil of Keerimalai alluding to the sage. Nagaswaram is located 12 miles north of Jaffna town.



Thirukoneswaram

Thirukoneswaram temple of Easwaran is located on a rock in Trincomalee on the East coast of Sri Lanka and has a long history. There is no evidence to prove that Raavanan built this temple. Although in the Ramayana it is said that Ravana was a keen devotee of Easwaran. Vijayakumaran, who landed in Sri Lanka from East India, with 700 friends. There is a belief that he would have built the five Easwaran. The rock on which the temple is located is triangular and hence it got its name as Thirukonamalai (Triangular shaped Mountain). When Kavaripoom pattinam, a city in Tamilnadu East which went under the sea, Tamaraparani river now flowing in Thirunelveli, was once in Lanka and got separated from Lanka. Per researchers, during this catastrophe, a triangular shaped rock must have got shifted to the East coast of Lanka. These are all assumptions. When the Pallava dynasty ruled Kancheepuram, they were good at sculpture work. An example of those sculptures is still found in Mahabalipuram.

They extended their work in sculptures to Anuradhapura and Trincomalee.

Many Tamil saints such as Thirugansampantha Moorthy Nayanar, Sundaramoorthy Nayanar, and Arunagiri Nayanar visited this temple and sang devotional songs. During 463 ADS, a Chola prince visited Lanka and observed the demolished state of the temple. He built tanks such as Kanthalai tank around the temple and invited Vanniyar caste to do farming. The temple was maintained on the income received from farming. During the 12th Century, the Chola kingdom expanded in Lanka. And many Hindu temples appeared in the areas where Tamils lived. Trincomalee achieved importance, and the area was managed by the Vanniyars. At one time it was the richest temple in South East Asia, and many kings donated gold, pearl, diamond, coral, etc. to the temple.

With the arrival of Portuguese in 1505, the situation changed. To expand their Catholic religion, they started destroying Hindu temples. During 1624 the Portuguese General Constantine Sa, using his Portuguese soldiers. Attacked and plundered the temple. The priests saved the statues by throwing them into the sea. The Portuguese destroyed the temple, used the stones to build the fort. He informed the king of Portuguese about what was written in stone at the entrance to the fort. It was against attacking the Portuguese. Those who plundered the temple could not enjoy the wealth. When Constantine Sa rebelled against the King, the Portuguese soldiers killed Him. The outcome was that the Portuguese

Kingdome gradually vanished for the sins they committed against Easwaran.

The situation changed when British conquered Sri Lanka. Devotees were permitted to go to the temple and worship. Restrictions were lifted. King George's third son Fredrick became the General of the fort, and the fort got the name, Fort Fredrick.

In 1950, the statues and Suyambulingam that were sunk under the sea around the temple were discovered by a photographer Mike Wilson who was involved in filming Ranmuthuduwa Sinhala film. This discovery brought a change in the life of Mike Wilson. He became a Hindu, started practicing meditation and became swami Kalki. There is a belief that Suyambulingam was in originally in Tibet and shifted by Ravana to his palace for worship

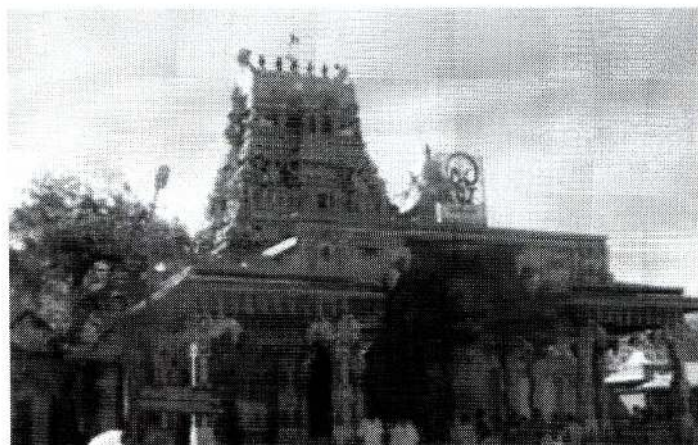


Dondeswaram. (Thenavanthurai)

Dondeswaram or Thennaavaram is one of the five Ishwarams located in southern Sri Lanka at Dondra. The importance of this temple is a that it is in an area where majority Singhalese community lives and no difference is shown between Shiva and Vishnu worship. Both gods have temples within the same compound. Even in Shiva Temple in Chidambaram Vishnu is respected by being worshiped in the same temple premises. It is beloved that the temple was built during 5th century AD.

Dondeswaram is located straight down south of Naguleswaram, near Dondra port. Both Hindus and Buddhists worship in this temple, which is located 15 miles east of Matara town. Ptolemy, a traveler (BC 150 – 160) visited this place and called it “Dagona,” as the temple is located near a port which was once called Thenavanthurai (Southern port). Thennaavaram temple was built on vaulted arches on the promontory overlooking the Indian ocean. The central gopuram tower of the vimana and the other gopura towers that dominated the town were covered with plates of gilded brass, gold, and copper on the roofs. Its outer body featured intricately carved domes, with elaborate arches and gates opening to various verandas and shrines of the complex, giving Thennaavaram the appearance of a golden city to sailors who visited the port to trade and they relied on its light reflecting gopura roofs for navigational purposes. It refers to the moon. Chandrasekar is also the name given to Easwaran as he has a moon on his head. Ubuntu Battuta, a Moroccan traveler, had the opportunity to visit this temple in Lanka

through the Maldives. After visiting Adams peak, he worshiped at the Dondeswaram temple. The business travelers who came to southern Lanka built this temple for Easwaran and Vishnu. A Perhara has celebrated annually in this temple even now. The temple was large with the roof made from brass which shone and gave the beautiful appearance to the travelers. Like Koneswaram, this temple too was destroyed by a Portuguese general De Souza d' Arronches



Muneeswaram - Chilaw

Muneeswaram temple is in Chilaw, a Catholic town in the North-Western province, 50 miles north of Colombo, three miles along the Chilaw Kurunegala road. The temple is in the predominantly Sinhalese area, but the temple is well sponsored equally by Sinhalese, Tamils and even Catholics. The two protectors of the temple are Aiyappan and Pathirakali. Pathirakali Amman temple is in the North of the temple. Sacrifices of animals and birds were made in this Amman temple; this ritual is now stopped after protests made by the public. Like in other Hindu temples, in 1578, the

Portuguese plundered the wealth of Muneeswaram temple. The river Deduru Oya, 142 Km in length, runs North West, crossing Chilaw- Puttalam road. An Aiyappan temple is on the river bank. Easwaran annually goes for the water cutting ceremony to this river and meets Vishnu. Muneeswram Shiva temple is located three miles from Chilaw along Kurunegala Road. Out of the five Ishwarams since it was the first Ishwaram that was established the name was called Muneeswaram. There is no record to determine the name of the person who constructed the temple. As per the stone inscriptions, Cholas King Kulakotan and Kotte King Prakraabahu VI and IX reconstructed the temple. They also donated paddy fields to the Temple. The temple was destroyed by the Portuguese in the year 1517. Because of the devotees, the statues were saved from destruction. In the Puttalam Singhalese, Tamils and Muslims live as such the temple is being patronized by the three communities. During annual water cutting ceremony, the statue of God Shiva is taken on a procession to Deduru Oya

It has been in existence at least since 1000 CE, although myths surrounding the temple associate it with the popular Indian epic Ramayana, and its legendary hero-king Rama. The temple is one of the ancient Five Ishwarams dedicated to Shiva the region.

The temple complex is a collection of five temples, including a Buddhist temple. The central temple dedicated to Shiva is the most prestigious and biggest and is popular amongst Hindus. The other temples are dedicated to Ganapathy,

Ayyanar, and Kali. The Kali temple is also popular with Buddhists, who frequent the complex. Post-19th century, most of the devotees of all temples in the complex belong to the majority Singhala Buddhist ethnic group; the temples, excluding the Ayyanar and the Buddhist temple, are administered by families belonging to the minority Hindu Tamils.

The temple is in Munceswram, a village with mixed Sinhala and Tamil population situated in the historic Demala Pathuva ("Tamil division") region in the Puttalam District. The main Shiva temple owns extensive property in the surrounding villages, ownership of which was affirmed when the region was part of the medieval Kotte Kingdom. The temple was destroyed twice by the Portuguese colonial officers, who handed over the properties to the Jesuits. Although the Jesuits built a Catholic chapel over the temple foundation, locals reconstructed the temple both times. Due to religious and demographic change after the late 18th century, most surrounding villages and towns are not directly associated with the temple administration and maintenance. However, the villages of Maradankulama and Uddappu are associated with organizing the main temple festival.

The main festivals celebrated at the temple include Navaratri and Sivarathri. The former is a nine-day long festival in honor of the presiding Goddess, while the latter is an overnight observation in honor of Lord Shiva. In addition to these two Hindu festivals, the temple has a festival

of its own, the Muneeswaram festival, a four-week-long event attended by Hindus and Buddhists.

Most of the myths associated with the temple are not dated and vary with the different religious and ethnic groups as well. One set of myths deals with the creation of the temple, and the other deals with various reconstruction efforts. For the Hindu Tamils, the Muneeswaram temple is primarily a Shiva temple. According to a Tamil legend, the temple is situated at a place where King Rama of Ayodhya (in India), the hero of the epic Ramayana, prayed to Siva after his war with the demon-king Ravana of Lanka (identified with Sri Lanka). For Sinhala Buddhists who hail from outside of Pattuva, Muneeswaram is primarily a goddess temple, currently associated with Kali, and a popular place of sorcery. Sinhalese myths say that Muneeswaram is the place where the deity Kali landed from India. The legend further postulates that another Sinhalese female deity, Pattini, prevented Kali from devouring human beings and made her settle down in Muneeswaram. Another myth current amongst Tamils says that a legendary Chola king, Kulakotan renovated the temple. According to that myth, the king, who was afflicted with an incurable skin disease, was cured after taking a bath in the ruined temple's holy pond. Following the miracle, the king went on to renovate the temple and created a community of temple caretakers to maintain the temple. The equivalent myth amongst the Sinhalese people indicates that the deceased king was Rajasinghe or Bhuvanekabahu and the king prayed to the presiding goddess who cured him of his affliction. There were at least two kings called Rajasinghe in Sri Lanka, and both

were involved in the actual renovations of the temple, and at least seven kings named Bhuvanekabahu, thereby making it difficult to identify the right king.



Thiruketheeswaram in Mannar

Thiruketheeswaram was a famous temple even during the Chola rule in Lanka and is in Maanthai in Mannar. In the south of Mannar, the river Malwattu Oya flows into the sea. The port near the temple was once called Maanthotam. Legend says that Ravenna's Father in law ruled the area. Many Arabs arrived from Arabia to do trade by selling Horse, Silk, etc. in exchange for Pearl, Elephant tusk, and spices. Cotton from Jaffna was exported through this port. The Gulf of Mannar was once famous for pearl fishing which was promoted by the British in Arripu area. On the way to Puttalam, south of Maanthai an old port called Kudiramalai is located (Horse Mountain rock). Archaeological excavations have revealed that Kudiramalai was a site of ancient habitation

from the 1st century BCE-to the 7th century CE. The area was once under the control of a Sera King Kattuman Koran. He was a commander in chief of the Chera Dynasty under the King Makkotai, who was an avid horseman and great patron of poetry, Koran ruled from here and administered the hilly terrain locality surrounding the ancient Tamil capital of Kudiramalai - the "Horse Mountain-Hill." During the rule of the Tamil Queen Alli Arasan (a lover of pearls) of Mannar, major changes to the western coastline occurred. According to legend she often traveled from Kudiramalai to Mannar. She traded the pearls from the Gulf of Mannar with horses from Arabia. Several Tamils of the Mukkuvar fishing tribe migrated from Kalamkari. Located 50 miles across the Gulf of Mannar in mainland Tamil Nadu to Kudiramalai and other Malabar cities such as Puttalam and Jaffna of the Northern Kingdom from the 8th century CE. Originally Saivites, they fled to the west coast from mainland Tamil Nada to escape forced conversion to Islam. Many went in search of water and finally lived in Uthappa

According to the historical record, Vijayakumaran (543 BC – 505 BC) and his 700 followers were exiled from West Bengal state called Kalinga and landed near Thaambapaani" ('copper-colored soil) (Ponparappu, a fertile area), met the Yakka queen Kuveni and married her. Kuveni had her place in Willpattu games sanctuary. A Sinhala Buddhist monk writes this history with no evidence of any record. The Sinhalese claim that they were the descendants of Vijayakumaran when Vijayakumaran chased away Kuveni went to Madurai and married a Tamil

princess. History says that the marriage ceremony took place in Thiruketheeswaram. The Saivite saints Sundaramoorthy Nayanar and Thirugnanasambanthar Moorthy Nayanar sang devotional songs about Thiruketheeswaram.

Tirukkētīsvaram is one of the five Ishwarams dedicated to the Hindu deity Shiva. Throughout its history, the temple has been administered and frequented by Sri Lankan Hindu Tamils. Its famous tank, the Pahlavi tank, is of ancient antiquity and was restored from the ruins. Tirukkētīsvaram is one of the 275 Temples that were praised by poets and Hindu saints. The poems were glorified in the form of the Thevaaram. (Holy humans)

Literary and inscriptional evidence of the post-classical period (300BC-1500AD) attests to the upkeep of the temple during the ancient period by kings of the Pallava, Pandiya and Chola dynasties who contributed to its development up to the late 16th century. In 1575, Tirukketisvaram was largely destroyed by the Portuguese, with Pujas terminating at the shrine in 1589. Following an appeal by Aarumuga Navalar in 1872, the temple was rebuilt at its original site in 1903.

The exact date of the Ketheeswaram temple's birth is not universally agreed. According to Dr. Paul E. Peiris, an erudite scholar, and historian, Thirukketisvaram was one of the five recognized Ishwarams of Lord Siva in Lanka. It existed very long before the arrival of Vijaya in 600 B.C¹. The shrine is known to have existed for at least 2500 years, with inspirational and literary evidence of the postclassical era (600BC – 1500AD) attesting to the shrine's classical antiquity.

The buried ancient Tamil trading port of Maanthotam (Mantotai/Maanthai) in the Mannar District, where Ketheeswaram is located has provided historians extant remains of the culture of the area during the ancient period. It includes the vestiges of its ancient temple tank (the Palavi tank), and the ruins of a former Hindu city built of brick, described by J.W. Bennet in 1843. During the ancient period, Mathoddam was a center of international trade, with Greeks, Romans, Phoenicians, Arabs, Ethiopians, Persians, Chinese, Japanese, Burmese and others vying with each other to monopolize the trade of North Ceylon with Tamil traders.^[4] Mathoddam is currently viewed as the only port on the island that could be called a "buried city," with much of the ancient ruins under sand today. The existence of the Thiru-Ketheeswaram temple attests to the antiquity of the port. Mathoddam finds mention as "one of the greatest ports" on the seaboard between the island and Tamilagam in the Tamil Sangam literature the classical period (600 BCE – 300 CE). Hugh Nevill wrote in 1887 of the illustrious city of Mathoddam "A renowned shrine grew into repute there dedicated to one Supreme God symbolized by a single stone, and in later times restored by a Saivaite after lying long in ruins. The temple was dedicated as "Tiru-Kethes-Waram."

One of the five ancient *Ishwarams* of Lord Shiva on the island, Ketheeswaram joins Koneswaram (Trincomalee), Naguleswaram (Keerimalai in Jaffna), Dondeswaram or Thevan Thurai (Near Dondra) and Munceswaram (Chilaw) as a renowned and highly frequented pilgrimage site from before 600 BCE. In the 6th–

9th century CE, the temple was glorified in the *Thevaaram* canon, becoming one of 275 Paadal Petra Sthalam, the holiest Shiva temples on the continent. The only other Paadal Petra Sthalam from Eela Nādu (the country of the temple as named in the Tamil literature) is Koneswaram. There is various explanation for the name Dondeswaram. Since it is in the southern part of the island it got its name. there is no gopuram in the temple. The legend says that was built by traders from Pallava dynasty. Now it is worshiped by singhalese as Vishnu temple. It was subject to destruction by the Portuguese who had no respect for Hinduism and Buddhism.

Karaiyar built Thiruketheeswaram, the great Sivan Kovil of the northern province of Sri Lanka. Thiruketheeswaram initial installment is credited to the indigenous people of the Maanthai port, the Karaiyar Naga tribe. The Karaiyar claimed to be related to several classical period public figures hailing from the international port town,

King Ravana's wife was Mandothari. She was the daughter of king Mayan who ruled Manthota area. Manthota was once a popular port which had trade with India and Arab countries. The port was not too far from the port of Kulasegarapattinam in southern India. The Cholas navy invaded Sri Lanka by landing in Maanthotam port.

Mandothari was Shiva devotee like her husband, Ravana. During 7th Century AD Thirugnanasambanthar Moorthy and 8th Century AD, saint Sundaramoorthy vested the temple and

sang many poems praising God Shiva. Various legendary stories are explaining as to how the Temple got its name as Ketheeswaram.

During 6th–7th century period hymns were sung about Keteeswaram temple and the waters of the Pallavi tank located by its side by poet Sampnathar. He also sang poems about Koneswaram temple on Swami Rock, Trincomalee, Keteeswaram temple and its deity. Thirukketisvaram henceforth is glorified as one of 275 Shiva temples of the continent, part of the temple group venerated by poems. The only other in Eelam is Koneswaram.¹ There is epigraphic evidence of maintenance of the temple by the Pallava and Pandya dynasties.

During 10th century AD, several Chola inscriptions from its medieval stone inscription refer to Ketheeswaram and two Sinhala inscriptions of the 10th century refer to the prohibition on slaughtering cows at the town.

During 12th Century AD, Dathavamsa speaks of a Hindu temple at Mantotai in the reign of King Megavannan (301–328).

After 1505 A.C.E along with countless Buddhist and Hindu temples around the island, were destroyed by Portuguese Catholic colonialists. The historian Do Couto recounts that the attackers encountered no resistance from pilgrims or priests while the temple was destroyed.¹ In 1589 C.E. the temple stones were used by them to build the Mannar fort, a Catholic church and the Hammershiels Fort at Kayts in Jaffna Peninsula.

The temples were reconstructed during 19th and 20th centuries. The original site of the Temple was traced in 1894. The Shiva Lingam of the old shrine together with several other finds were also unearthed. After a gap of almost 400 years in 1910s local Tamils, under the urging of Hindu reformer Arumugam Navalar, came together and built the present temple. With the restoration of the ancient and holy Paalavi pond in 1949, a major effort was made to improve the temple environs. It was in October 1948 that an intensive agitation resulted in the formation of the Thiruketheeswaram Temple Restoration Society, which renovated the temple and performed Kumbhabhishekam in August 1952. The Thiruketheeswaram Temple Restoration Society did a further renovation of the temple, and another Kumbhabhishekam was held on July 4, 1976.



CHAPTER 4

Sakthi Worship

The Universe is made up of matter and energy. The matter is made up of atoms and molecules (groupings of atoms), and energy causes the atoms and molecules to be always in motion - either bumping into each other or vibrating back and forth. The motion of atoms and molecules creates a form of energy called heat or thermal energy which is present in all matter. Even in the coldest voids of space, the matter still has a very small but still measurable amount of heat energy.

Energy can take on many forms and can change from one form to another. Many different types of energy can be converted into heat energy. Light, electrical, mechanical,

chemical, nuclear, sound and thermal energy itself can each cause a substance to heat up by increasing the speed of its molecules. So, put energy into a system, and it heats up, take energy away, and it cools down. For example, when we are cold, we can jump up and down and get warmer.

We know that Cosmos contains energy. The energy is generated by an elementary particle called neutrino which was postulated in 1930. Neutrino a particle that has a small mass and carries no charge interacts with matter through weak nuclear force.

Pythagoras is said to have been the first philosopher to apply the term *cosmos* to the Universe. Many say that when he went to India, he learned about Cosmos and Mathematics from Hindu Vedas and on his return to Greece he spoke about those subjects. The current diameter of the observable cosmos is thought to be about 93 billion light years. A light year distance is a distance traveled in a year with the speed of light. 1 light year = 9.4605284×10^{15} meters.

The Hindu cosmology and timeline is the closest to modern scientific timelines and even more so, which might indicate that the Big Bang is not the beginning of everything but just the start of the present cycle preceded by an infinite number of universes and to be followed by another infinite number of universes. The Rig Veda written by Hindu Rishis questions the origin of the Cosmos.

An alternate view is that the universe begins to contract after reaching its maximum expansion limits until it disappears into a fraction of a millimeter. The creation begins anew after billions of years (Solar years) of non-existence.

The term "Prakriti" means the "one that is primary." Prakriti comes before everything else. This word is a combination of the words "Pra," which means before and "Kriti," which implies, to make. The Prakriti is the one pradhana - the main root, which anchors the entire universe. It is the root of all that is ever created or ever occurs in the universe. Prakriti never emerged from a cause, but it is the cause of all events taking place in this universe. Hence, while Prakriti is itself detached from and independent of everything, all is dependent on it for support. Hindu philosophy sees Prakriti and Purusha as two separate aspects of the Brahman or on or the Creative Consciousness. While Prakriti is likened to the creative energy of Mother Nature, Purusha is the consciousness that is the power of Brahman. While Prakriti gives shape to things, Purusha helps manifest them as part of the universal consciousness

The puranic view asserts that the universe is created, destroyed, and re-created in an eternally repetitive series of cycles. In Hindu cosmology, a universe endures for about 4,320, 000,000 years interpreted as one day for Brahman, the creator or Kalpa and is then destroyed by fire or water elements. At this point, Brahma rests for one night, just if the day. This process, named pralaya, repeats for 100 Brahma years (311 Trillion, 40 Billion Human Years) that represents

Brahma's lifespan. It must be noted that Brahma is the creator but not necessarily regarded as God in Hinduism. He is mostly regarded as a creation of God.

We are currently believed to be in the 51st year of the present Brahma and so about 156 trillion years have elapsed since he was born as Brahma. After Brahma's "death," it is necessary that another 100 Brahma years (311 Trillion, 40 Billion Years) pass until a new Brahma is born and the whole creation begins anew. This process is eternally repeated and again.

Brahma's day is divided into one thousand cycles (*Maha Yuga*, or the Great Year). *Maha Yuga*, during which life, including humans, appears and then disappears, has 71 divisions, each made of 14 *Manvantara* (1000) years. Each *Maha Yuga* lasts for 4,320,000 years. *Manvantara* is Manu's cycle, the one who gives birth and governs the human race.

Each *Maha Yuga* consists of a series of four shorter *yugas* or ages. The *yugas* get progressively worse from a moral point of view as one proceeds from one *Yuga* to another. As a result, each *Yuga* is of shorter duration than the age that preceded it. The current Kali Yuga (Iron Age) began at midnight 17 February / 18 February in 3102 BC in the proleptic Julian calendar.

Space and time are Maya (illusion). What looks like 100 years in the cosmos of Brahma could be thousands of years, in other words, millions of years in some other worlds and 311 trillion and 40 billion years for our solar system and earth. The life

span of Lord Brahma, the creator, is 100 'Brahma-Years.' One day in the life of Brahma is called a Kalpa or 4.32 billion years. Every Kalpa creates 14 Manus one after the other, who in turn manifest and regulate this world. Thus, there are fourteen generations of Manu in each Kalpa. Each Manu's life consists of 71 Each **ChaturYugai'** composed of four eras or Yugas: Satya, Treta, Dwapara, and Kali. These are mainly assumptions.

The span of the **Satya Yuga's** 1,728,000 human years, **Treta Yuga's** 1,296,000 human years long, the **Dwapara Yuga**864,000 human years and the **Kali Yuga**432,000 human years. When Manu perishes at the end of his life, Brahman creates the next menu, and the cycle continues until all fourteen Manus, and the Universe perishes by the end of Brahma's day. When 'night' falls, Brahma goes to sleep for a period of 4.32 billion years, which is a period equal one day (of Brahma) and the lives of fourteen Manus. The next 'morning,' Brahma creates fourteen additional Manus in sequence just as he has done on the previous 'day.' The cycle goes on for 100 'divine years' at the end of which Brahma perishes and is regenerated. Brahma's entire life equals 311 trillion, 40 billion years. Once Brahma dies there is an equal period of un manifestation for 311 trillion, 40 billion years until the next Brahma is created.

The present period is the *Kali Yuga* or last era in one of the 71 Chaturyugas (set of four Yugas/eras) in the life one of the fourteen Manus. The current Manu is said to be the seventh Manu, and his name is Vaivasvat.

According to Aryabhata the Indian philosopher, the *Kali Yuga* began in 3102 BC, at the end of the *Dvapara Yuga* that was marked by the disappearance of Vishnu's Krishna avatar. Aryabhata's date is widely repeated in modern Hinduism.

Overview of Yugas:

1. **Satya Yuga(Krita Yuga):** - 1,728,000 Human years
2. **Treta Yuga:** - 1,296,000 Human years
3. **Dwapara Yuga:** - 864,000 Human years
4. **Kali Yuga:** - 432,000 Human years (5,111 years have passed; 426,889 years remain). *KaliYuga* started in 3102 B.C.; CE 2009 corresponds to *KaliYuga* year 5,111

Finding these figures in Indian Hindu almanacs is surprising. The almanacs also indicate the date and time of the occurrence of Solar, Lunar eclipses, whether they are partial or total and where they are visible. Hinduism speaks about eclipses and gives a different explanation for the occurrence associated with the planets.

Energies in Cosmos

In Physics and Chemistry, energy is the basis of all laws. Forces are linked with energy. Hidden energies in nature such as Electrical, Nuclear, Heat, Chemical, Potential, Kinetic energies could be used for good and bad purposes. Nature derives its energy from cosmos. Based on the Bing bang theory, cosmos generated energy. Explosion generated the sound "Aum." Energy from nature is used for different purposes. Many years ago during the Vedic period, Rishis

interpreted energy in the form of Goddess Amman, Durka, Kali, Saraswathy, Lakshmi. Each of these Goddesses is linked with different actions. As per the conservation of energy, there is no destruction of energy. Saraswathy the daughter of Brahman is considered as the wife of Brahman. How can the daughter symbol of knowledge become the wife? The philosophy is that Brahma accepted the knowledge as part of him and accept of Saraswathy, not for sex.

Cosmos is in the form of an egg. This thought is in the ancient Rig Veda. The limits of the energy are the competition between expansion and contraction. There is no end for the cosmos. There is competition between attractive and repulsive forces in the stars. It stops the expansion of the cosmos. Creation and Destruction can occur at any time. In-between is the maintenance that was created. These three processes explain the actions of Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva. Einstein's famous equation: $E = mc^2$, where E is energy, m is mass, and c is the speed of light in vacuum. Mass-energy equivalence does not imply that mass may be "converted" to energy, but it allows for *matter* to be converted to energy. Through all such conversions, *mass* remains conserved since it is a property of matter and any energy. In physics, mass must be differentiated from matter.

Matter. The estimate of the age of Universe is 13.72 ± 0.12 billion years. Brahma, the creator, is the consort of Saraswathy (knowledge) and together, they represent the creative force. After we obtain Knowledge, we can do anything. Knowledge takes us up to the highest level of consciousness known as

Bramhaaloka. Knowledge is the remover of fear and leads to awareness, enlightenment, and confidence in life. Goddess Saraswathy governs ten objects of transcendent knowledge.

Luximi is the Goddess of light and the representation of universal energy. Out of one of her hands, money flows. It shows that she represents CASH FLOW and controls the wealth from business ventures and investment prospects. MONEY is one form of the universal energy. In the earnings cycle, you go to work; there you expend your energy that was derived from the absorption of your food, which in turn will be converted into Labor for which the money you receive will be the measure. More the energy you apply more the money you earn. When this energy is not earned properly and not spent thoughtfully and respectfully, then the energy becomes destructive.

Swami Ram Charron shows how Hindu Gods are the Periodic Table of elements that keeps all of us alive. He shows how Einstein derived his famous equation $E = mc^2$ from the Hindu texts, how Newton knew about the colors of the Sun from the Hindu God Surya, and how the nine forms of electromagnetic energy since creation was known as the nine forms of Luximi, the Hindu Goddess of Light. Newton said that white light consists of seven colors. Long before he made that discovery, the Sun god is represented by an idol driving seven horses representing the seven colors, and this could be seen in Konark temple for the sun.

Durka represents braveness. It is another form of energy. Durka uses this form of energy to overcome evils. Puranic stories are explaining the braveness of Durka.

Explanation of the Energy

The needs are there for Man, Religion, and Science. To meet his needs, a man approaches the energy in different forms. Politics exists in all three areas. In Religion and Science, if knowledge is used for the bad purpose, energy is wasted. A typical example is the use of the Atom bomb (Nuclear Energy) during the second world war which killed thousands of people and polluted the environment. Economy and wealth are in all three. Man uses meditation to concentrate mind energy, expands his knowledge and unties the secrets of nature. Man attempts to know all about energy. But that is not complete. Man shares the energy with Religion and nature. In Hinduism, energy is interlocked with nature. We have seen importance given to trees in temples and worshiped. The use of Pancha Boothas (Five sources of Energies namely Water - Air - Fire - Space - Earth are used in rituals). There are five temples in India to signify each of the five booths. Uses of animals as vehicles by deities are all Energy transformation. Among animals, the cow and bull are considered as sacred animals. Pictures from the Indus Valley civilization prove the importance of the bull. The main reason may be that people used bulls for cultivation and transport.



CHAPTER 5

Murugan Worship and Temples

Though there are innumerable temples for Murugan (Karthikeyan) in Tamil Nadu, some temples have different types of trees for each temple. Apart from the mango tree and the lotus plant, the trees attached to the Murugan temples are the following: *Marutham* or Queen's Flower *Panneer* or *Indian Lavender*, *Punnai*, *Nelli*, *Mahizham*, *Pala* or *Jack* fruit tree. *Marutham* is the sacred tree in the Dandayudhapani temple at Marudamalai in Coimbatore District in Tamil Nadu. It is known as Arjuna in Sanskrit. Perhaps this hillock and the nearby place are named after the *marudham* (a kind of tree)

grove in that region. The tree has bunches of small flowers. People worship the Temple tree and make offerings to god.

There are a lot of references made to the tree Marutham in Ayurveda as its barks are useful for heart diseases. It is good for people who have asthma. Fractured bones get strengthened when it is taken with honey. Dysentery is stopped by taking the decoction of the bark powder of *marudham*. Young ladies who fear pimples, its paste is a good medicine. Even the sting of a scorpion is cured when its ashes are applied to the place of the bite. As it is an anti-microbial agent, it purifies the environment.

Paneer is very sacred to Murugan in Tiruchendur as the *vibhudhi* (sacred ashes) prasatham is given to the devotees by the temple priests only in the paneer leaves. The white flowers are small in shape with a lovely fragrance. *Paneer* tree is sacred to Siva and Vishnu in some temples. As it blooms at night, the whole surroundings are well scented. It used for Archana and in garlands to deities. This tree has some medicinal effects too. The wood of the tree is used to stop dysentery as well as to make nice furniture. The pustular swelling of the children is cured when the paste of the Panneer leaves are applied.

Though *punnai* flowers are very closely associated with Siva as one of the eight flowers offered to Him during morning offerings, the punnai tree is the temple tree of Murugan in the form of Subramani swami in Peacock in Cuddalore district. It is an indigenous tree and its blooming denotes prosperity. There are many references in *Puranas* to *Punnaga vanam* (the

forest of *punnai* tree). It has been a practice in villages in ancient times if the tree failed to bloom in time, the local women would dance around the barren *punnai* tree and kick the same at the bottom of the tree and surprisingly it would start blooming. Punnai flower juice cures venereal diseases and boils. Nervous disorders could be treated with its flowers. The powder made from the *punnai* leaves is good for getting relief from giddiness and headache. The juice taken from its bark is used to stop the internal and external bleeding. It is surprising to note that the intramuscular injection of the oil taken out of *punnai* seeds reduces the pain in leprosy. Though this green color oil does not have a good odor, it reduces and cures pain in joints, muscles, ulcers and skin diseases. The *punnai* fruits give gum.

Mahizham is the temple Tree for Siva, Vishnu and Murugan and sacred not only to the Saivites and Vaishnavism but Jains and Buddhists too. Mahizhm trees find their place in the Amaravati and Sanchi Stupas. It is an emblem of Neminatha, a Jain Tirthankara and he attained enlightenment under this tree. This tree has small but very sweet-smelling flowers. Even if it dries, the smell remains. There are many myths associated with this tree. It is believed that the tree blooms if women eat under its shade or beautiful women spits on it. In Indian society, it is a boon to get a male child. It is believed that the women who do not have male children beget a male child if they tie a small cradle to the tree after going around the temple. Similarly, people tie threads to the branches of the sacred tree if they want their wishes to be fulfilled. They untie the thread after the fulfillment of their wishes.

Pala is one of the three important fruits, the other two being plantain and mango. In Kollimalai in Salem District is famous for the Murugan temple. The sacred tree of the temple is *Pala*. It is not known to many that the leaves of *Pala* are as auspicious as banana leaves. It is interesting to note that this tree that jackfruit is depicted in the early Buddhist sculptures. The shade of this tree is so sacred that all Gods, Agamas, Sastras, and Vedas are said to have gathered under its shade. It is believed if one waters this sacred tree with one pitcher of water, it is equal to have performed *abhisheka* to all the gods.

Hinduism has often been coined as an "environmentally friendly" religion. Hindus regard everything around them as pervaded by a subtle divine presence, may it be rivers, mountains, lakes, animals, flora, fauna, the mineral world, as well as the stars and planets. It is so because the Divine reality is present as Prana/Shakti energy, power, in every electron, particle, atom, cell and every manifestation of matter. It is its very fabric. Just like the sparks of fire are of the same essence as the fire they come from, so is the entire creation, of the same essence as the Divine. Just as Hindus greet each other saying "Namaste," which means: I recognize and salute the Divine within you, so do they recognize the same Divine essence, in all around them.

Mountains play an important part in Hinduism. Thiruvannamalai, Palani, Marudhamalai, Thirukalukuntram are some of the mountains where Hindu Gods in temples are in Tamil Nadu. Many mountains consist of minerals and generate vibration from crystals. Herbal trees are in abundance

in the mountain in Palani and around 3000 B.C, when the world was waking up to evolution, it witnessed the presence of Siddhar Bhogar, a powerful astrologer, and a yogi who had mastered the science of medicine perfectly. Bhogar was an expert in Siddha medicine and it is said that according to the last wishes of his guru, Bhogar proceeded to China to spread the knowledge of Siddha sciences. His journey is said to have been made with the aid of an aircraft; he demonstrated to the Chinese the details of the construction of the aircraft and later built for them a sea-going craft using a steam engine.

Rivers such as Ganga, Jamun, Narmada, Indus, Kaveri are well respected by Hinduism, but people do not care and pollute the river. The ashramas are built by the side of the river and Rishis take a bath in the morning before starting meditating. The river water that flows through the medicinal herbs in the mountain range of Himalayas, act as a disinfectant. The River Ganges or Ganga is perhaps the holiest river in any religion. Besides being a sacred river, Ganga is also worshiped as a deity in Hinduism, Ganga water is used in various religious ceremonies of the Hindus. Even Science has proved that Ganga water is pure and bacteria free. Gangajal can be kept for years without any problem. In the banks of the Sarasvati River, Vedas flourished during the Vedic period and its name is mentioned 72 times in the Rigveda, appearing in all books except for book four. Between 6000 and 4000 B.C., the Sarasvati flowed as a great river and it disappeared during time due to climatic changes. Rivers constitute the lifeline of any country and some of the world's great civilizations (Indus

Valley, Mesopotamian, and Egyptian) have all prospered on banks of river systems. Hindus consider rivers as sacred and have personified them as deities and sung their praises in their religious literature, the *Vedas* river Saraswati, during its heydays, is described to be much bigger than Sindhu or the Indus River.

Among the various Hindu deities, Karthikeyan is worshiped mainly by the Tamil community in countries like Tamil Nadu, Sri Lanka, Singapore, Malaysia, Re-Union. With the migration of Tamils to the western world, many Murugan temples have originated in the name of Murugan temples such as Nallur, Selvasanithi, Kathirgamam, Thiruchendur to cater to the people from those areas.

God Murugan's name means beauty and He is considered as a Dravidian God. People say that Murugan worship started from the time of the Gupta period in North India. The origin of worshipping Murugan is similar to Worship of Hermes by Assyrians. This is like Ra (the Sun) by Egyptians.

Land division and worship

Idol worship in Tamilnadu is based on the division of land and the work done by the people from that area. Four of the geographical regions are described as landscapes that occur naturally in the Tamil areas. These are Kurinji - mountainous regions, associated with a union, Mullai -forests, associated with waiting, Marutham -cropland, associated with quarreling, and Neytall -seashore, associated with pine. The

fifth - Pālai or desert, associated with separation - They were described in the Tholkappiyam as being naturally existing landscapes. Murugan is worshiped by hunters who hunt using spears (Vel), bow and arrows in mountainous areas. It is the means to supply food as energy for their life. Hence Murugan temples are mainly found on the top of rocks such as Palani, Marutamalai and Viralimalai.

The vehicle for Murugan is the peacock. Murugan is also called Alagan (Beauty) and Peacock is a beautiful bird. Legendary stories are written about how the peacock and cock came into existence. Ganesh the eldest brother of Murugan played an important part in the love affair of Valli (Veddah girl) and Karthikeyan. The story centers around a farming village Kathirgamam in a jungle in southern Lanka. A historical temple of Kathirgamam exists in that village, looked after by Hindus, Muslims, and Buddhists. The river Maanicka Ganga flows through that village. As Valli was a Veddah girl (Hunter's daughter), puja is done in a typical Sinhalese style with Sinhalese damsels dressed like Veddah girls, serving Prasatham. The mouth of the priest is tied with a cloth and puja carried out and only he is permitted to enter the inner sanctum where a holy Yantra is kept. Devotees believe that a strong Yantra exists in the heart of the temple, and once in a way, it is taken out in a box on procession on the back of an Elephant.

According to legend, Karthikeyan, the second son of Siva and Parvathy has two wives, namely Deivayani, with North Indian Ariyan connection and Valli with the Dravidian link.

Deivayani represents spirituality and Valli the love within the soul.

Devotees of Murugan carry Kavadi (Carrying stick), climbing the rock. Some devotees pierce their cheeks with sharp spears. They shave the head symbolizing the incident that took place between Karthikeyan and his father Shiva over a Mango fruit. In anger, Karthikeyan shaved his head because he lost the contest with Ganesh and went and meditated with only a loin cloth to hide his genitals.



Kathirgamam (A village where Sitaras lived)

Kathir refers to paddy. Gamma is called Kiramam which means village. Combining both we can infer it as the village where paddy is grown. Veddah community who are believed to be decent of Kuveni was chased from Northwestern Sri Lanka when Vijayakumaran fell out with his wife Kuveni. He marries a princess from Madurai. Kuveni and children moved to the footrests in Jva province. This how the legendary story

of Veddah community known to the Singhalese people. Veddah is hunting and farming community. They used a spear for hunting. They worshiped spear as the symbol of their god. It is believed that Spear the symbol of Murugan started as the icon worshiped by Veddahs. A moreover legendary story about the love affair between the Veddah girl Valli and Murugan took place in the farmland in Kathirgamam. Murugan's brother Ganeshan (Elephant) helped him to get married to Valli. The Murugan Valli love story was written in the environment of Kathirgamam in Yala sanctuary, paddy fields, Veddah community, elephants. It is a traditional practice which exists even now that girls from Veddah community take part in pujas by serving prasadam to God Murugan. The temple for Murugan in Kathirgamam is located 228 Km south east of Colombo. 'Gamma means farming village area. Kathir, which means paddy. Hence Kathirgamam means a village where paddy is grown. The area was once infested with elephants and wild animals. A river named Maanicka Ganga flows through this village. From 1972, devotees started walking more than 400 miles from Northern Lanka, along with the eastern coastal area via Trincomalee, Batticaloa, Pothuvil to Kathirgamam. According to Sinhalese, historians, Kathirgamam temple was constructed 1st century BC by King Dutugaimunu's. There is no evidence for it. It is believed that it was once a Veddah temple in hut. Dutugaimunu's was the son of Viharamahadevi, wife, of Kavantissa. She ruled Kirinda an area near the Yala games sanctuary. Before going to war with the Tamil Chola king Ellalan in Anuradhapura, Dutugemunu meditated in the bank of the river Maanicka

Ganga, prayed for help from Murugan and went to the battle. When he won the war, he became a strong devotee of Murugan.

There are several curtains that hang in the moolasthanam to hide the Yantra and the priest who does the puja is called Kappurala. Unlike in many Murugan temples in other provinces, the priest ties his mouth with cloth when performing Puja. There is no idol taken out in procession after the Puja. No one knows what is behind the curtain which only shows the painted picture of Karthigeyan.

There are many interesting stories that happened in Kathirgamam, which prove the greatness and purity of the temple. During 203 AD, Babaji Nagaraj born in south India, At the age of eleven went to Kathirgamam in search of his guru Boganathar sithar. Under a banyan tree, Babaji meditated for six months. At the start, he meditated for 24 hours and later he reached a level of meditating continuously for 48 days. The banyan tree under which the Babaji meditated was cut down by a person, he became mad and committed suicide. There is a small black stone statue on the outside veethy of the main Kathirgamam temple of this deathless Saint Babaji who introduced Kriya Yoga to humanity as well as Devayanai worship and a temple for her exists there now.

Kalyangiri Swami was responsible for Kathirgamam to become popular in India, during the 16th century, He was called Muthulinga Swamigal in Lanka. After Kalyanagiri Swamigal," Paalkudi baba" became popular. He was a

Brahmin from Allahabad. Since he had the habit of drinking milk very often, he got the name Palkudi baba.

A king who had no children, prayed at Kathirgamam, promising that if a child is born to him, he will donate the child to the temple. A beautiful daughter by the name Balasundari was born to the king. The king took the daughter to Kathirgamam and left her there to serve God. She became a nun in the temple. The Kandyan king Rajasinghe came to know about the beauty of Balasundari and send a request for her to marry him. She refused the king's request to marry him. He ordered few of his soldiers to go to Kathirgamam, arrest and bring her by force to him. Balasundari prayed to God Murugan to save her. God fulfilled her request. At that time British forces invaded the Kandyan kingdom, arrested the king and took him as a prisoner to Vellore in Tamil Nadu. The king ultimately died in Vellore. She lived until she became old and after her assistant, Mangalpuri Swamigal lived in Kathirgamam. There is a memorial for her in the temple.

During the British rule, an administrative officer who worked in the Badulla Kachcheri; as Justice of peace, suffered from a serious illness. He was worried that he did not get any promotion because of his illness. His sickness could not be cured. He prayed to God Kathirgamam and went to the temple. He met Paalkudi Baba and prayed explaining his sickness. While one day when he was talking with the devotees about the greatness of Kathirgamam God, a madman met him and said "when you return to Badulla Kachcheri, you will get a transfer order to go to North. As per the mad man's

prediction, he was transferred to the northern province, where he met an Ayurvedic physician and had treatment. His sickness was cured and became a strong devotee of God Kathirgamam.

In my experience in Kathirgamam, when I went with my parents, sister, and brother during 1950a's to fulfill a vow, the temple was crowded and there was no place to keep our baggage's and sleep. We were tired after traveling 350 miles from Puttalam, by Train, Bus, and cart and had no place to sleep. My father was a Murugan devotee as our house in Jaffna house was closer to the Nallur Murugan temple. He prayed to Murugan of Kathirgamam.“ He cried saying “ Muruga, I have come to see you from a long distance with my family. Please do not leave my family alone. At that time an old man with holy ash and sandalwood pottu in his forehead, approached my father and said “Aiyah do you want a place to keep your things and rest? Come with me I will show you a room. You will be safe there” My father could not believe it. The old man disappeared after few minutes after getting him a room to rest. My father searched for him to thank him but could not meet him. He thought that it was Kathirgama Murugan who helped him.

Long ago there was sanctity in the temple. Devotees crossed the Maanicka Ganga (river) on a hanging bridge. There were no big hotels. Ramakrishna mission provided resting place and free food for devotees. Many businessmen from the south, provided rice and vegetables free of cost to the Mission. But political leadership upset the free service provided by the

mission. Hotels were constructed. in due course, Liqueur and Non-vegetarian food were served. In 50's, devotees walked 11 miles and went by cart from Tissa Maharagama, a village west of Kathirgamam. But things changed, and bus service is now available. up to the doorsteps. It is the respect and love for him that is required by Kathirgamam Murugan. Many Sitaras (Yogis) and great men lived, meditated and attained samadhi. there and great vibrational energy exists in that environment.

Sella Kathirgamam is a place where Ganesh temple is located 3 miles northwest of Kathirgamam by the side of a stream. As per the legendary story, Ganesh was instrumental in the Murugan Valli love affair and it is this place where Valli met the elephant when Murugan was courting Valli, Kumbuk trees provide the shade for the devotees.



Nallur Murugan Temple - Jaffna

The name Nallur means good village. There are many villages in Tamilnadu by the name Nallur. Even in near Poonahari there is a village by the name Nallur along Paranthan

Poonahari Road. But the history of Jaffna peninsula speaks about Nallur Rajasthani that was ruled by last king Sangiliyan. When we speak about Jaffna we cannot ignore the richest and well organized Nallur Murugan temple. The significance in that temple is, for several years, the ticket for a Pooja is charged the same amount. From the revenue received from devotees, yearly many additions were done to the temple. Gopurams were built. Road diversion was done for easy travel of the chariot called There4. The other significance of the temple is that punctuality is maintained in conducting activities. Unlike in other Murugan temples, a golden spear is used as the idol.

Nallur Kandasamy temple is located two miles from Jaffna town along the Point Pedro road. The temple has a long history and was attacked several times. Today it is a popular rich temple and patronized by many devotees. Historians are of the view Ukrainian when ruling fell in love with the princes Maaruthapiravalli who came to Keerimalai on pilgrimage from Tamil Nadu. He built a Murugan temple in Mavitapuram as per her request. He changed his capital from Kadiramalai to Singainagar. One time a place called Nallur in Poonahari was the capital. Some historians are of the view the first Nallur Kandasamy temple was built in Nallur Poonahari, a place between Paranthan and Poonahari. The name Nallur means a good town and it got its name from a village in Tamilnadu.

On the orders of Selvarayan's son Pandi Malavan, Pandyan appointed a King for Jaffna and Prince Singai Aryan arrived in Jaffna in 1200 AD. He founded the Arya Chakravarthy

dynasty, which lasted 403 years. The prince Singai Arian came with religious priests to the Jaffna Kingdom and established a kingdom for himself with high walls, administrative setup, judiciary, army barracks, and place for horses and elephants to be trained. He was called Koolankai Singaiarian. He made an educated Brahmin Buvanekubahu as the chief minister for the Kingdom. First, in remembrance of the Sivan temple, he worshiped in Madurai, he built the Kailasanathar Sivan temple in Nallur. As per the book Kailasmaalai, the temple was built in 870 AD Buvanekubahu. There is confusion on that date whether it is 948 or 1248 AD. There is nothing wrong in saying that Buvanekubahu built the temple during 948 AD in a place called Muthirai Santhi, on Point Pedro road, closer to the existing temple. The location was called “Kurrukal Vallavu” (Land of the chief priest). The temple continued to be popular until 13th century.

Buvanekubahu bahu was the name given to Senpaga Perumal, a Kerala prince from Panicker caste. Panickers are teachers of a martial Kalari art in Kerala. He was the adopted son of Prakraabahu the 6th king who ruled Kotte. Senpaga Perumal being a good warrior and Brahmin, served the King as a mercenary. The King started looking him after and adopted him as his son. Senpaga Perumal was sent to capture Nallur. He destroyed the temple that existed at Kurrukal Vallavu. To avoid getting a bad name from people he reconstructed the temple in the same place and ruled the area by the name of Sri Sangabothi Buvanekubahu. Even today his name is honored in the prayers said in the temple.

During 1478 Kanagasuriyan and then his first son Singai Pararajasekeran ruled the place. To get protection from God, he established temples around the Nallur kingdom. To mention, in the west he built the powerful and popular Veera Maha Kali Amman temple worshiped by Sangili king. Sangili fought with the Portuguese near the Veeramaha Kali Amman temple. In the North Sattanathar Sivan temple, In the East Viyilil Ularantha Pillayar temple exposed to sunlight and in the west Kailasapillayar temple.

Before the Murugan temple was built in the present place, there was a Muslim Yogi and a Fakir by the name of Sikandar who was respected by people of all religions. He guided and fought with Tamil soldiers when Portuguese attempted to destroy the Murugan temple. He died in the war. A vel was planted in the place where he died and people trust a tomb is there inside the present Murugan temple in the place he was buried. There is separate access for the Muslims to this tomb. Muslims are permitted to sell camphor and things for Puja and have access to the tomb of the Fakir.

One time in Tamil Nadu, the Tamils who became Muslims from the Hindu religion, because of the invasion of Muslims in Tamil Nadu, called themselves as the Kantahsaibu group and migrated to Kodikamam, Usan, Mirusivil, and Eluthumattuval to do business. The name Usan (Hussain) signifies that it was a Muslim area once. Because they could not do business successfully in those areas, they moved to the present Nallur temple area and built a mosque.

In 1620, like other Hindu temples, the Portuguese after cunningly defeating king Sangili, destroyed the Murugan temple to the ground. They built a Catholic church in the place where there was the Murugan temple. During 1658 the Dutch captured Jaffna from the Portuguese. They introduced protestant religion in Jaffna. They destroyed the Catholic church and built a Church of their religion. During 1734 a small temple was built on the land near the Yamuna. They established a Vel and worshiped it. A person by the name Don Juan Rangunatha Maapana Mudaliyar used his influence with Dutch administration and got legal permission to build the temple in the present location. Krasnaya Supper was of assistance to Rangunatha Mudaliyar to build the temple. When he saw the Muslims getting settled in that area, he tried to buy the land from them but failed. As a protest, they polluted the wells used by Muslims by dropping the meat of pigs. The Muslims had no other alternative but to sign a contract in that area. to move out from Naavanthurai to Sonata there and established their businesses. Many Muslims live there They gave permission for Muslims who wanted to worship through a door in the west of the temple.

In 1773 Aruumuga Navalar wanted to replace the Vel and build the temple using black stones but that was not agreed upon. Moreover, sacrificing a goat and applying its blood to the wheels of the cart during car festival was to be stopped. This action was taken to ensure that when the cart moves in the crowd no one gets killed as such it is done as a sacrifice to prevent any accidents happening during the car festival. Now

during Poongavanam festival, Venison is served in Prasatham. This is done in Kathirgama as well. He also filed a case on the temple to show the accounts and won the case in his favor. The location where the cart is parked is called “Theradi”. The location became popular because of Yogar Swami and Kadai swami meditated at Theradi.

Due to the ethnic war, many people migrated different countries. The younger generation of the people who migrated is not aware of the history of the temple in Jaffna and how the Portuguese destroyed the temples, Dutch and the Sri Lankan army.

Nallur temple was destroyed four times during different period but survived all attacks. Incidentally, Karthikeya is considered as a Warlord. In the south the Sinhalese worship Karthikeya at Kathirgamam. They believe that his second wife Valliammah was from Vedda community. Legendary stories and the beliefs go a long way in any religion.



Mavitapuram temple at Tellipalai

Mavitapuram means the horse face changed to a normal face. Mavitapuram temple, many years ago was a small place of worship. According to legend, the temple was built by the Chola princess, Maruthapuraveeravalli, who had been cured of her ailments and her horse-like face had disappeared after bathing in the Keerimalai tank. It is at this Kovil that the chariot stands to this day retaining much of its former splendor. The Chola Princess Maruthapura Valli from Tamil Nadu was cursed and to cure her curse traveled to Keerimalai and prayed for healing. The water of Keerimalai had curable properties. The king Ukiramasingan when he saw her fell in love with her beauty, wanted to marry her and kidnapped her. by force. On her request, he completed Kanthavel Murugan temple. The king got down the statues through Kankesanturai for the temple and that is how the port got its name as Kankesan referring to Murugan. During 785 AD the temple was established. The title Ma in Tamil refers to the horse. Since Maruthapuravalli's face appeared like a horse and was cured, the temple got its name as Mavitapuram. The temple festival starts one week before Nallur Kandasamy Kovil festival and ends on Adi Amaavasai with the water cutting ceremony. Five carts are used in the car festival. The temple is highly orthodox and low caste people were not permitted to enter the temple. The area was inhabited by educated people and the place is called Tellipalai.

It is believed that god Shanmuga performs a secret dance on the fifth day of the Annual festival and thousands of people

gather to witness this unusual and appealing sight. The climax of this festival which falls on the last day, the 25th day, is the water cutting ceremony or the well-known Adi Amavasai Theertham at Keerimalai in the waters of the Palk Strait, ever famous for its curative purposes. In May of 1872, a son Yogar was born to Ambalavanar and Sinnachi Amma not far from the Kandasamy temple in Mavitapuram. He became a yogi and is respected by many.

A dent appeared in the management of the temple owned by an orthodox Brahmin priest when low caste people from that area demanded entry into the temple with the help of Peking communist party. It started in 1968 as a nonviolent request but turned into a violent political issue. Educated people like professors were against the temple entry. Many said that a temple is a place of worship for all categories of people. The temple owner gave the reason. A Brahmin was that cleanness and purity of the temple will be lost. It is more than purity, the temple high priest wanted to control the temple so that no one could ask for the temple accounts. It should be noted that Murugan is the God of the hunters, who could also be considered as low caste people who hunt and eat meat and fruits.



Selvasanithi temple (Sella Kathirgamam)

The other popular Murugan temple in the Jaffna peninsula is Selvasanithi temple near Thondamanaru river. This temple is well patronized by the Vadamartachi population. Since travel to Kathirgamam took a long time, they called this temple as a duplicate and named it Sella Kathirgamam. Traders used Point Pedro, Valvettiturai ports for trade, so they worshiped Murugan and gave of their wealth to the temple. The method of puja here is like Kathirgamam as the priest ties his mouth with a cloth during the puja. This may be for avoiding pollution or following the tradition. There are 18 resting places called madams in the temple. Yogis have meditated under the tree and the area attained sanctity. Karunakara Thonadaman was sent to Vadamartachi to procure salt supplies by Kulathunga Cholan, who reigned in Chola Nadu. The temple by the side of the newly cut waterway was the place of worship of the settlement that was found in the locality. To transport salt from Navatuli to the port, to export

to Tamil Nadu, Thonadaman deepened the canal and named it Thonadaman aaru.

The annual 800 miles walk along the Eastern coast called Patha Yantra by the Murugan devotees to Kataragama starts from Selvasnathi temple. The rituals during Puja is like Kathirgamam where the priest ties his mouth and the ear with a white cloth.

Murugan Temples in Eastern Provin

Ukantai (Oakanda) Malai Murugan Temple



Many parts of the Eastern province have thick forests and Veddah's lived in these forests. They lived in places like Thabisile and Thirikovil. Eastern Sri Lanka is a region where various ethnic groups, including the tribal Veddas, have long been living together. Tamil speaking Hindus are the majority group in Batticaloa; their social formation is based on a rigid *Kudi* (matrilineal clan) system. This region is known for

Kannaki (Pattini) Mother Goddess worship and for Skanda-Murugan worship. Skanda-Murugan is known as *Vēlāyutacāmi*, *Kumaran*, *Kumarathan* and lately *Muruga Katavul* in this region. The cult practice of this region varies from ancient patterns to modern types. Although Batticaloa district in Eastern Sri Lanka is rich in such ritual traditions, few studies have been carried out in this regard. This study analyses these Skanda-Murugan traditions from a socio-anthropological perspective. The traditional temples of Mandoor, Ukantai, Tantamalai, and Ciittanti. God Skanda after successfully defeating the Asuras was returning east when he encountered the Vākūra Hills. The God in his anger split the hill into two with his Vēl. Three bright rays emanated from this, and each one of the range traveled in different directions. One of these reached Mandoor and sheltered within the tillai trees, which came to be patronized by the Veddas. During the Chola period, Queen Cīrpātātēvi left for the northern kingdom (Cinka Nakar), but before leaving handed over her golden Vēl to Cīrpata family members, she requested them to cherish it. To this day, members of this group are given prominence at all temple functions.

The origin of the temple is centered on the Veddas, who for their protection and safety used their weapons the bow and arrow as symbols of worship.

Another myth relates to the might of God Skanda-Murugan. A detachment of Portuguese soldiers after the conquest of the East advanced toward the temple to loot it, but they were attacked by wasps. The frightened soldiers fled for their lives, leaving behind their weapons, including muskets and swords.

The latter are still kept in the sanctum sanctorum as reminders of the power of the God residing at Mandoor.

A permanent temple was built in 1215-1248 by King Nāka., and its structure is a replica of the temple in Kathirgamam. In the outer courtyard, there are two smaller temples. One of these is for Theyvayānai Amman and the other for Valli Amman. In the inner courtyard, there are two shrine rooms: one for Pillaiyār and the other for Nākatampiran. There is a worshipping platform for Kumāra Tampiran. In addition, there are nine stone pillars as, each one representing Valli's brother and the other eight the Attatikku Pālakar, meaning those in charge of protection of the eight directions. Patterns of worship at Mandoor are ancient and virtually identical to those in Kathirgamam. The officiating priest is called Kappukanār, the equivalent of Kappurāla in Kathirgamam. The priest is chosen from the Cīrpata Kulam (clan). The Veddas are also given equal importance; for instance, the Ārāti Pen or the woman performing the lamp rituals is chosen from the Vedda group.

Ukantai Murugan temple is at the foot of the Ukantai Malai, a remote rock-hill on the coast at the intersection of the Eastern and Southern Provinces. Here the Murugan temple is at the foot of the hill, while his sweetheart Valli occupies the peak. This is another place where King Ravana is said to have rested and worshipped on his way to Koneswaram in Trincomalee. The theme of taking rest is reflected in the name Ukantai, for it is said that here Lord Murugan and others 'sat down' (utkantār) and rested.

According to another myth, the third ray from Vākura Hill reached here and came to rest on this hilltop, making it a favorite site for Murugan worship. There is yet a third myth according to which, Valli and Murugan arrived in separate stone boats (which still rest on the beach) to reside on top of the Ukantai Malai. The temple is located along the eastern shores of the country, along which the pilgrims walk to Kathirgamam. In places like Pānama and Kumana, which are close to Ukantai, Tamils and Sinhalese lived in harmony even down to the present day.

The devotees offer as in other temples cooked food, fruits etc. Some of them prepare milk rice and sweetmeats in the outer courtyard. At present soldiers as well as local villagers offer live poultry to the deity requesting his protection.



CHAPTER 6

Kannagi (Pathini) Worship & Temples

The story of Kannagi happened in Madurai during first century AD. Manimekalai and Silapathigaram were Sanga period literature. Manimekalai, according to the story was born daughter of Mathavi and Kovalan. She got interested in Buddhism. Later after learning doctrinal expositions from Buddhism, she became a dedicated Buddhist monk. The Chola King Uthayakumaran was madly in love with Manimekalai. He was a foolish king, who wanted everything thing to be done only in his way.

Legend says that Kannagi, after burning the city of Madura, crossed over to Lanka and appeared first at Sudumalai,

Manipay, Jaffna. The Sudhumalai Amman kovil for Kannagi Amman is now known as Rajeswary Amman kovil. This legend has nothing to do with the history of the Pathini cult introduced by King Gajabahu when he brought a statue of the lady with the clamp (anklet). Legends of Kannagi Amman visiting various spots in the North and East of Lanka are passed down to generations by word of mouth. After Sudumalai in Manipay, her next stop was Panrithalaichi Amman kovil also in Jaffna. She then visited the East of the land. In Batticaloa, she stopped at seven places.

According to legend, Kannagi came floating in a casket. The casket reached the shores of a place called Aaraiyampathy. She appeared in the dream of one teacher by the name of Sinnathamy, and told him, "My casket is on the shores of this village. Take that and set up a temple for me." Accordingly, that teacher went to the seashore, found the casket, took the statue and with the help of the people built a temple with a roof of ola leaves.

This teacher is a farmer too had gone to his field and while in the watch-hut fell asleep. Again, Kannagi Amman appeared in his dream and said, "Here I am getting wet in the rain while you are sleeping peacefully. Your paddy will be alright. Stop the roof from leaking." The teacher got up saw the paddy heaped after winnowing and ran to the temple.

He collected the men of the village and put up a stone structure for Kannagi Amman. He was worried as to who could perform the proposal.

Again Kannagi Amman appeared in his dream and told one Panthan Kaddafi generation would conduct the proposal, and so that family has been performing the proposal from then on. The temple festival is in the Tamil month of Vaishali: May 15 – June 15.

Besides Aaryampathy there are six other places which Kannagi Amman visited. Temples were constructed for her at Puthukudyyiruppu, Karainagar, Kokkatticholai and three other places. In all these places legend says miracles have taken place. People throng to the temple during the annual festival on full moon day in Vaikasi and have 'Pongal'. Almost in all Kannagi temples, there are the usual scenes – Cavadi, fire walking, and other penances – to fulfill a vow.

After her sojourn in two places in Jaffna, seven places in Batticaloa, she chose Mullaitivu as the 10th place. Originally it was 'Paththam Pallai' (Patcham – tenth; Pallai – resting place). During the time it has turned out to be Vattappalai. In Vattappalai too she appeared in person to some shepherd boys, as an old woman. When a Portuguese General wanted to destroy the temple, an old lady shook the Panicum tree near the temple and chased away the soldier.

According to legend, she had asked them to put up a hut for her. Later she asked them to light a lamp. When the boys told her there was no oil, she told them to get the sea water and use it like oil. This tradition continues to this day. In all the ten places where she stopped, she had performed some miracle or

other.

In Hinduism, each deity has a favorite tree. Amman prefers the neem tree. At many of these stop-overs, she is said to have sat on a dead fallen trunk of the neem tree and it had sprouted to life.

However, most temples of Kannaki were transformed into Agamic Raja Rajeshwari and Bhuvaneshwar Temples as Kannaki was considered as a Jain lady by the activists of Saiva movement of 19th Century in Jaffna in the leadership of Arumuga Navalar. The story of Kannagi was first written by Illangovadigal a Jain saint. The story took place in in Madurai and Poompuhar which was one time under the influence of Jains and Buddhists.

At Vattappalai, she asked the shepherds to look for lice in her head. And when the children did so, they saw the head full of eyes. They got frightened and she disappeared. Dead scared. those children ran to the village with the news of this strange visitor. When the village folk came running back here, she was not there.

They knew it was Amman, and since she had eyes (Kann in Tamil) on her head they assumed it must be Kannagi Amman. That was how Kannagi temple was built at that very spot. Whether in Jaffna, Vanni or Batticaloa, Kannagi Amman temples appeared due to Amman appearing in person or in the dreams of ardent devotees be it king or beggar.

Thus in Lanka, there were ten dwelling places of Kannagi Amman. In these places, legend and folklore play an important part and not history, in practicing Kannagi worship.

Kannagi was strong in her chastity. At her age of marriage, her parents married to a merchant named Kovalan. He played boy and got interested in the temple dancer Madhavi. Kovalan separated from Kannagi and lived with Madhavi and Manimekalai was born to them. Kannagi had no children but still loved the husband. Kovalan spent all his wealth on Madhavi and returned to Kannagi penniless. When Kovalan asked for money from Kannagi to start a new life, she removed one of her ankles and gave it Kovalan to sell, make money and start a business. He sold the anklet to the palace jeweler who had stolen the Queens anklet. The king wanted people to find the anklet. The jeweler falsely accused Kovalan of stealing the anklet. The king without proper inquiry made a mistake and ordered Kovalan to be beheaded. Hearing about the death of the husband, Kannagi went to the King and accused him of wrongly ordering the execution of her husband. Her anger was so intense that the King got scared. She proved to the king that her anklet was different from the queen's one. The King realized his mistake. Kannagi cursed the kingdom, her chastity bestowed power to command the elements and she burnt the city of Mathurai. Kannagi was upset and sad over the destruction of the city of Madurai, left the place and went to Sera Nadu. She died there after her husband's death in AD 113- 135. Sera king Sengutuvan's

brother Ilonggo adigal, a Buddhist monk wrote the story of Kannagi as the famous epic Silapathigaram.

King Senguttuvan went to the Himalayas, brought a stone and made a statue of Kannagi for worship because of his great respect for her. Between the periods 171 to 193 AD king Gajabahu who ruled from Anuradhapura went to the Sera Kingdom to attend the festival organized by Senguttuvan for Kannagi. The festival made Gajabahu respect and surprised at the wonders of Kannagi. He brought a similar statue to Lanka through Mathagal in Jambukolam port and established several temples for Kannagi on the way to Anuradhapura. The Kannagi Amman temple in Mullaitivu was the tenth one and hence is called Vattappalai Amman temple. Like the festival for Kannagi, at the Pehara in Kandy, Kannagi by the name of Pattini Amman was carried in procession. Several temples were constructed in Sinhalese areas in the south and eastern provinces. There is a list of Sinhalese villages where Pattini temples were constructed namely Dedigama, Maduwa Pattini Devale - Kandy -Medagoda (Sitawake), Nawagamuwa Devale - is said to be built by King Rajasinghe I (1581-1593). This is situated in Colombo closer to the Avissawella Low-level road. It is the principal cult center for worship of the Goddess. Panama - 15Km South of Arugam Bay Ratnapura Seeni Gama (Hikkaduwa) Wibawa (Kurunegala), Kabulumulla Kannagi Amman worship became popular in the Eastern province. Kannagi Amman temple gradually became Rajeswary Amman temple. During the 16th century AD, Kannagi worship became popular in the Batticaloa area. Small kings in Eastern province

spread this worship. During the Portuguese period, Cedar caste people migrated to Batticaloa district. A person by the name Kandappar brought seven Kannagi Amman statues and established in the eastern province and people started to worship. During 2nd century AD, the statue of Senpagaselvi was established in Thambuluvilla and worshiped. From 2nd century AD until 12th century AD Kannagi worship flourished in the Eastern province. To get rain in the area, the popular Kombu game in Kannagi story was practiced.

Singhalese and Tamils believed that by worshipping Kannagi Amman, all infectious diseases could be cured. People use margosa leaves as an herbal cure for chicken pox, measles etc.

Anganakadavai Kannagi temple.

The first Kannagi Amman temple was established in the Jaffna peninsula at Anganakadavai. Angana refers to Amman. During the Dutch period, the temple was destroyed and reconstructed again. Anganammai refers to Kannagi. The statue of Kannagi was brought to Mathagal port and the temple would have been established in this area closer to the port. The temple is located west of Kandarodai. It was established in 2nd Century BC. In the past, people who travel from Mathagal pass Anganakadavai temple on their way to Kandarodai.



Vattappalai Kannagi Amman temple

Vattappalai Kannagi Amman temple is considered as the guardian God of Vanni area. The village Vattappalai is located closer to Mulliyavallai, Thanniyutru in Mullaitivu area, a mile from Nandi Kadal where the last Eelam war took place. There are legendary stories about this temple. On the day of the Pongal, this water is brought to the Amman Temple in the morning and a lamp is lit with the seawater instead of oil and it keeps burning the whole day and night This temple lies three miles off the main road leading to Mullaitivu among swaying coconut palms. Legend has it that after the consecration of the shrine of Kannagi in South India, the deity visited Ceylon manifesting herself in 10 places where temples were built for the Goddess. This last or the tenth place was Paththam Pallai (Pathum means tenth, Pallai - means residence). During time, the name has changed to Vattappalai.

The Brahmin priest blesses the event. The person who starts the Pongal sits in front of the fireplace and takes the pot on to his lap and using Digitized by Noolaham Foundation
noolaham.org | aavanaham.org twine thread makes a network of it covering

the pot, when this is done, the temple stewards take the pot and he stands up and receives it. Thereafter he goes into a trance, going around the fireplace with the pot balanced precariously on one shoulder.

As he dances around the fireplace supported by the stewards, some rice grains are put into his outstretched hand and he throws the grains upwards in each direction. When we asked the reason for this, we were told that the grains are for the celestial companions of the Amman. Believe it or not even one grain didn't fall on the ground or on anybody's head for that matter. Once he puts the pot on the fireplace the man becomes normal. This happens at midnight and milk rice sweetened with jaggery is cooked. Once the main Pongal starts, devotees who have vowed to cook milk rice there, start their minor Pongal in the sandy compound. Firewalking and Kavadi also take place there. Nanadikadal is located one mile from this temple. It is the sea where the final Eelam war was fought. The lagoon got its name because conch is found in that lagoon. Other explanation is crabs are in plenty in that lagoon.

This temple too has a history of miracles. A prowler who had his eyes on the precious jewels of the deity had gone there. He went to the hall where the pilgrims rest to see if anyone was around. The poosari's assistant was asleep there with a shawl covering his body. The prowler took the shawl and was on his way into one of the wadiya built for carpenters. He then took off his shirt and hooked it on the fence, buried his wristwatch in the sand and made his way to the temple. He used the camphor to light the place. He made quick work of it and

keeping the box of jewels on the wall below the cave, came to the hut. As soon as he reached the wadiya he was struck blind. Later he is believed to have confessed that something white went over his eyes and he lost his sight, that when he was discovered with the shawl what would have happened to him. People came flooding to see the thief. There was general excitement over the miraculous deed of the Amman and the faith of devotees grew stronger.

During the time the Portuguese controlled the area, people say that a certain General used to mock and deride the devotees going to the temple. 'Can your Goddess perform miracles like our Lady of Miracles', he would taunt them. One day when he was riding past the temple arrogantly, a tree which they call Anickia Marram - which was beside the wall of the sanctum sanctorum of the temple, shook so violently that the fruits from the tree fell and pelted the general till he fell off the horse. It is said that to this day after that incident, the tree bore neither a flower nor a fruit.



CHAPTER 7

Vishnu Worship and Temples

Hindu Deities worshiped by Sinhalese Community

In Hinduism, the Buddha is viewed as an Avatar of Vishnu. Hindu texts including Bhagavata Purana, enlist Buddha as an Avatar of Vishnu. In the Puranic text Bhagavata Purana, he is the twenty-fourth of twenty-five avatars, prefiguring a forthcoming final incarnation. Similarly, many Hindu traditions portray Buddha as the most recent (ninth) of ten principal avatars. This is one of the main reasons that in Buddhist Viharas in Lanka, Vishnu idol too is worshiped along with the Buddha statue. Sinhala Buddhists also worships the Idol of Ganesh along with Karthikeyan. Many Singhala farmers in Lanka, consider Ganesh as a protector of farming,

hence Ganesh temples are constructed for him in the farming areas and due respect given to him by boiling rice with milk. The other deity worshiped by Sinhalese is Pattini Goddess, called Kannagi Amman. This worship was imported from Kerala (Sera kingdom)by King Gajabahu through Jambukolam port at Mathahhal in the North and worshiped in the Kandy Perehara with reverence. Mashaal was the port where Sangamitta, daughter of Emperor Asoka brought the sapling of the Bo tree under which Gautama Buddha attained Nirvana.

Sinhalese consider Pattini as protector of chastity and infectious diseases. The Sinhala Buddhists believe that the Pattini is a guardian deity of Buddhism. Many Kannagi temples are constructed in Sinhalese areas mainly eastern province, and the details are given in the section on Kannagi Amman worship

What that is created will have to be maintained before destruction. Once it completes its lifetime it will be destroyed. This is the law of nature. These three functions are the basis in Hinduism and refer it to Brahma, Vishnu, and Linga. In science these functions are vital. The laws are related to these functions. In the Cosmos centripetal forces move toward a point for the cosmos to exist and to preserve the Cosmos. This refers to Vishnu. It is the Centrifugal force that moves out that causes destruction.

Vishnu is regarded as a major God in Hinduism and Indian mythology. He is considered as the preserver of the universe while two other major Hindu Gods Brahma and Shivalinga are

regarded respectively, as the creator and destroyer of the universe.

The original worship of Vishnu, by the Aryan conquerors of India or the original Dravidian inhabitants, is not definitely known. It is throughout that this literature and especially through incarnations that Vishnu is raised to higher rankings within the Hindu pantheon. He becomes the prominent second God of the Trimurti, the Hindu Triad, while Brahma is first and Shiva is third.

In some Puranic literature, Vishnu is said to be eternal, an all-pervading spirit, and associated with the primeval waters that are believed to have been omnipresent before the creation of the universe.

The concept of Vishnu is the preserve of the world came relatively late in Hinduism. Presumably, it sprang from two other beliefs: that men attain salvation by faithfully following predetermined paths of duty, and that powers of good and evil (Gods and Demons) are in contention for domination over the world. When these powers are upset, it is further believed that Vishnu descends to earth, or his avatar, to equalize the powers. Further, it is thought that ten such incarnations or reincarnations of Vishnu will occur. Nine descents are said to have already occurred, the tenth is yet to come. Rama and Krishna were the seventh and eighth.

Another interesting speculation concerning Vishnu's role as preserver among many modern scholars is that it is

characteristic of the practitioners of Hinduism to raise local legendary heroes to Gods in the Hindu pantheon.

Vishnu is portrayed as blue or black skinned and has four arms. He has a thousand names and their repetition is an act of devotion. The way the Linga worshipers apply three stripes of holy ash horizontal in the forehead, Vishnu worshiper apply Naamam vertically in the forehead. Vibhudhi expresses the concept that this world we live in and the universe are driven by the functions of creation, preservation, and destruction as enacted by the Triad.

Naamam consists of three vertical lines joined at the base, the two outer white lines signifying the worship of Brahman and Vishnu and the red center line signifying the worship Mahalakshmi. The Naamam (Thirunamam) signifies the fact the men and women of this world will all be transformed. In Hindu temples, red and white stripes signify the temple and the explanation is that the two colors namely white signifies male energy (Sivam) and Red the female energy the Sakthi. These symbols identify whether the person who has those symbols on the forehead is Saivite or Vaishnavite. This division exists predominantly among Hindus. The rituals are different.

Ten Avatars of Vishnu: The ten incarnations or 'Dasa Avatar' of Lord Vishnu is an extraordinary recording of the evolution of human life, Lord Vishnu descends on Earth to uphold dharma and to cleanse the earth of evil. So far, Lord Vishnu has appeared nine times on earth and the tenth, Kalki,

is expected. The sequence of appearance of Lord Vishnu on earth is in tune with the evolutionary theory. In fact, the ten incarnations of Lord Vishnu is an amazing recording of the advancement of human civilization. All this was recorded by Hindu sages thousands of years before Christ.

The first incarnation or avatar of Lord Vishnu was in the form of a fish and is known as 'Matsya Avatar.' It has now been confirmed by Science through various experiments that the first life forms evolved underwater. The second incarnation of Lord Vishnu was in the form of a tortoise known as 'Kurma Avatar.' Tortoise is an amphibious creature capable of living both on land and in water and it indicates the moving of life form from underwater to surface of Earth. The fourth incarnation of Lord Vishnu is the half-man half-animal form known as 'Narasimha Avatar.' This incarnation starts the transformation from animal to human form. The fifth incarnation of Lord Vishnu is the dwarf or pigmy sized human being known as the 'Vamana avatar.' A transition from the beastly form to human form and the development of intelligence. The sixth incarnation of Lord Vishnu is the forest dweller known as 'Parasuram.' He has developed weapons and ax is his first weapon. Any sharp stone can be transformed into an ax and it also indicates the first settlement of humans in forests. The seventh incarnation of Lord Vishnu is Lord Ram. He is civilized and has developed more superior weapons like the bow and arrows. He has cleared the forests and developed small communities or villages. He is very vigilant and protects his villages and people. The eighth

incarnation of Lord Vishnu is Lord Balarama. He is portrayed with the plow – the beginning of full-fledged cultivation. Human civilization has developed agriculture and is no longer dependent on meat and forest for food. The beginning of the agrarian economy. The ninth incarnation of Lord Vishnu is Krishna. He represents the advancing human civilization. He is associated with cows, the beginning of domestication of animals and development of the economy, which continues to the present day. The tenth incarnation of Lord Vishnu is Kalki and is yet to arrive. He is believed to ride on a swift horse Devadatta and destroy the world. A clear indication that human beings will bring an end to life on earth. the numerous natural calamities created by human beings and the numerous nuclear weapons stored illustrate this.

Scientists from Leeds University have discovered that pig-like creatures ruled the world for a million years. The "Age of the Porcine" occurred around 260 million years ago - when the creatures called lystrosaurs were the few survivors of a mass extinction. Nearly 95 percent of the living species were destroyed by a series of volcanic eruptions leaving behind pigs in a "golden age" of no predators.

They had Earth's abundant plant-life all to themselves. "The remarkable thing about the lystrosaurs was their size." Nothing else that big seems to have got through the destruction - and that is why they were able to dominate Earth for so long. They fed and spread. "We think there were billions of them. Their fossils are everywhere Lystrosaurus were similar in size to

modern pigs, with snouts and small tusks for rooting around in vegetation.

Dasavatharam explains the stages of evolution of mankind. Matcha Avatar being the first, explains living in water. Then came Tortoise which lived on water and land. Stage by stage he reached Parasuraman stage using a dagger and then Rama avatar using bow and arrow.

Important Vishnu Temples in Lanka

Venkateshwara Varatharaja Perumal Vishnu Kovil

This temple is in Kannathidy Jaffna. This temple was built 200 years ago during Dutch period by the Chattiest.



Varatharaja Perumal Kovil Ponnalai

This temple is located near Moolai. An old Buddhist temple was discovered close to this temple. Historians are of the view that a Buddhist temple turned into the Vishnu temples.

Another explanation is the link with the Pallava Kingdom where Buddhism and Vaishnavism thrived and traders introduced Vishnu temple in some coastal areas.



Vallipuram Aalvar temple – Thunalai.

Vallipuram is a part of Thunalai migrants from an area called Vallipuram in Namakkal Coimbatore settled in this and as such it must have got its name. Vallipuram (Sandy City) has a recorded history from the 2nd century BC, in the gold inscription of King Vasabha, where the local ruler is named as "Asagiri. Vallipuram (Sandy City) has a recorded history from the 2nd century BC, in the gold inscription of King Vasabha, where the local ruler is named as "Asagiri. Vallipuram has very rich archaeological remains that point at an early settlement. Between the 2nd and 12th centuries AD, the Cholas and Pallavas did extensive sea trade throughout Southeast Asia and China

The temple is surrounded by sand and has a long history behind it. A legend says that a Parivar lady Vallinachi found a chakra in the sea and she built a temple for it considering it as

a symbol of Vishnu. The story is linked with Matcha (Fish) avatar of Vishnu relating to the sea. It would have been built by traders who came from the Pallava dynasty as Pallava's were Vishnu worshippers. The temple was a small hut during the 15th century. However, by 1981 seventy-one feet Rajagopuram was built facing the east. There is a Ganesh temple in the west. Devotees worship him first before worshipping Vishnu. Three miles between the temple and the sea is covered by sand. People believed that Vishnu protected the temple and the village from the tidal waves of the sea.

According to some archeologist, before Nallur, Vallipuram was the Singai Nagar. During the 2nd century, BC gold inscription of King Vasabha was discovered in Vallipuram. Historians say that the descendants of Arya Chakravarty married into Kalinga Magha family and ruled from Vallipuram, one-time popular port and renamed it as Singai Nagar. Vallipuram Buddha statue was found in excavations proving the fact that traders from Pallava kingdom who were Buddhists had influence in Vallipuram.

Natural Vishnu Temple Dehiwala

A 300-year "Natural" (Balaji) temple on the outskirts of Colombo has survived the ravages of Sri Lanka's turbulent times to emerge as a spiritual bridge between the Sinhalese & Tamils. The Vishnu-Nedumal is a symbol of the togetherness despite the deep divisions brought by the 25-year bloody ethnic war. "This temple has always attracted many people from both communities and the numbers have increased tremendously in the past 20 years or so," says Narayana Potti,

the senior priest of the temple who hailed from Tirunelveli in Tamil Nadu. Sinhalese, devout Buddhists by religion, refer to the temple as "Vishnu-Kovil" and find themselves at home there as all the priests fluently converse in their language.

The temple, and its chief deity Lord Venkateshwara, devoutly referred to by Tamils as "Natural" (Perumal in Tamil Nadu) whose statue was brought from Tirupati Andhra Pradesh, has acquired an immense popularity from the temple's legendary history spanning over 300 years. The temple, according to its present records, was built by a Tamil civil contractor Theeran, who while attending to civic works of Dehiwala canal outside

Colombo during the Dutch period in the 18th century heard a divine call and stumbled on its ruins in the forests located a few kilometers away. It was first believed to have been discovered by an unknown devotee, who after a divine call, followed a mysterious calf into the forest which had vanished after leaving him at the place where he later discovered Sangu (the conch) and Chakram the wheel), which are always carried by Vishnu. "Now the temple is called Mini-Tirupati as people who have no means an opportunity to visit Lord Perumal at Tirupati offer Him prayers at this temple.

CHAPTER 8



Worshipping Guardian deities and Temples

Guardian deities

In Tamil Nadu guardian deities are many. They differ from village to village and worshiped based on different beliefs. In Lanka, the most commons are Ayyanar, Vyravar, Maha Kali Amman, Mari Amman.

The farmers who live in Vanni and Anuradhapura areas depend on their living on land and water and the rain. They accumulated the water in the tanks and used the water during dry season. To prevent the tank and land were not destroyed by floods, the farmers considered Aynor as the guardian deity. There are many Ayyanar temples appearing near the bunds of the tanks. They did pujas for Ayyanar to bless them with rain.

The guardian of Minneriya tank is Minneriya god, Kalu god, Bairavi god, and many such Guardian gods. Many rituals are adopted in doing Puja for these deities to ensure harvesting is done successfully. Between Lord Shiva and Vishnu Ayyanar worshipping appeared.

Ayyappan's origin is uncertain but is sometimes believed to be an incarnation of Dharma Sastra, who is the offspring of Shiva and Vishnu (as Mohini, in his female form). In Lanka, the white elephant is considered as the vehicle for Ayyanar. In the islands in Jaffna peninsula, there are many Ayyanar temples in the sea coast. There are many stories linking Vedarasan, Poothathambi with Ayyanar. Analaitheevu Ayyanar. The temple was very old and was demolished by Portuguese

Vairavar. It is called **Bhairava** (Sanskrit: "Terrible" or "Frightful", sometimes known as **Vairavar** (In Tamil), is the fierce manifestation of Lord Shiva associated with annihilation. He is one of the most important deities of Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Lanka, and Nepal. He is depicted ornamented with a range of twisted serpents, which serve as earrings, bracelets, anklets, and sacred thread He wears a tiger skin and a ritual apron composed of human bones. Bhairava has a dog as his divine vehicle. Bhairava himself has eight manifestations: Kala Bhairava, Asitanga Bhairava, Samhara Bhairava, Rudra Bhairava, Krodha Bhairava, Kapala Bhairava, Rudra Bhairava and Unmatta Bhairava. Kala Bhairava is conceptualized as the Guru of the planetary deity Saturn.

Kathakali Amman temple Muneeswaram

Pathirakali Amman is the guardian deity for Muneeswaram. The cult of Kali reached Sri Lanka via South India. Although Kali shrines may have been part of Tamil Hindu temples prior to 12th century CE, the Sinhalese Buddhist population came to revere Kali as a village demon at least by the 12th century CE. The first known Hindu temple with a shrine to Kali to become popular with the Sinhalese Buddhists is Muneeswaram. A myth that has Kali landing at the town of Chilaw, and residing in Munneswaram, has made the temple a popular place of visit for cursing and sorcery purposes. In the early 1970s, most of the Sinhalese visitors were there for sorcery purposes, but by 1990s more than half have been visiting the temple for general veneration purposes, demonstrating the transformation of the deity from a malevolent demigod to a mother goddess. Since the 1960s a number of Sinhalese Buddhist shrines dedicated to Kali have sprung up all over the island, especially in urban areas. These are managed by Sinhalese priests who are trance specialists and act as intermediaries between the deity and the devotee while being possessed by the deity.

There are many interesting stories about this temple. Animal and birds were sacrificed as a vow in this temple. Recently, due to political involvement, the sacrifice is stopped. The appearance of the deity looks fearful.

Sudalai Madan is a regional Tamil male deity popular in Thoothukudi Tamil Nadu, He is the son of Shiva and Parvati and. He seems to have originated in some ancestral guardian

spirit of the villages or communities in Tamil Nadu, in a similar manner as Ayyanar.

Madan's principal role is being a protector and a hero (Veeran). He is the divinity of the dispossessed. Madan is usually considered to be the caste deity of the Naidu, Pillai, Pallar, Konar, Thevar, Pariyar, Nadar, and other castes. This deity is very popular in the southern districts. Large Madan temples are rare. Madan shrines usually consist of simple stone platforms with stone pillars. They are usually located on the outskirts of the villages. Sometimes Madan is painted on the pillar and sometimes he is represented in sculpture form, but frequently those pillars are only white, daubed with red marks. When Madan is represented ichnographically, he is usually standing in a threatening position, carrying weapons (Sickle, club, sword, cleaver, whip) in both hands. Owing to the non-Vedic origin of this deity, rituals in most Madan temples are officiated by an- Brahmin priests. Each Caste or families will have their own Madan temple in their villages. This worship is not popular in Lanka as caste system is not predominant. The deity exhibits bravery. and goes out for hunting.

Snake worship



Nagathmabiran Temple in Jaffna

Worshiping snake is common in Tamil Nadu and Lanka. Naga worshipping started 3500 years ago in the Indus valley civilization. Vishnu is linked to the serpent. Naga worship is popular in Kerala. Nagarkovil area near Kanyakumari was one time a town in Karla state. In Lanka, naga temples exist in Mankulam, Pulliyankulam, Mulliyavallai, Vanni areas. The main reason for why the farmers worshipped the snake was because there were many snakes in Vanni area and for protection, they worshipped the reptile. A female nag is a Nagi. The Snake primarily represents rebirth, death, and mortality, due to its casting of its skin and being symbolically "reborn". The two ancient races of Sri Lanka are the Nagar and Yakkar



CHAPTER 9

Temples built by South Indian Kings

Shaivism thrived in Cholas, Sera, Pandiya kingdoms. Many saints called Nayanmar lived in those kingdoms. When Cholas invaded Sri Lanka during 997 AD and ruled until 1070 AD. The notable Chola Kings were Raja Raja Cholan and Rajendra Cholan. Even before BC, Ellora a Chola king ruled Sri Lanka. The Cholas first had the capital at Anuradhapura and later at Pollanaruwa for security reasons. The period of Chola rule in the island of Sri Lanka began in the 2nd BCE with Manu Neethi Cholan who upon capturing the throne became king of the Anuradhapura Kingdom. In 993 AD, Raja Raja Chola sent a large Chola army which

conquered the Anuradhapura Kingdom, in the north and added it to the sovereignty of the Chola Empire. The whole or most of the island was subsequently conquered and incorporated as a province of the vast Chola Empire e during the reign of his son Rajendra Chola

The Chola rule which lasted for eight decades in the island would be overthrown in 1077 through a rebellion led by Vijayabahu I, of the dispossessed Sinhalese monarchs. The Cholas fought many subsequent wars and attempted to reconquer Anuradhapura as the Sinhalese monarchs were allies of their arch-enemies, the Pandiyas.

During the period of their governance, the Chola officials, as well as Tamil traders, built many temples of worship of Siva, many in the Northern half of the island. There is also documented evidence regarding Chola contributions to ancient Tamil Saivite temples such as Trincomalee and Mannar.

A Siva temple was built at Jananathamangalam also known as Ramanathapuram in the province of Nigarili Cholavalanadu and was named as Vanavanmadevi Ishwarams after the queen of Raja Raja - 1. They built another Siva temple at Padaviya in the Anuradhapura district and named it as Ravikulamaanikka Ishwarams after one of the titles of Rajaraja. Many Chola officials and traders around fifteen of them have made endowments to this temple, and Chenkulavan Katampan being one of them made donations in the year A.D.1005. Another Siva Temple was built at Padaviya and was named as Uththama Kovil. There was yet another Siva temple constructed at Atakade in the Anuradhapura district and

named as Uththama Chola Ishwarams after the Rajaraja's predecessor to the Chola throne. Chola officials also established settlements of Brahmin priests on the lands of Rajavichadira valanadu covering the present Kantalai in the Trincomalee district and named it as Rajaraja Chaturvedi Mangalam.

The region comprising Maanthotam in Mannar alias Arnoldian Valanadu was renamed as Rajarajapuram, and a Siva temple was constructed by Nallur Kilavan Taalikkumaran, a Chola Officer in Sri Lanka during this period, and was named as Rajaraja Iswarem. He also decided to celebrate the annual festival of Vaikasi Visakam elaborately at this temple every year in the month of May. During this period Cholas built another Siva temple at Rajarajapuram alias Mathottam the present Mannar district and named it as Thiruraameeswarem. The artisans from the Chola country who came to Sri Lanka during this period were employed in the construction of these temples and in the casting of the bronze statues of Hindu deities for their shrines. The Cholas are also believed to have also reconstructing Buddhist temples, and expanded some of them such as Velgam Vihara also known as Sade Vihara in present-day Trincomalee district.

Cholas - 993 - 1070

What is known as the Chola country was disputed with varying fortunes by the Pallavas from the 2nd to the 9th century AD when the Chola Rajas began to regain their authority over 860 AD. Wars with Ceylon, the Pallavas, and the Rashtrakutas took place in the 10th century; and at last,

there arose a King, Rajaraja the Great, who became unquestionably the Lord Paramount of the South. The Pallavas had already been reduced to complete dependence, and Rajaraja, who inherited their quarrels with the more Northern Kingdoms, completely defeated the Eastern Chalukyas and added Kalinga to his territories.

In the tenth century, the Sinhalese sent an invading army to India, this time to aid the Pandyan king against the Cholas. The Pandyan king was defeated and fled to Sri Lanka, carrying with him the royal insignia. The Chola, initially under Rajaraja the Great (AD 985-1018), were impatient to recapture the royal insignia; they sacked Anuradhapura in AD 993 and annexed Rajarata -- the heartland of the Sinhalese kingdom -- to the Chola Empire. King Mahinda V, the last of the Sinhalese monarchs to rule from Anuradhapura, fled to Ruhuna, where he reigned until 1017 when the Chola took him, prisoner. He subsequently died in India in 1029.

Under the rule of Rajaraja's son, Rajendra (1018-35), the Chola Empire grew stronger, to the extent that it posed a threat to states as far away as the empire of Sri Vijaya in modern Malaysia and Sumatra in Indonesia. For seventy-five years, Sri Lanka was ruled directly as a Chola province. During this period, Hinduism flourished, and Buddhism received a serious setback. After the destruction of Anuradhapura, the Chola set up their capital farther to the southeast, at Polonnaruwa, a strategically defensible location near the Mahaweli Ganga, a river that offered good protection against potential invaders from the southern Sinhalese kingdom of Ruhunu.

The island was for nearly a century in the almost entire possession of the Malabars, and complete anarchy is stated to have long prevailed over the whole; this being the case, it is not probable they would have been able to invade any place. Several Chola or Pandian kings have boasted in their edicts of the supremacy they exercised over Ceylon, and copper plates have been found where they are recorded. Although the invaders are generally called Malabar, they appear to have come from several parts of the continent, including Kalinga, or the northern Circars, Soilee, now Tanjore, and Mysore, also Pandya, or Madura, Southern India.

Prakrama Bahu I (1153 AD), according to the chronicles, was one of the most renowned of Sinhalese sovereigns, first successfully expelling the Malabar invaders, and then sending an expedition to the archipelago to avenge the insults of the kings of Cambodia, who intercepted ships between Ceylon and the continent; he next turned his arms against the Pandian kings in consequence of their assisting the Malabar invaders; having conquered them he founded a city, where he coined money, and then returned in triumph to Ceylon. When the Sinhalese kings regained their dominance, they chose not to establish themselves at Anuradhapura because Polonnaruwa offered better geographical security from any future invasions from southern India. The area surrounding the new capital already had a well- developed irrigation system and several water storage tanks in the vicinity, including the great Minneriya Tank and its feeder canals built by King Mahasena

(AD 274-301), the last of the Sinhalese monarchs mentioned in the Mahavamsa.

The Malabars, in one of their forays under Chakravarty, general of Kulasekara, a Pandian prince, carried off the "Dalada" from the Yapahu to India (1303), where it remained until it was recovered a few years after by negotiation. This Kulasekara was probably one of the rulers of Malabar, called the Dewar Kelesa by Wassaf, who says he was slain in 1310 AD, after a reign of forty years.

Chola built Shiva temples in Pollanaruwa - Sri Lanka

1 Rajarajaeswarem Temple

The region of Maanthotam in Mannar alias Arunmolideva Valanadu was renamed as Rajarajapuram, and a Siva temple was constructed by Nallur Kilavan Taalikkumaran a Chola Officer in Sri Lanka during this period and was named as Rajarajaeswarem. He also made arrangements to celebrate the annual festival of Vaikasi Visakam elaborately at this temple every year in the month of May.

2 Thiruraameeswarem Temple

During this period Cholas built another Siva temple at Rajarajapuram alias Maanthotam the present Mannar district and named it as Thiruraameeswarem.

3 Vaanavanmaathevieswarem Temple

A Siva temple was built at Jananathamangalam also known as Ramanathapuram the present Polonnaruwa in the province of Nigarili Cholavalanadu alias Pulainari and was named as Vanavanmadevi Iswarem after the queen of Raja Raja - 1

4 Ravikulamaanikkaeswarem Temple

They built another Siva temple at Padaviya in the Anuradhapura district and named it as Ravikulamaanikkaeswarem Ishwarams after one of the titles of Rajaraja. Many Chola officials and traders around fifteen of them have made endowments to this temple, and Chenkulavan Katampan being one of them made donations in the year A.D.1005.

5 Uthama Cholaeswarem Temple

There was yet another Siva temple constructed at Atakade in the Anuradhapura district and named as Uththama Chola Ishwarams after the Raja Raja's predecessor to the Chola throne.

In the year A.D.1040 a Chola officer Arankan Ramesan had made an endowment of 50 coconut trees for lighting five Santhi Vilakku (temple lamps) at Uttama Cholaeswarem at Teliyalperu of Kallai at present Attakada, and further donated three Veli lands with fence and 20 cows for the lighting of a Nontha Vilakku (a sacred lamp within this temple -daily).

Panditha Cholaeswarem Temple

During this period another Siva temple which was built and named after one of the titles of Rajendra Chola namely Panditha Cholan as Panditha Choliswarem at Matalakiri, which was renamed as Nittavinodapuram the present Medirigiriya. In A.D.1037 a Tamil devotee Amuthan Chatan alias Kayavahu Kodi made donations of 10 cows and 10 oxen and ghee for the lamp.

These Chola temples are treated as heritage sites and no pujas are held. These temples are visited by foreign tourists

CAPTER 10

Destruction of Temples

The colonial rule of Portuguese and Dutch caused much destruction to Hindu and Buddhist temples. The five Ishwarams were badly danged. At Koneswaram the statues were protected by the priests into the sea. These statues were subsequently discovered by undersea photographer Mike Wilson who later became a spiritualist by the name Swami Siva Kalki.

Portuguese did damages to many Hindu temples in Sri Lanka. Nallur Kandasamy temple was destroyed four times and then renovated. Portuguese had the habit of building churches in the location of the temple. The stones from the building were used to build fortresses. Many Hindus were forcibly converted as Catholics. Dutch caused destruction as well. During British rule, they focused on Plantation industry and administration.

Recently the Sri Lankan army damaged many Hindu temples. They also occupied the temples for army operation. Thiruketheeswaram and Koneswaram were badly managed by the army.

Conclusion:

Hinduism contains many legendary stories based on the concepts of the religion. The stories were written over a long period of time and turned into the ritual process in some temples. The stories teach a lesson in the way of living. Some are popular epics such as Ramayana, Mahabharata. With time, Hinduism may undergo a transformation in its philosophy. In Sri Lanka, Hinduism is interlaced with Buddhism. In Perihara like in Kandy, Dondeswaram, Hindu deity plays an important part. The Buddha's relation with Hinduism is so close that it's easy to confuse Buddhism with Hinduism. The two religions have close connections, and yet they are distinct. This was because of Buddha's reform movements and his refining of Hindu beliefs. It would not be wrong to state, then, that Buddha founded a noble religion by distilling Hinduism, and offering a commonsense approach to self-betterment to which the people can relate easily. Hindu devotees should look back at science and nature and interpret it with the beliefs in Hinduism. Laws of nature are intermingled with Hinduism.

CHAPTER 11

List of Temples in Sri Lanka

The list of Temples in Sri Lanka is extensive. The upcountry Tamils living in estates have built many temples worshiped by Hindus and Buddhists. In Vanni where farming is important, pillayar temples are many. The notable one is Murugandy Pillayar Temple is located on the main Jaffna-Kandy A9 road

Northern Province

Jaffna

1. Saaththiriyar Madam Anjaneyar Kovil Sangarathai.
2. Saaththiriyar Madam Murugan kovil Sangarathai.
3. Thuratti Panai MuththuMari Amman kovil Vaddukodda East.
4. Sangarathai PittiyamPathy Pathirakali Kovil.
5. Sri nagawaratha naaraayanar thevasthanam, alaveddy, jaffna.
6. Sanguvelly Vettukkattai pillaiyar Kovil.
7. Sanguvelly Sivagnana Pillaiyar Kovil.
8. Nallur Kandaswamy Kovil, Point Pedro road, Nallur.
9. Kirubhakhara Sivasubramaniya Kovil(Puthukkovil) K.K.S road Kokuvil East Kokuvil
10. Vannai Sri Kamakshi Ambal Aalayam (Nachchimar Kovil,Vannarpannai,K.K.S.Road,Jaffna).
11. Sri Vallipura Aalwar Kovil, Vallipuram, Puloly South, Puloly.
12. Vaduvavaththai Veerapathrar Kovil, Vaduvavaththai, Puloly South, Puloly.
13. Kanai Vairavar Kovil, Kanai, Puloly South, Puloly.
14. Upayakathirkamam Murugan Kovil, Upayakathirkamam, Puloly South, Puloly.
15. Puttalai Pillayar Kovil, Puttalai, Puloly South, Puloly.

16. Sri Visalachchi Samatha Visvanathan Kovil, Vali-West, Araly Centre.
17. Sri Maha Ganapathi Pillaiyaar Kovil, Vali-West, Sithankerny Junction, Sithankerney.
18. Chempithodda Gna Vairavar Kovil, Vali-West, Araly South.
19. Mavady Ganavairavar Kovil, Vali-West, Chankanai
20. Kalawathurai Ganavairavar Kovil, Vali-West, Aralee South.
21. Sri Siva Sithamparaeswarar Kovil, Vali-West, Sithankerny. <http://www.sithankerney.net>
22. Sithamparam Ambalavanr Kovil, Vali-West, Chankanai Center.
23. Arasady Vyravar Kovil, Vali-West, Chankanai South.
24. Lanka Paruthi Vyravar kovil, Vali-West, Chankanai Center, Chankanai Center.
25. Gnanavyravar Kovil, Vali-West, Chuleepuram Center.
26. Gnanavyravar Kovil, Vali-West, Tholpuram West6.
27. Nikara Gnanavyravar Kovil, Vali-West, Chankanai West.
28. Thoddaththu Vairavar Kovil, Puloly South, Puloly.
29. Sinnavalavu Gnavairavar Kovil, Vali-West, Araly North.
30. Olludai Gnavairavar Kovil, Thellipalai, Kadivalai Elavalai
31. Gnanavyravar Kovil, Thellipalai, Sithiyampuliyady.
32. Gnanavyravar Kovil, Thellipalai, Kadduwan Rd. Mallakam.
33. Gnanavairavar kovil, Jaffna Town, Eachchamoddai.
34. Vairavar kovil, Jaffna Town, Kulathady.
35. Sri ampalavanr kovil, Jaffna Town, Nedunkulam.
36. Arulmihu Gnanavairavar kovil, Karaveddy, Kottawaththai.
37. Kilisiddy Gnanavairavar kovil, Karaveddy, Irumbu mathavady, Vathiry.
38. Arulmihu paththanai vairavar kovil, Karaveddy, Alvai east.
39. Valliappar gnanavairavar kovil, Karaveddy.
40. Sakkalawathay gnanavairavar kovil, Karaveddy.
41. Gnavairavar Kovil, Islands South, 6th Ward, Velanai.
42. SriGnavairavar Kovil, Islands South, 6th Ward, Sangaththanai.

43. Sri Veerapaththira Kovil, Islands South, 6th Ward, Velanai.
44. Vairavar kovil, Islands South, Saravanai West, Velanai.
45. Arulmihu Gnanavairavar kovil, Nallur, Kondavil East.
46. Arulmihu Gnanavairavar kovil, Nallur, Kokuvil.
47. Kumarakoddam Gnanavairavar Kovil, Nallur, Kondavil.
48. Srikamalambikaisametha Kailasasamy Kovil, Nallur.
49. Sri Puveneswarar Ambal Kovil, Nallur, Kondavil.
50. Samundathevi Sametha Gnanavairavar Kovil, Nallur, Kondavil, North.
51. Gnanavairavar kovil, Nallur, Ariyalai.
52. Konamalai Vairavar Kovil, Nallur, Kokuvil East.
53. Sivasubramaniyar Kovil, Nallur, Maniyar Road.
54. Sri Gnanavairavar Perumal Kovil, Nallur, Thirunelveli North.
55. Iraddaipulam Gnanavairavar Kovil, Sandilipay, Sandilipay North.
56. Arulmihu Sri Saamundaampikaa sametha Eenchadi Gnanavairavar Kovil, Suthumalai North, Manipay.
57. Aladai Vairavar Kovil, Sandilipay, Uyarapulam.
58. Anthikuli Gnanavairavar Kovil, Sandilipay, Savatkaddu.
59. Veerapathirar Kovil, Pointpedro, Katkoyalam.
60. Athivairavar Kovil, Pointpedro, Athikovilady, VVT.
61. Vairavar kovil, Pointpedro, Revady, VVT.
62. Valambikai sametha vaitheeswara kovil, Pointpedro, Valvai South West, VVT.
63. Sadaiyandy Vairavar Kovil, Pointpedro, Valvai South West, VVT.
64. Vairavar kovil, Pointpedro, Kothiyal Lane, VVT.
65. Gnanavairavar kovil, Pointpedro, Nediyaikadu, VVT.
66. Vairavar kovil, Pointpedro, Netkolu, Thondamanaru.
67. Gnanavairavar kovil, Pointpedro, Konavalai.
68. Sankilivairavar kovil, Barathi veethy, Atchuvvely, Jaffna.
69. Kanthavanam Kovil, Polikandy, VVT.
70. Sri Pathirakali Amman/Ambaal Kovil, Polikandy, VVT.

71. Ilupai Mulai Pillayaar Kovil, Polikandy, VVT.
72. Kulathady Vairavar Kovil, Pointpedro, Polikandy West.
73. Maruthady Gnanavairavar Kovil, Pointpedro.
74. Odakarai Sivan Kovil, Vali-West, Chanknai South.
75. Sampunathar Sivan Kovil, Vali-West, Pannipulam.
76. Koddadiperan Sivan Kovil, Vali-West, Chulipuram West.
77. Sivagnavairavar Kovil, Thellipalai, Kailaya Valavu, Mallakam.
78. Sivan Kovil, Thellipalai, Kovitpulam, Thellipalai.
79. Anantha Nadarajah Kovil, Thellipalai, Mahajana College,
80. Sivan Kovil, Jaffna Town, Columbuturai.
81. Sri ampalavanr kovil, Jaffna Town, Nedunkulam.
82. Valambikai sametha vaitheeswara kovil, Karaveddy,
83. Sri Gneswarar Kovil, Nallur, Kondavil East.
84. Sivan Kovil, Sandilipay, Sudumalai North.
85. Nunasai Sivan Kovil, Sandilipay, Madakal.
86. Sivan Kovil, Pointpedro, Muchampulavu, Puloly South.
87. Koneswarar Kovil, Pointpedro, Thondamanaru.
88. Kanapatheeswaram Sivan Kovil, Kayts, Sivankovil, Kayts.
89. Sivan Kovil (Eelaththu Sithamparam), Kayts, Karainagar.
90. Gnanavairavar kovil, Kayts, Naranthanai East, Kayts.
91. Thanthonri Manonmani Amman Kovil, Naranthanai North, Kayts.
92. Nayinai Nakapoosani Amman Kovil, Nayinathivu.
93. Vairavar kovil, Kayts, Oluvil Road, Karamban.
94. Koonan Paruththy Vairavar Kovil, Kayts, Ilakady, Karainagar.
95. Sri Aathy Vairavar Kovil, Kayts, East Road, Kayts.
96. Aalamkanru Gnanavairavar Kovil, Kayts, Vetharadaippu, Karainagar.
97. Vairavar kovil, Kayts, Sithambaramoorthikerny, Kayts.
98. Sadaiyaly Gnanavairavar Kovil, Kayts, Sadaiyaly, Karainagar.
99. Gnanavairavar kovil, Kayts, Valanthalai, Karainagar.

100. Srisithambareswara Sivakamyambal Devas, Kayts, Karainagar Center.
101. Sivan Kovil, Uduvil, Punnalaikadduwan South.
102. Gnanavairavar kovil, Kopay, Sirupiddy.
103. Ollai Vembady Gnanavairavar Temple, Kopay, Neerveli.
104. Perunthalai Sivan Kovil, Kopay, Sirupiddy.
105. Sankili Vairavar Temple, Kopay, Paththaimeni, Atchchuveli.
106. Nedunkulam Gnanavairavar Temple, Delft, 5th Ward, Delft.
107. Mayiliyar Vairavar Kovil, Thenmaradchi, Idaikurichchy, Varany
108. Vairavar Kovil, Thenmaradchi, Manthuvil West Kodikamam.
109. Paddaiyolachchy Veerapaththeerar Kovil, Meesalai East.
110. Arulmihu Gnanavairavar kovil, Thenmaradchi, Kaithady West, Kaithady.
111. Vairavar kovil, Thenmaradchi, Kaithady Center, Kumaranagar.
112. Vairavar Muniyappar Kovil, Thenmaradchi, Kaithady Center, Kumaranagar.
113. Veerapathirar Kovil, Thenmaradchi, Maravanpulo North.
114. Thanthonry Gnavairavar Kovil, Thenmaradchi, Kaithady, Navatkuly South.
115. Chandrasegaravaryvananathar Sivan Kovil, Thenmaradchi, Chavakachchery.
116. Veerapathirar Kovil, Thenmaradchi, Palavy South, Kodikamam.
117. Narasingha Vairavar Kovil, Thenmaradchi, Shanthypuram, Madduvil North.

118. Koilamanai Maruthady Sivan Kovil, Thenmaradchi, Koyilamanai, Kodikamam.
119. Paramasivan Kovil, Thenmaradchi, Ketpeli West, Mirusuwil.
120. Veerapathirar Kovil, Thenmaradchi, Ketpeli Centre, Mirusuwil.
121. Gnavairavar kovil, Thenmaradchi, Kachchai Road, Kodikamam.
122. Vairavar Kovil, Thenmaradchi, Madduvil South.
123. Thuvali Kannakai Amman Kovil, Uduppiddy
124. Selva sannithi Temple, Thondamararu
125. Vannai Sri Vengadesa Varatharaja Perumal Kovil
126. Arulmiku Manthikai Kanakai Amman Kovil, Puloly South, Puloly.<
127. Muruka Moorthi Kovil, Alangkulai, Sandilipay North Sandilipay.
128. Eradijar pulam Vairavar Kovil, Sandilipay North Sandilipay,
129. Maijer Kotti Vairavar Kovil, Sandilipay North Sandilipay,
130. Arasady Pliar Kovil, Sandilipay North Sandilipay,
131. Sri Gana Vyravar, Nainativu Ward No'6
132. Sri Kailasanathar Kovil kailasapillayar Kovil , Temple Road, Nallur.
133. Vannai Sri Veermakali Amman Kovil, Pointpidro Road, Jaffna
134. Kalainagar Kampanpulo Athivairavar Kovil,Sithankerny.
1. Valalai Neerppeddy Murugan Temple,Keerimalai-Pt.Pedro Road,Valalai,Atchuvely
135. Manthiddy Vairavar Kovil,Palm Beach,Valalai,Atchuvely.
136. Valalai Pillayar Kovil,Valalai,Atchuvely.
137. .Valalai East Kali Kovil,Valalai,Atchuvely.

138. Nagathambirann Alayam, Valalai West, Atchuvvely.
139. Inuvil kanthasuwamy Kovil, Inuvil West, Inuvil.
140. Inuvil Sri Pararasa Segara Pillaiyar Kovil , Inuvil
141. Sekarasa sekarappillaiyar Kovil , Inuvil West, Inuvil
142. Om Sri palayadipillayar kovil Meesalai

Kilinochchi – Northern Province

1. Athmalingeswarar Alayam, Ramanathapuram, Kilinochchi
2. Alady vinayakar Alayam, Ramanathapuram Center,
Kilinochchi -
3. Vairavar Kovil, Kannakai Ambal Temple, Kaneshapuram,
Kilinochchi
4. Kanakampikai Ampal Great Temple Iranaimadu kilinochchi
5. Vinayahapuram Pillayar Kovil Kilinochchi-
6. Vairavar kovil, Karachchi, Akkarayan.
7. Sivan kovil, Karachchi, Krishnapuram.
8. Sivan kovil, Karachchi, Uthayanagar west.
9. Sivan kovil, Karachchi, Kanakambikai kulam.
10. Vairavar kovil, Karachchi, 27, Thirunagar.
11. Vairavar kovil, Karachchi, 104, Thirunagar north.
12. Sudalai vairavar kovil, Karachchi, Puthumurippu.
13. Sivan kovil, Karachchi, Mayavanoor.
14. Kallady vairavar kovil, Pallai.
15. Karanthai vairavar kovil, Pallai, Tharmakerny.
16. Monduwan vairavar kovil, Pallai, Arasar kerny.
17. Aththikandu vairavar kovil, Pallai, Arasar kerny.
18. Narasimmavairavar kovil, Pallai, Pallai nagar.
19. Paddivairavar kovil, Poonakari, Gowtharimuani.
20. Veerapathirar kovil, Poonakari, Mannaitthalai.
21. Vairavar kovil, Poonakari, Selvapuram.
22. Vairavar kovil, Poonakari, Kavakulam.
23. Vairavar kovil, Poonakari, Samippulam.
24. Vilathikadu vairavar kovil, Poonakari, Nallur.

25. Veerapathirar kovil, Poonakari, Karikkoddukkulam
26. Vairavar kovil, Poonakari, Madduvilnadu west.
27. Mudavairavar kovil, Poonakari, Pallikkudha.
28. Nainakaddu vairavar kovil, Poonakari, Veddukkadu.
29. Vairavar kovil, Poonakari, Cheddiyakuruchchi..
30. Aknivairavar kovil, Poonakari, Gnanimadam.
31. Addathuddivairavar kovil, Poonakari, Gnanimadam.
32. Maruthady vairavar kovil, Poonakari, Gnanimadam.
33. Pampadiththan vairavar kovil, Poonakari, Sempankunru.
34. Vairavar kovil, Poonakari, Sithankuruchchi.
35. Kampilivairavar kovil, Poonakari, Gnanimadam
36. Vaikalady vairavar kovil, Poonakari, Karrukkaithivu.

Mullaitivu – Vanni

1. Athivajiravar Kovil, Kallappadu Mulliththivu-
2. Thiththakarai Amman Kovil Kallappadu-
3. Murukan Kovil Viji Ved kallappadu mulliththivu
4. Gnanavairavar kovil, Maritimepattu, Mullaithivu.
5. Thantrontreeswarar kovil, Oddusuddan.
6. Vairavar kovil, Oddusuddan, Sammalan kulam.
7. Athivairavar kovil, Oddusuddan, Karippaddamurippu.
8. Gnanavairavar kovil, Oddusuddan, Karippaddamurippu.
9. Vairavar kovil, Oddusuddan, Katkidangu, Mankulam.
10. Soolavairavar kovil, Oddusuddan, Olumadu, Mankulam.
11. Pathalavairavar kovil, Oddusuddan, Olumadu, Mankulam.
12. Vairavar kovil, Oddusuddan, Mankulam veethy.
13. Sivan kovil, Puthukudiyiruppu.
14. Sivan kovil, Puthukudiyiruppu, Manthuvil.
15. Sivan kovil, Thunukkai, Koddakaddiyakulam
16. selva venayakar, veddajadappu ,Thunukkai.
17. Karpaka venayakar, Uyilankulam, Thunukkai.
18. Puthukkula Venayakar, Puthukkulam, Thunukkai.
19. Iyanar kovil, Uyilankulam, Thunukkai.

20. Narasimmar Kovil, Uyilankulam, Thunukkai.
21. Sannarsi Kovil Uyilankulam, Thunukkai.
22. Veravaththerer Kovil Uyilankulam, Thunukkai.
23. Amman kovil, Thunukkai.
24. Thanthondreeswarar temple, oddusuddan, mullaitivu.

Vavuniya – Vannai

1. Manikapuram gnanavairavar kovil, Cheddikulam, Menickparm, Manickapuram.
2. Gnavairavar Kovil, Vavuniya, Rambaikulam.
3. Vairavar Kovil, Vairavar Kovil Veethy, Vavuniya.
4. Vairavar Kovil, Vavuniya, Kurumankadhu.
5. Veerapaththirar Kovil, Vavuniya, Sasthirykoolankulam.
6. Sannasi Vairavar kovil, Vavuniya, Kaththar Sinnakkulam.
7. Sri Thurkkai Amman Kovil, Srinagar, Poonthoddam, Vavuniya.
8. sri muththumari amman kovil thonikkal vavuniya.
9. sri pulijadi sithivenajakar kovil Rambaikulam vavuniya
10. Kanagarayankulam Ithiyadi Siththivinayagar Temple , Kanagarayankulam , Vavuniya.
11. Ketheeswaram, Mathottam - Ketheeswarar, Gauriammai, Gauri theerththam - 32 km from Thalaimannar - Destroyed by Portuguese in the 17th century CE,
12. Ellapparmaruthankulam vinayagar Kovil

Pungudutivu

1. Kannakai Amman Temple, Pungudutivu.
2. Sivan Kovil, Islands South, 7th Ward, Pungudutivu.
3. Gnanavairavar kovil, Islands South, 7th Ward, Pungudutivu.
4. Veerapaththirar Kovil, Islands South, 9th Ward, Pungudutivu.
5. Veeramalai Vairavar Kovil, Islands South, 10th Ward, Pungudutivu.
6. Puthaiyadi Vairavar Kovil, Islands South, 10th Ward, Pungudutivu.

7. Malady Vairavar Kovil, Islands South, 4th Ward, Pungudutivu.
8. Maruthady Vairavar Kovil, Islands South, 4th Ward, Pungudutivu.
9. Athi Vairavar Kovil, Islands South, 2nd Ward, Pungudutivu.
10. Kurunthady Vairavar Kovil, Islands South, 2nd Ward, Pungudutivu.
11. Sivan Kovil, Islands South, 7th Ward, Pungudutivu.
12. Sivan Kovil, Islands South, 3rd Ward, Pungudutivu.
13. Palaivairavar ward no 10 Pungudutivu

Mannar

1. Shiva Temple, Iranai Illuppaikkulam
2. Sivan Temple, Savatkaddu

North Western Province

Puttalam

1. Munneswaram temple
2. Sivan Temple, Maanavari, Rajakathaluwai

North Central Province

Polannaruwa

1. Chola period Shiva Temple

Central Province

Nuwara Eliya

1. Sri Navanathar Siththar Sivan Temple
2. Kethara Gowreeswarar Temple
3. Sri Lankatheeswarar Temple
4. Siva temple, Kuliwata, Hatton, Maha Nuwara, Nuwara Eliya District

(There are several Temples in Rea Tea estataes)

Western Province

Colombo

1. Sri Kailasanatha Swami Kovil
2. Sri Ponnambalavaneswarar Kovil

Gampaha

1. Sri Somasundareswar Swamy Kovil
2. Muthumariamman Temple

Eastern Province

Trincomalee

1. Koneswaram
2. Pathirakali Amman Temple
3. Ati Konanayakar

Amparai

Thambiluvil Sri Kannaki amman temple

1. Thambiluvil Sri Sivalinga Pillayar Temple
2. Thirukkovil Sithira Velayutha Swami Kovil
3. Chenaikudiruppu Sri Sithivinayagar
Kovilwww.chenaikudiruppu.webs.com
4. Chenaikudiruppu Sri Muthumariyamman Kovil

Batticaloa

1. Anaipanthi Sri Sithy Vigneswarar Thevalayam, Pulliyanthivu, Batticaloa
2. Sri Sithira Velayutha Swamy Koyil, Pulliyanthivu, Batticaloa
3. Throupathayamman Koyil, Pulliyanthivu, Batticaloa
4. Pechiamman Temple
5. Sri Mamanga Pillayar Temple (Most Popular one)
6. Sri Veerapathirar Temple
7. Kaluthvalai Pillyar Temple
8. Kannaki Amman Temple
9. Sithy Vinaygar Temple
10. Veerakathi Pillayar Kovil
11. Kothiyapulai Pillaiyar Temple

12. Kannankudah Kannaki Amman Temple
13. Kokkaddicholai Thaanthonreeswarar Temple
14. Puthumandapathady Sri Murukan Temple
15. Tiruchendur Murugan Temple
16. Nakathampiran Temple
17. Thanthamalai Sri Murugan Temple
18. Sri Kamakshi Temple
19. Mahiladithivu Kannaki Amman Kovil
20. Pillayaradi Vinayagar Kovil
21. Puthukudiyiruppu Kannaki Kovil
22. Santhi Pillayar Kovil
23. Nagathampiran Kovil
24. Kallady Pillaiyar Kovil
25. Sri Santhippillayar Temple
26. Thanthamalai Sri Muththumariyamman temple
27. Vilavaddawan Sri Shiva Muththumari Amman Kovil
28. Gayathri Amman Temple
29. Mukathuvaram Sri Muthu Mari Amman Kovil
30. Kallady, Sri Lanka

Uva Province

Moneragala

1. Kataragama

Southern Province
Galle

1. Thondeshwaram

Reference:

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Temple Web pages



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Hinduism in Sri Lanka dates back to many centuries BC. The epic Ramayana says King Ravana ruled Sri Lanka and was a Shiva worshipper. As per the legends, He built many Temples for God Shiva. There are legendary stories linking him with Koneswaram, Thiruketheeswaram, Naguleswaram and Muneswaram, Domdeswaram. the 5 Iswarams. These iswrams were built in North, East North West, West, South coasts to protect the island from Tsunamis. Sri Lankan Tamils and Singhalese worship Ganapathy, Shiva, Sakthi Karthigeya, Kannagi, Vishnu and Guardian deities. It is estimated about 470 temples exist on the island. Cholas built several Shiva temples during their rule in Sri Lanka. Many sidhars such as Yogar samy, Kadayil samy, Kalki samy, Pal Kudi Baba, attained Samadhi in few of these temples. The Singhalese did have an idol of Vishnu in viharas and built several pathini temples in Southern Sri Lanka. Idol of pathini is carried during Kandy Perehera along with the tooth relic. Much destruction was caused to the temples during Portuguese and Dutch rule. Many temples have legendary stories.



Pon Kulendiren, a retired Telecom Engineer, is a Canadian citizen. He was born in Sri Lanka. He is a dual language writer in English & Tamil. He worked as Telecom Engineer in Sri Lanka, Oman, Dubai UK, US and in Canada. He published several Printed & eBooks He traveled widely in Sri Lanka and visited many temples and read several Tamil books about the temples in Sri Lanka. He hails from Nallur Jaffna one time the capital of Jaffna Kingdom and educated at St Johns College Jaffna. He is a BSc (Physics) Hons graduate from Colombo University, IEE and CIM (UK). He is the author of the printed and eBook of "Hinduism a Scientific Religion" in English.

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