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TEMPLES IN KUMBAKONAM

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ABSTRACT

Kumbakonam temple that give varies benefits, there are many cities with temples in Tamil Nadu, Kanchipuram and Kumbakonam are important among them. The number of temples in both these cities is huge. Among them Kumbakonam has the most temples for curing doshas. There are various temples here to get rid of navagraha dosha and marriage ban. There are temples in Kumbakonam which offer benefits from child birth to satabhishekam.

Kumbakonam in the 3rd century established. The Pallava kings ruled the region from the 4th century to the 9th century controlled. Then came the Chola dynasty. It built many notable temples. Famous among them is the Prahadeeswarar temple in Thanjavur. After the fall of the Chola Empire in the middle of the 12th century. The Pandya dynasty ruled their rule lasted until. The 14th century when Kumbakonam became the capital of the Vijayanagara dynasty. Krishna Devaraya II, the king of Vijayanagara visited this place from 1524. Madurai and Thanjavur Nayaks raided Kumbakonam from 1535 to 1673. The Chola period is known as the Golden Age of Kumbakonam

KEY WORDS

Heritage, Culture, Tourism.

KUMBAKONAM

Kumbakonam is one of the important town in Kumbakonam of Thanjavur District in Tamilnadu. It is historically an important town and renowned for the famous and beautiful Temples. The ruins of an ancient structure in in a suburban village called SOLAMALIGAI or the place of the Chola indicate that Kumbakonam was the capital of the Chola kings. It is also said that king Srimara Pandya, who lived about the 9th century, defecated the armies of the Cholas and the Gangas here. The temple of Nagesvara contains a separate shrine for the Sun, who is said to have worshipped Siva in this place, and to this day the rays of the Sun are seen to fall on the central Linga on certain days of the year. There is also a sculptural

representation of Uchehishta Ganapati (the polluted Elephant God) in this temple. An inscription which is dated in the third year of Parakesarivarman (i.e. Aditya Karikala II), refers to a gift to one of the famous commentaries on the Purvi – Mimamsa Sutras which founded a new school of philosophy called Prabhakara – Mata after its expounder the great Prabhakara who in point of time was contemporaneous with Bhatta – kumarila being one of his direct pupils and must, consequently, have flourished about the beginning of the 8th century. The Telugu work “Sakalurthamgara” also makes mention of this Prabhakara. This temple goes by the name of Tirukkil – kottam. Religious places are most important constructions in every religion, the temple have supreme importance and different god and goddesses like Vishnu and Siva temple, etc. are being worshiped.

LIST OF KUMBAKONAM PANCHAYAT UNIONS

LIST OF KUMBAKONAM PANCHAYAT UNIONS	
SL. NO	NAME OF THE PANCHAYAT UNIONS
1	Ammachatram
2	Annalagraharam
3	Ariyapadaiveedu
4	Asur
5	Agarathur
6	Anaigudi
7	Athiyur
8	Baburajapuram
9	Devanancheri
10	Eraharam
11	Innambur
12	Keelapaiyaar
13	Koranattu karuppur
14	Korukkai
15	Kadichambadi
16	Kallapuliyur
17	Kallur
18	Kovilacheri
19	Kothangudi
20	Kumarankudi
21	Marudanallur
22	Magarajapuram
23	Maanampadi
24	Nagagudi
25	Neerathanallur

26	Palavathankattalai
27	Perumandi
28	Patteeswaram
29	Puttur
30	Sakkottai
31	Seshambadi
32	Cholanmaligai
33	Seganur
34	Sundaraperumalkoil
35	Thenampadugai
36	Thillaiyampur
37	Thippirajapuram
38	Thiruvalanjuli
39	Thirunallur
40	Thiruppurambiyam
41	Udaiyalur
42	Ullur
43	Umamaheshvarapuram
44	Uthamadani
45	Valapuram
46	Valaiyapettai
47	Vilandakandam

The history of Kumbakonam is very old and from historical time in religion, culture, festivals plays important role. In every religion existence of god its worship, abode of god is predominant. The experience of the travellers on visiting destinations possessing a special cultural, historical or natural value, may be a group of people sometimes, refers to heritage tourism. Architecture is one of the most important arts in which the culture of any people has found expression. Kumbakonam is an ancient place with a hoary tradition of art and culture. This Thirukoil Portal is hosted by Hindu Religious & Charitable Endowments Department (HR & CE), Government of Tamil Nadu. The website has been designed and developed by National Informatics Centre, Government of India, in consultation with Department. The content is owned and maintained by HR & CE Department. Style of constructing temples became recognition of particular dynasty. The technique of temple construction with the passing time becomes polished and temples took grand look. There are many temples in Kumbakonam constructed in different time period. Also analysing temples on comparative basis with basic temple structure, plan forms of various temple, their proportions and architectural elements, constructions material and methodology, timeline of temples, relation of temple with light.

TEMPLES

Kumbakonam is a town in the Thanjavur district of Tamil Nadu, India. This town is the headquarters of the Kumbakonam taluk of Thanjavur district. Kumbakonam is known as a “Temple town”. This is because more numbers of Hindu Temple are built in Kumbakonam.

This ancient city formerly called KUDAMUKKU, with a number of Vishnu and Siva temples, on the river Kaveri, is a railway station on the Madras – Danushkodi line. The town, lying in north latitude 0⁰57’ and east longitude 79⁰25’ at a height of 85 feet in a low level tract between two rivers – the Kaveri in the north and the Arasalar in the south – extending about two miles in length from north to south and one mile in breadth from east to west, derives its name from its presiding deity Kumbesvara whose temple has an immense local celebrity. The central Linga is said to be composed of fragments of a pot installed in a box. There are several explanations of the origin of the name Kumbesvara.

This is the only place where the great Mahamagha festival occurring once in ‘twelve years and celebrated in February, takes place and which has temples dedicated to the Trimurtis – Brahma, Vishnu and Siva.

Kumbakonam was ruled by the Early Cholas, Pallavas, Medieval Cholas, Later Cholas, Pandyas, the Vijayanagar Empire, Madurai Nayaks, Thanjavur Nayaks and the Thanjavur Marathas. This town served as a capital of the Medieval Cholas.

SL. NO.	SAIVITE TEMPLES	SL. NO.	VAISHNAVITE TEMPLES
1	Kasi Viswanathar	1	Sarangapani
2	Adi Kumbeswarar	2	Chakarapani
3	Someswarar	3	Ramaswamy
4	Nageswarar	4	Rajagopaldaswamy
5	Ekambeswarar	5	Varahaperumal
6	Abimukeswarar		
7	Gauthameswarar		
8	Kambatta Viswanathar		
9	Banapuriswarar		
10	Kalahasteeswarar		
11	Kodeeswarar (Kottaiyur)		
12	Amirthakadeswarar (Sakkottai)		

INSCRIPTIONS

The inscriptions in the temples here have been copied during the years 1908, 1911 & 1915 by the Madras Epigraphical Department.

The antiquity of Kumbakonam is well – recognized, its God Sarangapani or Aravamuda having been sung in the Prabhandas in the eighth century, but no epigraphical evidences are available to show its antiquity. It has twelve Saivite and four Vaishnavite shrines, besides a Brahma temple. The temples are comparatively modern (being the works of the Naik kings) in outer parts, but ancient, going back to the Chola period at least in inner parts. The Nagesvara shrine is famous for the adoration of its deity by the Sun and the Chakrapani shrine for the statue of a Tanjore king holding a lamp for the God. The Sankaracharya Matha is one of the most important historical institutions.

13 of 1908. – (Tamil.) On the west wall of the shrine of the Goddess in the Nagesvara temple. A record in the eighth year of the Pandya king Maranjadaiyan. Records gift of 138 cows for milk and 100 kasu for two lamps by the king to the temples of Tirukkilakkottattu Bhatara at Tirukkudamukku. (The exact identity of Maranjadaiyan is not known). Tirukkudandai Killkottam is famous in Saivite tradition as the place where the Sun worshipped Siva and got back the splendour which he had lost owing to Visvakarma's curse.

13 of 1908. – (Tamil.) On the north wall of the Suryanarayana shrine in the Nagesvara temple. A record of the Chola king Rajakesarin Udaiyar Sri – Vijayarajendradeva (Rajadhiraja I) in his thirty – sixth year, Makha, Aparu, Wednesday, Ayiliam.

STYLE

On the question of style, there is a lot of erroneous views. Burgess, Fergusson and Dubreuil are pioneers who laid the foundations of Dravidian Archaeology. Their methods were systematic and scientific, and their conclusions are sound upto the extent original sources of art history were then available to them. Their successors in the field, instead of following their methods, simply, even blindly, echoed their views though outdated by the progress and enlargement of the frontiers of our knowledge during the course of more than half a century. Without a full survey and careful study of dated monuments and dated sculptures, no satisfactory results would be possible.

Dubreuil divided Dravidian style into five main periods, and his generalisations were too sweeping. He enunciated the first three phases as follows:

1. The Pallava phase (A.D. 600 – 850). It was characterised by rock – sculptures. The Bahur temple was wrongly included in this group. It seems to be a foundation of the period of the Rashtrakuta king Krishna III (10th century A.D.).

2. The Chola phase (A.D. 850 -1100). It was (he held) a period of grand vimanas. In this group were included the Koranganatha temple at Srinivasanallur (which he and others attributed, owing to inadequate appreciation of evidence, to Parantaka I) and the Rajarajesvaram at Tanjavur.
3. The third was the Pandyan phase which according to him extended from A.D. 1100 to 1350 ; he characterised it as the period of grand gopurams. He included in this group the east gopuram in the third wall of enclosure of the Nataraja temple at Chidambaram, the small western gopuram in the second wall of enclosure of the Jambukesvarar temple at Tiruvanikka (which he dated to A.D. 125), the main eastern gopuram of the Sarangapani temple at Kumbakonam and the Ballala (Hoysala) gopuram at Tiruvannamalai. He added: “The monuments belonging to the Pandyan style are very rare. They are all gopurams... The east gopuram of Chidambaram is the best example of Architecture of the Pandyan epoch. The date of its erection is undoubted since it bears an inscription of Sundara Pandya. This style is found in a large number of monuments of this epoch”.

TOURIST ATTRACTIONS IN KUMBAKONAM

Kumbakonam is famous for its temples and monasteries. Kumbakonam is very famous for the presence of a number of temples and ranks very next to Kanchepuram town, Tamil Nadu.

The existing Government Arts College at Kumbakonam is one of the oldest college in Tamil Nadu and gained the title as “ Cambridge of South India” in the Olden days. The famous mathematician Ramanujam studied in this institution.

The town was originally a religious centre, with the presence of large number of temples. It has gained importance as a Commercial and Industrial (small-scale) centre during the last quarter of the 19th century. During the early period of 20th century, the town has gained importance especially for silk and metal manufacturing activities, which supports sizable number of workers in the town.

Just like Kanchi, Kumbakonam too is a city of temples, and there are more than 41 shrines here apart from the big temples we have already seen. As it is not possible to list and describe all of them, only some important minor shrines are chosen for a hurried visit

SL . NO.	NAME OF THE TEMPLES
1	Arulmigu Sarangapani Temple (Town)
2	Arulmigu Chakarapani Temple (Town)
3	Arulmigu Ramaswamy Temple (Town)
4	Arulmigu Kasi Viswanathar Temple (Town)
5	Arulmigu Adi Kumbeswarar Temple (Town)
6	Arulmigu Swaminathaswami Temple (Swamimalai)
7	Arulmigu Someswarar Temple (Town)
8	Arulmigu Nageswarar Temple (Town)
9	Arulmigu Navagraha Temples
10	Arulmigu Ekambeswarar Temple (Town)
11	Arulmigu Abimukeshwarar Temple (Town)
12	Mahamaham Tank (Town)
13	Arulmigu Gauthameswarar Temple (Town)
14	Arulmigu Kampatta Viswanathar Temple (Town)
15	Arulmigu Banapuriswarar Temple (Town)
16	Arulmigu Kalahasteswarar Temple (Town)
17	Arulmigu Koteleswarar Temple (Kottaiyoor)
18	Arulmigu Amirthakalasanathar Temple (Sakkottai)
19	Arulmigu Hayagriva and Hanumar Temple (Town) (Melakaveri)
20	Arulmigu Kaligaparameshwari Temple (Town)
21	Arulmigu Karumparira Vinayagar Temple (Town)
22	Arulmigu Bramman Temple (Town) (Behind Ramasawmy)
23	Arulmigu Sri Sitarama Bhavani Sankar Temple (Town) (Solaiyappar street)
24	Arulmigu Varagaperuamal Temple (Town)
25	Arulmigu Brammapuriswarar Temple (Korukkai)
26	Arulmigu Airavadeswarar Temple (Darasuram) UNESCO Undertaking
27	Arulmigu Selva Maha Kaliyamman Temple (Udaiyalur)
28	Arulmigu Someswarar Temple (Pazhayarai)
29	Arulmigu Sachinathar Temple (Thirupurambiyam)
30	Arulmigu Soundararaja Perumal (Sundaraperumal Kovil)
31	Arulmigu Kapardisvarar Temple (ThiruvalanJuli)
32	Arulmigu Kalyanasundeshwarar Temple (Thiru Nallur)

33	Arulmigu Siva Temple (Ammachatram)
34	Arulmigu Siva Temple (Marutha Nallur)
35	Arulmigu Naganathar Temple (Manam Padi)
36	Arulmigu Vikrama Soleswarar Temple (Thirppirajapuram)
37	Arulmigu Sundareswarar Temple (Koranattu Karupur)
38	Arulmigu Thenupuriswarar Temple (Patteeswaram)
39	Arulmigu Oppiliyappan Temple (Thirunageswaram)
40	Arulmigu Ezhutharinathar Temple (Innampur)
41	Arulmigu Srinivasa Temple (Nachiar Kovil)

The fact that the Colas were staunch Saivas is beyond dispute. Of the temples built by them or under their aegies 80.1% are of Saiva lineage. Temples for Visnu are 14.6% while those of the other deities, including Devi show a very low figure. All the rulers had erected temples for Siva among whom the top ranking are Rajaraja I, Kulottunga I, Parantaka I, Kulottunga III, Rajendra I, Uttamacola and Vikramacola in the order of priority. Excepting Vijayalaya, Aditya I, Aditya II, Kulottunga II, and Rajaraja II all others had built or enabled the erection of Visnu temples. Kulottunga II and Rajaraja II.

CONCLUSION

The Chola realised the many manifestations of arts; art as fundamentally being one, and thus the idea of their best should be universal. “The guiding motive behind all art in the Chola period, behind architecture, sculpture (and painting) was to connect life with the spirit. The overall influence of religion and philosophy at all stages had thus affected the Early Chola style.

It is those functional features which had wooden prototypes scattered all over the Tamil land that are responsible for architecture development in stone. Transient interest is the most we can say which saw a few Pallava elements in the Early Chola, more so in sculpture than in architecture. Architecture was at home in the Muttaraiyar tract, which had also naturally taken some features from the pioneering Pallavas. Sculpture was what basically conformed to the principle of metamorphosis. The Muttaraiyar idiom with a strong Pallava influence in technique and form tried to change by expressive variations. From the rubric Pallava they changed to spectral forms. It was the Early Chola in the Vijayalaya Aditya I phase at Tiruvedikudi, Tiruccatural etc. which tried to humanise as well as spiritualise. This was achieved by manipulating the medium and shaping them. Shape after shape changed till a total organising occurred. The form derived much from their natural human counterparts. Beyond the constant; ‘ciphers’ were being written variously till they found harmony in Tiruvedikudi, Pullamangai, Kumbakonam and Srinivasanallur sculptures. These new values which they created repeatedly and in variation became their vocabulary and hallmark.

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