

# AGATHEESHWARAR TEMPLE, PALANJUR, TAMILNADU

**G. Anitha<sup>1</sup>, R. Praveen Kumar<sup>2</sup>, B. Sadha<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Assistant Professor, RMD Engineering college, R.S.M Nagar, Kavaraipettai – 601206, India

<sup>2</sup>UG Scholar, RMD Engineering college, R.S.M Nagar, Kavaraipettai – 601206, India

<sup>3</sup>UG Scholar, RMD Engineering college, R.S.M Nagar, Kavaraipettai – 601206, India

## Abstract

This paper explores a divine shrine, delving into its establishment, development, and maintenance over time. It uncovers astonishing facts and beliefs, shedding light on the spiritual and scientific contributions of our ancestors. The shrine offers insights into managing life's challenges, promoting personal well-being. Focused on unearthing hidden treasures, it encourages readers to explore ancient lifestyles, values, and survival skills. Through a comprehensive study, this work aims to inspire deeper spiritual understanding and appreciation for our heritage.

**Keywords:** Ancient lifestyles; Heritage; Hidden treasures; Scientific contributions; Values.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

There lies a unique religious site that captivates visitors with its harmonious blend of spirituality and natural beauty. Palanjur, a charming village situated ten kilometers from Chembarambakkam, serves as the gateway to this intriguing temple.

This distinctive religious sanctuary is intricately linked to water, situated around the periphery of a serene lake. Its grand entrance stands gracefully, partially submerged in the crystal-clear waters, imparting a sense of mystique and tranquility. The temple's setting undergoes a fascinating transformation during the monsoon season. What was once a dry expanse adorned with dense trees transforms into a water-laden haven, as the region receives abundant rainfall.

As one ventures into Palanjur, the landscape unfolds with cultural and religious significance. The temple's unique location symbolizes a harmonious coexistence with nature. The sight of the grand entrance partially submerged in glistening water creates a surreal ambiance, offering solace to devotees and visitors alike. The temple's architecture reflects resilience against changing seasons, designed to withstand the ebb and flow of water.[1] This structure stands as a testament to the enduring spirit of faith. The cyclic nature of the landscape, transitioning from dryness to a water-bound sanctuary, mirrors the cyclical essence of life and spirituality.

In conclusion, this temple near Palanjur [2] is not just a religious site but also a cultural landmark along National Highway-48. It beckons travelers to pause, reflect, and immerse themselves in the profound beauty of this unique and sacred space, where the divine and the natural seamlessly converge in a captivating dance of spirituality. This Temple is seen over the lake which is a special premise.

## 2. AGATHEESHWARAR AND HIS CONSORT:

This Temple is one among the thousand eight Chola-built Shiva temples. This shrine houses "Agastheeshwarar" along with his consort "Anandhavalli" as the primitive and preferred deities. The deity has its name from the revered monk Agathiyar, who worshipped this "Shivalingam" many years ago, hence giving it its name. There is a belief that this idol was also worshipped by another great monk, Pathanjali, hence the place got its name as "Pathanjaliyur," further modernized as "Pathanjur," and eventually as "Palanjur."

Lord Shiva is considered a Suyambu Lingam, where he and his consorts are aligned in opposite postures. Moreover, there is a specialty – the "AAVUDAI," the place over which the idol is placed, is "square-shaped," indicating that only if a deity is worshipped by monks, it will be placed over such a shaped platform; otherwise, the idol will be placed only over a "circular-shaped" platform, which is shown in *figure 1* and *figure 2*.



*figure 1*

This Shivalingam is made of a rare type of "JADE/EMERALD" stone, which is precious and holds great significance.



*figure 2*

### 3. THE SANCTUM SANCTORUM:

When the shrine and deities were under the research there will always a notable thought that there might be something aesthetic about the sanctum sanctorum.[3] Yes, This Sanctum-sanctorum has a special feature than any other shrines. Usually the “Kalasam” or “The Metallic Kalash” over the sanctum will be only one but this temple holds “FIVE TEMPLE KALASH” moreover this scenario is almost never seen in any temple which holds a special claim of dignity.

### 4. NANDHI BHAGAVAN:

Rather than any other temple, this temple is distinguished by the presence of "The Great Pancha Nandhi." Each Nandhi depicts different emotions with distinct postures. [4] Apart from the legendary Thiruvaiyaru Temple, Nandhi Bhagavan is accompanied by his consort 'NANDHINEE'—a posture observed only in two of those temples. Usually, Nandhi Bhagavan is positioned inside the premises; however, there is a spiritual protocol mandating the placement of the Nandhi Bhagavan Mandapa outside the "GOPURAM." As depicted in *figure 3*,



*figure 3*

Within the temple premises, two additional Nandhi statues are placed in a lane facing towards the sanctum, with their heads tilted slightly left. The revered Pradhosam Pooja has never ceased since the temple's commencement, [6] signifying a perpetual sacred belief.

### 5. THE NAVAGRAHAMS:



*figure 4*

As considered in *figure 4*, There were many temples with Navagraha s-the nine planets along with their consorts [5] as this premises has more than that the Surya Narayanan (The Sun) here is stretched along a posture who is over the “CHARIOT WITH HORSES” which is never seen in any such shrine.

#### 6. THE KALA-SARPHA DHOSA:

The “KALAHASTHI TEMPLE” is known for the remedy for the kala-sarpa dhosam. Prevalently outside the shiva’s sanctum, “DHUVARA BALAGAS” were placed so that only if they give permission the devotee will be allowed near the sanctum is the belief but here the guards were “RAHU AND KETHU” as configured in *figure 5* and so it is considered as the shrine of relief from Kalasarpha dhosam.



*figure 5*

#### 7. SHREE KARPAGA VINAYAGAR:

This temple [7] has considered with lord Ganesh whose structure is similar to the Revered and Famous “PILLAYARPATTI KARPAGA VINAYAGAR” whose trunk-tip is hung towards the right side and who have shiva idol in his right hand which is shown in *figure 6*.

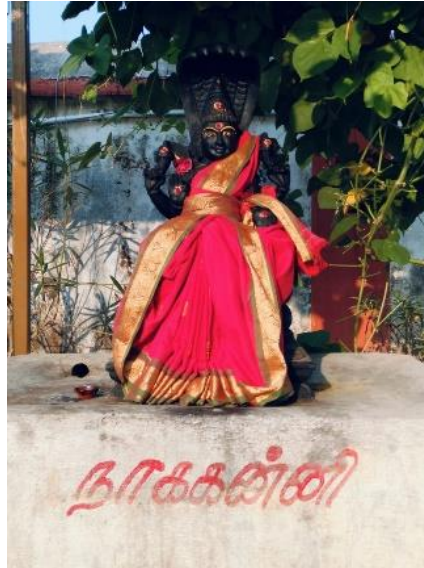


*figure 6*

#### 8. NAGAKANNI:

She is considered as shown in *figure 7*, as the daughter [8] of the village deity, ‘Nagathamman’ who is Remarkable for the “Nagadhosam” and the “kala-sarpa dhosam”





*figure 7*

#### **9. STHALA VIRUKSHAM:**



*figure 8*

Neem tree as seen in *figure 8* is considered as the ancient tree which was been there since the commencement of construction of this site.

#### **10. THE MYSTERIOUS UNDERGROUND TUNNEL:**

There is a mysterious underground tunnel which connects [9] this shrine to the renowned “EKAMBAREESHWARAR TEMPLE” in Kancheepuram.

#### **11. THE PREMISES:**

At the earlier stages, there were only a few idols in the temple.[10] Later, the temple was developed by the priests along with their well-wishers. Soon after the temple underwent development, some more idols were placed. Namely, Lord Subramanyam, Chitraguptha, Durga, Brahma, Ganapathi, Muneeshwarar along with the Seven Kannigal, Iyyapan, and Saneeshwarar were among the deities present.

This temple is naturally endowed with the "Five elements of nature" - heat as fire inside the temple, air surrounding the place, the sky above the temple, a watery shrine, and the temple itself placed above the land.

## 12. THE SCIENCES BEHIND THE ANCIENT HISTORY:

This temple was in practice before the practice of usage of the holy utensils named golden kalasas, which was not in existence when the cholas built this holy sancture.

The premise holds a special feature that is during the month of September [11] and November or December the sunlight rays and moonlight rays directly falls on the deity in such a way that this appearance of the deity is holding the light in a squared manner covering the deity brighter with the light rays and depicting it in a glorious and aesthetic manner.

As this temple has multiple scientific facts it specially correlates with the properties of rays since the sunlight and moonlight falls on the deity's sculpture.

## 13. CONSTRUCTION AND ARCHITECTURE:

Chola dynasty temple [13] architecture is celebrated for its opulence, meticulous craftsmanship, and impressive engineering. The Cholas, who held sway in southern India from the 9th to the 13th centuries, bequeathed an enduring legacy of temples that underscore their architectural and artistic prowess. Key characteristics of Chola temple architecture encompass,[14] to explore the development on how they built the shrine.

**13.1.Principal components** -- Vimana (Tower): Chola temples typically boast a pyramidal tower, known as the vimana, soaring above the sanctum sanctorum (garbhagriha). This vimana is adorned with intricate sculptures and often exhibits a pyramidal or tiered structure.

Mandapa (Hall): Temples feature expansive halls or mandapas, distinguished by elaborately carved pillars. These halls serve as venues for congregational activities, rituals, and occasionally function as entrances to the primary sanctum.

**13.2.Materials** -- Stone Carving: Chola temples are distinguished by their exquisite stone carvings, portraying mythological scenes, deities, and facets of daily life. The art of stone carving reached its zenith during the Chola period.

Bronze Casting: Beyond stone, the Cholas gained renown for their bronze casting. Bronze idols, particularly those depicting deities, were crafted using the lost wax technique and adorned the temple interiors.

**13.3. Sculptures and Iconography** – Deities and Mythological Figures: Chola temples are adorned with sculptures portraying various deities such as Shiva [12], Vishnu, and their consorts. Intricate carvings also depict mythological narratives and stories.

## 14.Dvarapalas (Guardians):

Impressive sculptures of dvarapalas, or doorkeepers, often stand guard at the entrances, imparting a sense of grandeur and protection.

This shrine compiles the “Snake” [“Rahu and Kethu”] as the guardian.

## 15.Temple Complex Layout:

**Prakara (Enclosure)** -- Chola temples typically encompass a rectangular enclosure wall, referred to as the prakara, which surrounds the main sanctum and other structures within the temple complex.

**Gopurams (Entrance Towers)** -- Ornate entrance towers, known as gopurams, mark the gateways to the temple complex. These gopurams are frequently adorned with sculptural reliefs.

**16.Engineering Marvels:**

**Dravidian Architectural Style** -- Chola temples exemplify the Dravidian architectural style, featuring pyramid-shaped towers, pillared halls, and extensive sculptural detailing.

**Kumbam (Kalasha)** -- At the summit of the temple tower, a distinctive bulbous structure known as kumbam or kalasha is often present, symbolizing cosmic energy.

**17.PROPERTIES OF RAYS:**

- ❖ With the reference and proof of Purkinje's effect. It is shown that the moonlight may show the appearance of bluish to the human eye despite the silver and blue colour is the illusion
- ❖ The reflection of sunlight over the greyish surface of the moon is the moonlight.
- ❖ The rays of sunlight with electromagnetic radiation which is emitted by sun which has a combination of visible, ultraviolet and infrared light.
- ❖ These rays with solar radiation have some properties of transmission, reflection, absorption.
- ❖ This light is a form of energy which travels at a speed of  $3 \times 10^8$  m/s
- ❖ It has a tendency to travel even through the vacuum
- ❖ It does not need any media for propagation
- ❖ It travels along a straight line
- ❖ It consists of particles called photons which was handled by many scientists and resulted with many laws with successful ideas.

Sunlight and moonlight are two essential components of Earth's natural illumination. Sunlight, originating from the Sun, is the primary source of daylight. It provides not only the necessary energy for photosynthesis, supporting plant life, but also influences Earth's climate and weather patterns. The Sun emits a broad spectrum of electromagnetic radiation, with sunlight encompassing various colours.

Moonlight, on the other hand, is the reflected sunlight that reaches the Moon and then returns to illuminate the Earth during the night. The Moon's surface, devoid of its light source, reflects varying amounts of sunlight, creating the phases of the moon. Moonlight is softer and less intense than sunlight due to the Moon's smaller size and reflective properties. Both sunlight and moonlight have cultural, ecological, and navigational significance, influencing human activities, wildlife behaviour, and celestial observations throughout history. The interplay between sunlight and moonlight continues to captivate and inspire scientific exploration and artistic expression alike.

**18.THE LOQUACIOUS JADE LINGAM AND ITS ESSENCE:**

The shiva lingam present here is exclusively sculptured with a versatile jade/emerald stone which is considered as one of the rarest stones in the earth [15]. Emeralds, revered for their lush green hues, exhibit diverse classifications based on colour, clarity, origin, and cut. Classic emeralds boast a pure green tone, while Pigeon's Blood emeralds display a rare red undertone. Variations include bluish-green or yellowish-green hues. Clarity grades distinguish between eye-clean stones and those with visible inclusions. Origin significantly influences quality, with Colombian emeralds prized for richness, Zambian for transparency, and Brazilian for unique hues. Different cuts, such as cabochon or faceted, enhance their brilliance. Treatments like oiling improve clarity. Buyers often seek certifications for authenticity, ensuring a thorough understanding of the emerald's unique characteristics and value.

**Conclusion:**

In conclusion, Palanjur Temple stands as a testament to the enduring spirit of faith and the seamless convergence of spirituality and nature. With its unique architecture, rare jade lingam, and rich cultural

significance, the temple offers visitors a profound and captivating experience. From its mystical underground tunnel to the remarkable presence of Pancha Nandhi, each aspect contributes to its allure. Palanjur Temple beckons seekers of solace and beauty to pause, reflect, and immerse themselves in its serene ambiance, where the divine and the natural coexist harmoniously, transcending time and space.

**Journal reference style:**

- [1]. G.Anitha,AbiramiManoharan,Hariprasath Manoharan, P. Ganesan “A Survey of Security Issues in IIoT and Fault Identification using Predictive Analysis in Industry 4.0”, vol 70 Issue 12,99-108, December 2022.
- [2]. Velmurugan and R. Kalaivanan (2020). The golden ratio in Tanjavur Brihadeeshwarartemple. 12 August 2019; Accepted: 4 June 2020; Published: 11 July 2020.
- [3]. P. Meenakshi (2017). HERITAGE AND IMPORTANCE OF LEGENDARY TEMPLES IN KANCHIPURAM. *International Journal of Advanced Trends in Engineering and Technology (IJATET)* Impact Factor: 5.665, ISSN (Online): 2456 – 4664.
- [4]. R. Vennila, Dr. A. Srinivasan (2017). THE CHOLA ARCHITECTURE: A DRAVIDAN STYLE GLEAND FROM KAILASANATHA TEMPLE AT SEMBIANMAHADEVI. *International Journal of Interdisciplinary Research in Arts and Humanities (IJIRAH)* Impact Factor: 4.675, ISSN (Online): 2456 – 3145.
- [5]. Gerd J.R. Mevissen ‘Chola Architecture and Sculpture at Chidambaram Home of Nataraja Edited by Vivek Nanda with George Michell Photographs by Bharat Ramamrutham Mumbai: Mārg publications (Vol. 55, No. 4), June 2004: 82-95.
- [6]. S. Anuradha (2017). HISTORICAL AND ICONOGRAPHICAL STUDY OF THE ASHTABHAIRAVA IMAGES IN SRI SATTANATHASWAMY TEMPLE AT SIRKAZHI. Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, 2012, Vol. 73 (2012), pp. 431-437.
- [7]. R. Vennila & Dr. A. Srinivasan THE CHOLA ARCHITECTURE: A DRAVIDAN STYLE GLEAND FROM KAILASANATHA TEMPLE AT SEMBIANMAHADEVI *International Journal of Interdisciplinary Research in Arts and Humanities (IJIRAH)* Impact Factor: 4.675, ISSN (Online): 2456 - 3145 ([www.dvpublication.com](http://www.dvpublication.com)) Volume 2, Issue 2, 2017
- [8]. Dr. Yalala Shivanand *International Journal of Interdisciplinary Research in Arts and Humanities (IJIRAH)* Impact Factor: 4.675, ISSN (Online): 2456 - 3145 ([www.dvpublication.com](http://www.dvpublication.com)) Volume 2, Issue 2, 2017
- [9]. Sandhya Durga Prasad, Dr. V.T. Bindu HERITAGE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT OF GREAT LIVING CHOLA TEMPLES: A STUDY ON VISITORS PERCEPTION AND GIS REPRESENTATION *Int. J. of Management and Social Sciences (IJMSS)*, Vol. 8 (2.1): pp. 114-120 (2019)
- [10]. N. INDHUMATHISOCIAL AND CULTURAL LIFE IN SOUTH INDIA DURING CHOLA EMPIRE RESEARCH EXPLORER-A Blind Review & Refereed Quarterly *International Journal* ISSN: 2250-1940 (P) 2349-1647 (O) Impact Factor: 3.655 (CIF), 2.78 (IRJIF), 2.62 (NAAS) Volume X, Issue 36 July-December 2022
- [11]. Dr. N. Neela and Dr. G. Ambrosia VIMANA ARCHITECTURE UNDER THE CHOLAS Vol. 3 No. 4 April 2016 ISSN: 2321 – 788X
- [12]. Dr.S. Iniyana History and Archaeological Wealth of Tamil Nadu with Accent on Tourism Angle *Scholars Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences Publishers (SAS Publishers)* (An International Publisher for Academic and Scientific Resources
- [13]. **C Arul Jothi S Ramaswamy** Pilgrimage Tourism: A Study on Palani Temple, Tamil Nadu
- [14]. S. Shobana MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS USED IN TEMPLE RITUALS Shanlax *International Journal of Arts, Science & Humanities*
- [15]. T. A. Gopinatha Rao Elements of Hindu Iconography. Delhi, Mothilal Banarsidass Publishers Private Limited, (Vol.1 and Vol.2)