CHAPTER - THREE

STRUCTURAL TEMPLES IN PUDUKKÓTTAI DISTRICT
3.1. Three Styles of Indian Architecture

Structural Temples are classified from different points of view. according to the size, Alpa and Mahá-Prásáda according to the number of floors (tala or bhúmi), ekatala dvitala, tritala etc., and according to their shape and design, chaturasra (square), vritta (circular), chaturasradirga (rectangular), hasti – prshtha (apsidal), vrttayata (elliptical) shat-kona (hexagonal) and ashtasra (octagonal). According to the Mánasaraagama and Suprabhedaagama, the three main styles of temple architecture are defined as follows:- Nágara is that in which the vimana was quadrangular through out, Vesara in which the vimana was crowned by a circular sikhara above the neck, and Dravida in which the vimana was crowned by an octagonal or hexagonal sikhara above the neck, and the Manasara adds an apsidal form in the case of both vesara and Dravida styles.

Architecture is one among the classifications of fine Arts. It is a predominant of all other fine Arts. It is the principal, visible and material record through the ages. It is considered to be the matrix of civilization. It is generally classified into two main divisions. They are Secular Architecture and Religious Architecture. Secular Architecture is in no way connected with any religion, or it does not have any religious motifs. On the basis of erection, or execution or creation the Architecture again classified into two divisions as, Rock-cut Architecture and Structural Architecture.
3.1.1. Nágara Architecture

The temples in Northern India are built according to a style known as the Nágara style. The Nágara style was developed during AD 5th century. This style is characterized by a beehive-shaped and multi-layered tower, called ‘Shikhara’. The layers of this tower are topped by a large round cushion-like element called ‘ámalaka’. The plan is based on a square but the walls are sometimes so segmented, that the tower appears circular in shape.

The Nágara style is typically characterized by the architectural wonder, which ideally portrayed the craftsmanship of the artists. A study of the temples of northern India reveals two distinct features. One of the distinctions is in planning and the other one is in elevation. In plan the temple was always a square with a number of graduated projections in the middle of each side. These projections give it a cruciform shape with a number of re-entrant angles on each side. In elevation it exhibits a tower or Sikhara, gradually inclining inwards in a convex curve.

The projections in the plan are also carried upwards to the top of the Sikhara, and thus there is strong emphasis on vertical lines in elevation. On account of this and the prominence of the vigorous and unbroken outline of the tower it is also known as the rekha Sikhara. The Nágara style is widely distributed over a greater part of India. It therefore, exhibits distinct verities and ramifications in different lines of evolution and elaboration that each locality chose for it. The cruciform plan and the curvilinear tower are, however, common to every medieval temple of northern India, wherever it is situated and whatever its local stamp might be. Nágara style of architecture, Development in six distinct regions. These can be mentioned as Orissa, Central India, Rajputana, Gujarat and Kathiwar, Deccan and
Sindhu-Ganga valleys. A brief description of the most important temples of Nágara style in northern India can be given.

3.1.1.1. The development of Nágara Architecture in Orissa

The development of the Nágara style took place in Orissa from the 7th to 13th century A.D. It has, therefore, probably more temples than in all the rest of northern India. The activity centered on Bhuvanesvara, which alone contains hundreds of temples. The three most important temples of Orissa are Muktesvara temple, Rájáránitemple and the LingaRája temple.

3.1.1.2. The Muktesvara Temple

The Muktesvara temple is regarded as a gem of Orissan architecture. A low enclosure wall embellished with sculptured niches surrounds it. The temple is entered through an elaborately ornamented takaratórana that forms a unique and fitting entrance to this small but exquisitely ornate and well-proportioned monument. The sikhara is of five storeys and shows on the central ratha beautifully carved Chaitya-dormer surrounded by a kirtmukha and flanked by two grinning dwarfs. This is the first temple wherein the shoulder partakes of the projections of Sikhara and the mandapa facade follows the same scheme of ornamentation as the sanctum with the addition of an ornate projection on each side. It is surrounded by a pediment and crowned by a lion figure.

3.1.1.3. Rájáráni Temple

The Rájáráni temple, dateable roughly to the early 11th century, represents a unique experiment in Orissa. Its sikhara is clustered by turrets including leaning spires and corner-spires, some of them crowned by double ámalakas, like the temples of central India such as those of Khajuraho.
3.1.1.4. Lingarāja Temple

The Lingarāja temple, dating from the 11th century is the grandest and loftiest temple marking the culmination of the architectural activity at Bhuvanesvara. This temple consists of the sanctum, a closed hall, a dancing hall and a hall of offerings. The sanctum is pancharatha on plan. The lower register of the wall is decorated with khakhara-mundis and the upper with pidhamundis. The khakharamundis contains on the corner rathas figures of eight Regents and on the flanking rathas miscellaneous friezes. The pidhamundis are inset with images of various Brahmanical gods and goddesses.

3.1.1.5. Puri Jagannath Temple

The famous temple of Jagannath at Puri is roughly contemporaneous with the Lingarāja. It shows the same mature plan as the latter, but is even loftier and is nearly 56.70 mts. High. The culmination of the style was reached in the Sun temple at Konarak, which marks even in its ruined state. This is the grandest achievement of the artistic and architectural genius of Orissa. The colossal temple originally consisted of a sanctum with a lofty curvilinear Sikhara, a Jagamohana and a detached elaborately carved square platform. The sanctum and the Jagamohana together stand on a common lofty platform. The sanctum has lost its super structure including the towering sikhara but shows three super images of the Sun God in the three cardinal niches. The battered wall of Jagamohana consists of horizontal tiers grouped in three stages with life-size female sculptures of great charm adoring each stage. This Jagamohana is unparalleled for its grandeur and structural propriety in the country, Majestic in conception and rich imagery, the temple not only marks the final
fulfillment of Orissan architecture but is one of the sublimest monuments of India.

3.1.1.6. Khajuraho Temple

In Central India the Kandariya Mahádeva is the largest and loftiest temple of Khajuraho. It is very magnificent and mature in plan. Its design and dimensions and also its superb sculptural embellishment and architectural elaboration is really enchanting. It is the most evolved and finished achievement of Central Indian building-style and one of the sublimest creations of Indian temple architecture. It is decorated with graded and ascending series of smaller replicas of it totaling 85.

The grand Sikhara of the temple is an intricately ornamented pile, somewhat restless in movement but unified in theme and design. Of all the Khajuraho temples, it has the loftiest base with several elegantly chiseled mouldings, which include two rows of processional friezes teeming with elephants and horses, warriors and hunters, acrobats and musicians, dancers and devotees, and erotic couples. The sculptures on three registers of its wall represent an animated array of gods and goddesses, couples and nymphs on projections. The sculptures on this temple are conspicuously tall and slender and show the richest variety of nymph-types in lively, often violently agitated postures.

3.1.1.7. Rajputana and Gujarat Temple

A beautiful variant of Nágara style is found in Rajputana and Gujarat. It is characterized by a free use of columns, carved with all imaginable richness, strut brackets, and exquisite marble sealing with cusped pendants.
The climax of the medieval architecture of the Rájasthán and Gujarat style was reached in the two Jaina Temples at Mount Abu. These two temples are known as vimalavasahi in the year 1031 and Luna Vasahi in 1230. Vastupala and Teapala built these two temples respectively. They were the two ministers of the later Solanki rulers of Gujarat. The Vimala Vasahi is dedicated to Adinatha. It shows a lately added entrance hall and a rectangular pavilion showing portraits, sculptures mounted on elephants. Prithvipala, a descendant of Vimala added the magnificent assembly hall in the year c. 1150.

The hall has lavishly ornamented pillars surmounted by attic sections, with multi cusped tarana-arches in between. The architraves are heavily ornamented and support a ceiling of ten diminishing rings loaded with bewildering wealth of carvings of which the most impressive are the 16 figures of the Vidyadevis. There is a magnificently designed central pendant. The rings are further decorated with friezes of elephants, goddesses, dancers, musicians, horse riders and female dancers. All of these are alternating with cusped and coffered courses. The ceilings and the architraves of the lateral bays of the assembly hall are lavishly embellished with carvings including narrative and mythological relieves.

The temple of Luna Vasahi, built two centuries later, illustrates further efflorescence of the style. It is accompanied by a richer elaboration of decoration. Its ceiling is slightly smaller in diameter but is carried equally lavishly and culminates in a larger and more delicately ornamented central pendant. It reveals the finest filigree work in metal. These temples constitute marvels of stone chiseling and with their minutely carved doorframes, niches, pillars, architraves and ceilings excel the rest of the ornamented temples of India.
3.1.2. Vesara Architecture

Vesara is a type of Indian architecture primarily used in temples. The two other prominent styles are Dravida and Nágara. Vesara is a combination of these two temple styles.

Etymologically, the term Vesara is believed to have been derived from the Sanskrit word vishra meaning an area to take a long walk. The quarters of Buddhist and Jain monks who left urban areas to live in cave temples were called viharas. This is also in conformity with the prevalence of Vesara style of architecture in the Deccan and central parts of South Asia vis-à-vis Nágara style prevalent in North India and Dravida style prevalent in South India.

Accordingly, the Vesara style contain elements of both Dravida and Nágara styles. The Vesara style is also described in some texts as the ‘Central Indian temple architecture style’ or ‘Deccan architecture’. However many historian agree that the vesara style originated in the what is today Karnataka. The trend was started by the Chalukyas of Badami (500-753AD) who built temples in a style that was essentially a mixture of the Nágara and the dravida styles, further refined by the Rashtrakutas of Manyakheta (750-983AD) in Ellora, Chalukyas of Kalyani (983-1195 AD) in Lakkundi, Dambal, Gadag etc. and epitomized by the Hoysalas (1000-1330 AD).

The Hoysalas temples at Belur, Halebidu and Somnathpura are supreme examples of this style. These temples are now proposed as a unesco world heritage site. It is understaood that the Virupaksha temple at Aihole and Pattadakal in northern Karnataka served as an inspiration for the design of the famous Khajuraho temples at Madhya Pradesh. Early temples constructed in this style include temples at Sirpur, Baijnath, Baroli and
Amarkantak. The temple complex at Khajuraho, a World Heritage Site, is a typical example of the Vesara style.

3.1.2.1. Badami Chalukya Architecture

The Badami Chalukyas also called the Early Chalukyas, ruled from Badami, Karnataka in the period AD 543 - 753 and spawned the Vesara style called Badami Chalukya Architecture. The finest examples of their art are seen in Pattadakal, Aihole and Badami in northern Karnataka. Over 150 temples remain in the Malaprabha basin.

The most enduring legacy of the Chalukya dynasty is the architecture and art that they left behind. More than one hundred and fifty monuments attributed to the Badami Chalukya, and built between 450 and 700, remain in the Malaprabha basin in Karnataka.

The rock-cut temples of Pattadakal, a unesco World Heritage Site, Badami and Aihole are their most celebrated monuments. Two of the famous paintings at Ajanta cave no. 1, "The Temptation of the Buddha" and "The Persian Embassy" are attributed to them. This is the beginning of Chalukya style of architecture and a consolidation of South Indian style.

3.1.2.2. Rashtrakutas

The Rashtrakutas who ruled the deccan from Manyakheta, Gulbarga district, Karnataka in the period AD 753 - 973 built some of the finest dravidian monuments at Ellora (the Kailasanatha temple), in the rock cut architecture Development. Some other fine monuments are the Jaina Narayana temple at Pattadakal and the Navalinga temples at Kuknur in Karnataka.
The Rashtrakutas contributed much to the culture of the Deccan. The Rashtrakuta contributions to art and architecture are reflected in the splendid rock-cut shrines at Ellora and Elephanta\textsuperscript{58}, situated in present day Mahárashtra. It is said that they altogether constructed 34 rock-cut shrines, but most extensive and sumptuous of them all is the Kailasanatha temple at Ellora. The temple is a splendid achievement of Dravidian art. The walls of the temple have marvellous sculptures from Hindu mythology including Ravana, Śiva and Parvathi while the ceilings have paintings.

### 3.1.2.3. Western Chalukya Architecture

The Western Chalukyas also called the Kalyani Chalukyas or Later Chalukyas ruled the deccan from AD 973 - 1180 from their capital Kalyani in modern Karnataka and further refined the Chalukyan style, called the Western Chalukya architecture. Over 50 temples exist in the Krishna River-Tungabhadra doab in central Karnataka. The Kasi Vishveshvara at Lakkundi, Mallikarjuna at Kuruvatii, Kalleshwara temple at Bagali and Mahádeva at Itagi are the finest examples produced by the Later Chalukya architects.

The reign of Western Chalukya dynasty was an important period in the development of architecture in the deccan. Their architectural developments acted as a conceptual link between the Badami Chalukya Architecture of the 8th century and the Hoysala architecture popularised in the 13th century. The art of Western Chalukyas is sometimes called the “Gadag style” after the number of ornate temples they built in the Tungabhadra - Krishna River doab region of present day Gadag district in Karnataka. Their temple building reached its maturity and culmination in the 12th century, with over a hundred temples built across the deccan, more than half of them in present day Karnataka\textsuperscript{59}. Apart from temples they are
also well known for ornate stepped wells (Pushkarni) which served as ritual bathing places, many of which are well preserved in Lakkundi. Their stepped well designs were later incorporated by the Hoysalas and the VijayaNāgara empire in the coming centuries.

3.1.2.4. Hoysala Architecture

The Hoysala kings ruled southern India during the period AD (1100-1343) from their capital Belur and later Halebidu in Karnataka and developed a unique idiom of architecture called the Hoysala architecture in Karnataka state. The finest examples of their architecture are the Chennakesava Temple in Belur, Hoysaleswara temple in Halebidu, and the Kesava Temple in Somanathapura. The modern interest in the Hoysalas is due to their patronage of art and architecture rather than their military conquests. The brisk temple building throughout the kingdom was accomplished despite constant threats from the Pāṇdyas to the south and the Seunas Yadavas to the north. Their architectural style, an offshoot of the Western Chalukya style, shows distinct Dravidian influences. The Hoysala architecture style is described as Karnataka Dravida as distinguished from the traditional Dravida, and is considered an independent architectural tradition with many unique features.

3.1.3. Dravidian Architecture

Dravidian architecture was a style of architecture that emerged thousands of years ago in the Indian subcontinent. They consist primarily of pyramid shaped temples which are dependent on intricate carved stone in order to create a step design consisting of numerous statues of deities, warriors, kings, and dancers. The majority of the existing buildings are located in the Southern Indian states of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh,
Kerala, and Karnataka. Various kingdoms and empires such as the Pallavas, Cholas, Pándyan, Chera, Chalukyas, Rashtrakutas, Hoysalas, Náyák and VijayaNágara Empire amongst the many others have made a substantial contribution to the evolution of Dravidian architecture through the ages. Dravidian styled\textsuperscript{61} architecture can also be found in parts of Northeastern Šr Łanka, Maldives, and various parts of Southeast Asia.

3.1.3.1. Pallava Architecture

The Pallavas ruled from AD (600-900) and their greatest constructed accomplishments are the single rock temples in Mahábalipuram and their capital Kanchipuram, now located in Tamilnadu.

South Indian architecture the earliest examples of temples in the Dravidian style belong to the Pallava period. The earliest examples of Pallava constructions are rock-cut cave temples dating from 610 - 690 AD and structural temples between 690 – 900 AD. The greatest accomplishments of the Pallava architecture are the rock-cut temples at Mahábalipuram. There are excavated pillared halls and monolithic shrines known as rathas in Mahábalipuram\textsuperscript{62}. Early temples were mostly dedicated to Śhiva. The Kailasanatha temple also called Rájasimha Pallava in Kanchipuram built by Narasimhavarman II also known as Rájasimha is a fine example of the Pallava style temple. Mention must be made here of the Shore Temple constructed by Narasimhavarman II near Mahábalipuram which is a unesco World Heritage Site.

Many Śiva and Vishnu temples at Kanchi built by the great Pallava emperors and indeed their incomparable Rathas and the Arjuna's penance Bas Relief are proposed unesco World Heritage Sites. The continuous Chola, Pallava and Pandiyan belt temples, as well as the Sethupathy temple
group between Pudukkóttai and Rameswaram uniformly represent the pinnacle of the South Indian Style of Architecture that surpasses any other form of architecture prevalent between the Deccan Plateau and Kanniya Kumari. Needless to add that in the Telugu country the style was more or less uniformly conforming to the South Indian or Dravidian idiom of architecture.

3.1.3.2. Chola Architecture

The Chola kings ruled from AD (848-1280) and included Rájarája Chola I and his son Rájéndra Chola who built temples such as the Brihadeshvara Temple of Thanjavur and Brihadeshvara Temple of Gangaikonda Cholapuram, the Airateswara Temple of Darasuram and the Sarabeswara (Śiva )Temple, also called the Kampahareswarar Temple at Thirubhuvanam, the last two temples being located near Kumbakonam. The first three among the above four temples are titled Great Living Chola Temples among the unesco World Heritage Sites.

The Cholas were prolific temple builders right from the times of the first king Vijayálaya Chola after whom the eclectic chain of Vijayálaya Chozhisvaram temple near Nárttámalai exists. These are the earliest specimen of Dravidian temples under the Cholas. His son Áditya I built several temples around the Kanchi and Kumbakonam regions.

Temple building received great impetus from the conquests and the genius of Áditya I, Parántaka I, Sundara Chola, Rájarája Chola and his son Rájéndra Chola I. The maturity and grandeur to which the Chola architecture had evolved found expression in the two temples of Tanjavur and Gangaikondacholapuram. In a small portion of the Kaveri belt between Tiruchy, Tanjore, Kumbakonam, at the height of their power, the Cholas
have left over 2300 temples, with the Tiruchy, Thanjavur belt itself boasting of more than 1500 temples. The magnificent Śiva temple of Thanjavur built by Rājarāja I in A.D 1009 as well as the Brihadisvara Temple of Gangaikonda Cholapuram, completed around A.D 1030, are both fitting memorials to the material and military achievements of the time of the two Chola emperors. The largest and tallest of all Indian temples of its time, the Tanjore Brihadisvara is at the apex of South Indian architecture. In fact, two succeeding Chola kings Rāja Rāja II and Kulothunga III built the Airavateswarar Śiva Temple at Darasuram and the Kampahareswarar Śiva Temple at Tribhuvanam respectively, both temples being on the outskirts of Kumbakonam around A.D 1160 and A.D 1200. All the four temples were built over a period of nearly 200 years reflecting the stability and prosperity of Chola rule and their glory.

The temple of Gangaikondacholapuram, the creation of Rājéndra Chola, was intended to exceed its predecessor in every way. Completed around 1030, only two decades after the temple at Thanjavur and in much the same style, the greater elaboration in its appearance attests the more affluent state of the Chola Empire under Rājéndra . This temple has a larger Śiva linga than the one at Thanjavur but the Vimana of this temple is smaller in height than the Thanjavur vimana.

3.1.3.3. Vijayanagar Architecture

The whole of South India was ruled by Vijayanagar Empire from AD (1343-1565), who built a number of temples and monuments in their hybrid style in their capital Vijayanagar in Karnataka. Their style was a combination of the styles developed in South India in the previous centuries. In addition, the Yali columns (pillar with charging horse), balustrades (parapets) and ornate pillared manatapa are their unique contribution. King
Krishna Deva Raya and others built many famous temples all over South India in Vijayanagar Architecture style.

Vijayanágara architecture\textsuperscript{64} is a vibrant combination of the Chalukya, Hoysala, Pándya and Chola styles, idioms that prospered in previous centuries. Its legacy of sculpture, architecture and painting influenced the development of the arts long after the empire came to an end. Its stylistic hallmark is the ornate pillared Kalyanamantapa (marriage hall), Vasanthamantapa (open pillared halls) and the Rayagopura (tower). Artisans used the locally available hard granite because of its durability since the kingdom was under constant threat of invasion. While the empire's monuments are spread over the whole of Southern India, nothing surpasses the vast open air theatre of monuments at its capital at VijayaNágara, a unesco World Heritage Site.

In the 14th century the kings continued to build Vesara or Deccan style monuments but later incorporated dravida-style Gópurams to meet their ritualistic needs.

\textbf{3.1.4. The Essential parts of the Hindu Temple}

\textbf{3.1.4.1. Garbhagraha}

The most important part of a temple, its very heart as it were, is the garbhagrha or sanctum sanctorum. This is usually square with a low roof and with no doors or windows except for the front opening. The image of the deity is satationed in the geometrical centre. The whole place is completely dark, except for the light that comes through the front opening. Over the roof of the whole shrine is a smaller tower. This tower is quite hight in the North Indian temples and of low or medium height in the South Indian temples.
3.1.4.2. Lingam

Lingam – “Li” in the word lingam indicates Layam (getting in to union) and Gam means ‘comes out’ or Manifest. The word lingam denoted Kuri (symbol) derived from the Sanskrit. Derivative root lingam chitreeekarani i.e that which performs wonderful act, as God’s act of being with all liging being and at the same time apart from them, is wonderful.

3.1.4.3. Vimana

Vimana (Temple with its towers) have been sought to be erected and not for the sake of god. The place where the chief deity is installed in the sanctum is called Garbagraha and the tower over it is called vimana. Gópuram is the sthula linga. Vimanas without manam means measure degree. The gross vimana for god indicate that; His immeasurable form pervades all (Virats varupa) and is every where (Viswarupi) and hence this indicate his immeasurability. He is the greatest of the great and the atoms. The gross tower which is visible denotes not only the visible sthula but also the invisible sukshms and karana bodies which are immeasurable and hance it indicates the invisible aspect of God.

3.1.4.4. Antarala

Anrarala, a narrow passage connecting the garbhagraha and the mukhamandapa to the mandapa (pavilion or hall). As already stated, in most of the temples the antarala is identical with mukhamandapa or sukanasi. The mandapa the nrttamandapa (also called nrttamandapa ornavaranga) is a big hall used for or congregational religious acts like singing, dancing recitation of mythological texts, religious discourses and so on.
3.1.4.5. Mukhamandapa

In front of the garbhagrha and contiguous to it is the mukhamandapa, sometimes called sukanasi or ardhamantapa, sometimes called sukanasi or ardhamandapa, depending upon its proportion relative to that of the garbhagrha. Apart from being used as a passage, it is also used to keep the articles of worship including naivedya (food offerings) on special occasions.

3.1.4.6. Balipitha

The balipitha (pedestal of sacrificial offerings) with a lotus or the footprints of the deities is fixed near the dhvajastambha, but nearer to the deity. Red-coloured offerings like rice mixed with vermillion power, are kept on this at appropriate stages, during the performance of rituals. This indicates the feeding of the parivaradevatas (attendant and associate deities).

3.1.4.7. Dhvajastambha

The dhvajasambha (flagpost) in front of either the garbhagrha or antarala or the mantapa is another common feature. It represents the flagpost of the “king of kings. The lanchana (insignia) made of copper or brass fixed like a flag to the top of the post varies according to the deity in the temple. The figure on the lanchana is invariably that of the vahana (carrier vehicle) of the deity. For instance, in Śiva temples it contain Nandi. In Śiva temples it is the lion that finds its place. In Vishnu temples Garudgets that honour.

3.1.4.8. Yagasala, Pakasala And Puskarni

A part from these, the temple precincts include a yagasala, (sacrificial shed), pakasala (cooking shed) and kitchen, place for the utsavamurth
(processional images carried during the car festivals), well or a puskaini (tank) flower garden, stores and other essential structures connected with the management of the temple as also the rituals.

3.1.5. Evolution of the Gópuras

Like the sky – scrapers of the Western World, it is the Gópuram that dominates the South Indian landscape. It is the main gateway of a temple, the unique achievement and glory of Dravidian art. It has been pointed out that “in the boldness of its marvellous execution, it remains unsurpassed” and judged by any standard, its stands favourable comparision with any other form of architecture, Eastern or Western.

In the days of the supremacy of Buddhism in India, stupas were built all over the land, and tóranas were erected at the four cardinal points to serve as gateways to these monuments as a Barhut, sanchi, Amaravati and Nagarjunakonda. The tóranas of Sanchi richly ornamented with bas-reliefs illustrating the events of Buddha’s life as well as stories of his previous births (jataka stories) are really marvellous monuments of this class. And some of the bas-relief on slabs which once covered the stupa itself contain representations of gateways to cities, palaces and fortresses, they are generally two – storeyed, crowned by a sala type of pavilion resembling a wagon-roof.

James Fergusson held the view that the term Gópurams applied to the lofty towers over the entrances to Southern temples and that “the later style of Gópuram dates from the sixteenth century and do not properly belong to the original Dravida temples. They were probably intended for purposes of defence against invasion and plunder”. The question of the erection of walls of enclosure of temples for the purpose of defence did not arise before the
invasion of South India by the Muslims in the 14th century and later on during the Anglo–French wars of the 18th century. Even the officers of the Archaeological Department believed that the tall Gópurams were the creation of only Pândyan and Vijayanágara rulers. But these views are outdated and have to be given up. Gpurams with three, five and seven storys were built even during the period of the Chola rulers of Tanjavur i.e. even from the 9th century A.D. onwards.

3.1.5.1. Kalinga

In kalinga, the Buddhist torana model was adapted to a Hindu temple. One of the finest of the existing ornamental tóranas resting on two stout, fluted pillars is found at the entrance to the Mukteavara temple at Bhuvaneswar (early 10th century A.D) but there were perhaps earlier examples of this type. We shall deal with development of the Gópuram during the pallava and chola periods.

3.1.5.2. Pallava

The Draupati ratha at Mamallapuram is a monolithic temple dedicated to Durga and its entrance is surmounted by a beautiful makara-torana. The sikharas of the Bhima and the Ganesa rathas in the same place furnish the prototype for the wagon-roof feature of the later Gópurams (Sala-type pavilion).

The taller structural shore-temple at Mamallapuram has a gateway in the front wall of the sanctum topped by a Sala type pavilion. There are guardian deities on either side of the gateway. Here for the first time in South India, the torana has given way to a new style of gateway.
3.1.5.3. Chola

The fine tradition in temple-building established by the Pallavas was carried to greater heights by the Cholas. “There are contemporary inscriptions which refer to the building of Gópuram, but I have been unable to find a photograph or description of any extant early chola Gopura.

There is another equally ancient and interesting Gópuram in front of the Sundaréśvarar temple in the neighbouring village of Melappaluvur, a mile away from Kilaiyur. Both the temples belong to the period of Áditya I (A.D. 871).

The next forward step is found in the great temple built at Tanjavur by RájaRája I (A.D.1004 -1014). It is not only the biggest and grandest of Dravidian temples, but is one of the finest products of Indian achievement in Architecture. There are two Gópurams in front in the middle of the two concentric walls of enclosure, both these Gópurams are shorter than the vimana.

The next important development in this sphere of South Indian Art and Architecture is the evolution of the seven-storeyed Gópuram under the patronage of the later Cholas, from Kulottunga I to Kulottunga III (A.D. 1070 to 1216). And now, the centre of gravity in this field of art shifts to Chidambaram. In this period, the Gópuram dwarfs the vimana and dominates the temple-complex and the ever-enlarging temple-city. In spite of this new development, the essential features of the Tanjavur example were still followed at Darasuram and Tribhuvanam.
3.2. Development of Pudukkóttai Temple Architecture

The Pudukkóttai temples are of more than local interest. The geographical position of the State accounts for the existence within it of structures belonging to all the most important epochs of south Indian architectural history.

The ‘Chola’ Architecture Development in A.D. 850 and 1100, covers the period of the Vijayálaya line of kings and takes us to the beginning of the Chola-Chalukya line. To the first 150 years of this period, ending about the middle of the reign of RájaRája the Great belongs a group of interesting temples in the State, all completely built of stone from basement to finial. These are the Vijayálaya chólisvaram at Nárttámalai the Śiva temples at Kaliyápatti, Viśalúr, Tiruppúr, and Panangudi (A.D.850 to 871), the Śiva temple at Tirukkattalai, the Mukdéśvara temple at Kodumbálúr, the Bálasubrahamananya temple at Kannanúr (A.D.871 to 907), the Tiruvagniśvara temple at Cittar (A.D.907 to 953), the Múvarkóvil at Kodumbálúr, the Kadambarkóvil at Nárttámalai (A.D.950 to 1000).

The garbhagrham is square except in the Vijayálaya Chólisvaram, where it is circular but enclosed within a square prákáram, which helps to support the vimánam. The walls are decorated with pilasters, and sometimes with dévagosthas or niches. The decorations of the kalaśam and kumbham of the pilasters are simple. The pódigai or corbel is ordinarily of the Pallava type with roll-mouldings, but in some temples – for example in the Tirukkattalai temple instead of a roll at the lower edge of the curved part of the corbel there is a concave moulding. The dévagosthas are surmounted by double arched tórana. The figures in the niches are in bas-relief in the earlier temples and in high relief in the later ones.
The kapôtam or cornice is deep and has a single convex curve, ornamented with kúdus, the finials of which are trifoliate not spade shaped like those of the normal pallava type. The angles of the cornice are ornamented with the elaborate scrollwork known as karukku, and its lower edge displays indentations, or inverted scollops, intended to suggest lotus petals.

In some temples there is a row of bútaganas immediately below the cornice. The cupola surmounting the garbhagrham is plain and consists of a grivam or base, supporting a śikharam or dome, crowned by the stupi or finial. In the Vijayalachólísvaram temple at Nárttámalai there are several storeys supporting the cupola proper. Each storey has a pancaram or turret like a miniature cupola at each corner. The grivam has always a dévagóstham on each side, and the śikharam, a large kúdu on each face surmounted by a simhalalátam. The use of brick in the upper part of the vimánam came into vogue in the second half of this epoch.

The upapitham or plinth consists of the upanam, the kumudam and the varimabnam. The latter has a row of lions, heads larger than we find in the Pallava style, interrupted at the corners by the heads of makharas.

The essential character of the bulbous capitals of this period is the large size of the palagai or abacus. The plain bevelled corbels of the earlier examples have a central triangular projection like a tenon, after about the 11th century.

Another interesting motif of the later years of this epoch decorative pilaster, which developed into the kumbapancaram with its vasiform base of the 14th century and later. This is a broad flat pilaster, rising from a vase-
shaped base, and terminating in a complicated ornament supported by a rearing horse forming a bracket on either side, and consisting of a sort of medallion, out of which rises something resembling a candelabrum flanked by two makhara heads.

The Pándya style lasted from 1100 to 1350 A.D. Chola-Chalukya line, which came to an end in 1280 A.D. Owing to the weakening of the central authority of the Cholas and the discontinuance of the Chola-Pándya viceroyys, the Pándya power gradually developed, and in the reign of Jatávarman Sundara Pándya I (A.D. 1251) attained the hegemony of South India. The Pándya style, is intermediary between the Chola and Vijayanagar styles. The central vimánam becomes comparatively insignificant instead of being, as it is at Tanjore, by far the most prominent feature.

In this period the plain tenon-shaped corbel-end is elaborated into a conventional pendent flower the puspabodikai, and its sides are ornamented with bold conventional foliage. Where the old form of the corbel persists, the sides behind the bevel are cut into perpendicular grooves. In the centre of the kúdu is a completely circular recess surrounded by a roll-moulding; conventional foliage issues from the mouth of the lion in the finial and spreads out on each side of the upper part of the circular recess. Similar foliage sweeps round the lower half, and unites beneath it.

The pancarams or turrets, are elevated by the introduction of a base called the karnakúdu. Brick was substituted for stone in their construction, and this explains why the upper parts of many temples of this style state are now in runins, while the earlier temples built completely in stone are better preserved.
The palagai or abacus of the pillar now becomes smaller and below it we find a scolloped member called the idal suggesting lotus petals. The octagonal shaft with the square base now display the nagapadam, a novel ornament at the junction of shaft and base representing the head of a serpent, more or less conventionalized, and ultimately to become unrecognizable.

A large number of temple in the state belong to this style, and among them the Rájéndra Chólisvaram at Ponnamaravati, and the Šiva temples at Tiruvarangulam, Tirumananjeri, Kolattúr, Karaiyur, Perumanadu, Puttambur, and Irumbanadu. The Amman temples at Ponnamaravati the Šiva and Amman shrines at Kúdumiyánmalai and several mantapams in the latter temple and in the Tirumayam Šiva and Vishnu temples were erected in the 13th century.

3.2.1. Development of pillared hall mandapa in pudukkóttai district temples

Mandapams are built within the temple or outside for the installation of the utsava-the processional deities-or as halting places for the visiting devotees. The entrance of the mandapam may face any cardinal point. The mandapam is supported by huge massive pillars. The number of pillars may vary from four to a few hundreds, as found in many big temples in Tamil Nadu. The roof of the mandapam is made of stone slabs supported by beams in between the pillars. The number of pillars found in the temples and their mandapams is one of the important features of Dravidian temple architecture. The style and type of the pillar may vary from period to period. A Dravidian pillar consists of the following parts, kalašam, Tadi, kumbam, kamalam, Palagai and Podhigai.
The pillars in the mandapam of the temple are of different shapes. They may be Chaturasa Stamba (square pillar), Vartula Stamba (circular pillar), Panchakona Stamba (pentagonal pillar), Shatkona Stamba (hexagonal pillar), Ashtakona Stamba (octagonal pillar), Dwadasakona stamba (twelve faced pillar), and Shodasakona Stamba (sixteen faced pillar). It is not necessary that throughout its’ height the pillar should be of uniform shape. It may be four faced at the bottom and six faced at little high up and four faced again at the top or circularly shaped throughout the full length of the shaft with four face again at the top and bottom and so on. The style of the podhigai differs from period to period and it is an identifying feature to fix period of construction. It is usual to find on the huge pillars of the mandapams, carvings of parrots, pigeons, peacocks, trees, armed soldiers, monkeys, deer, lions, yalis or images of gods and goddesses, celestial gandarvas, kinnaras and Yakshis.

The pillared halls (mantapam) in the temples in the state belong mostly to the vijayanagar and madura styles. The principal idols are taken in procession to these halls during festivals. The mantapam took the form of a long corridor in the ‘Madura’ period. Examples of such corridors are to be found at Tirugókarnam, Tiruvéngaivášal, Kúdumiyánmalai and Tiruvarangulam, but none of them is comparable in extent to the corridors of Ramesvaram.

The pillars in the Vijayanagar structures found in the State temples have the following peculiarities. The base is invariably decorated. The rectangular bands at the bottom and top are often ornamented. The pillars are massive and generally cubical in section. In the State we miss the monolithic pillars with a number of small columns with bulbous capitals sculptured on their sides, that we see at Madura or Suchindram. There are
however, massive monolithic pillars, called aniyottikkal, oblong in section, set at right angles to the axis of the corridor which they flank and elaborately sculptured with figures of Gods, chief tains, worshippers, demigods, or women bearing lamps.

The Kúdumiyanmalai and Ammankurichi temples have the best specimens of such pillars. The sides of such pillars are often sculptured in high and low relief. The stone slabs forming the roofs of the corridors or pavilions are often supported by carved lions or rearing horses placed above the pillars. The style of these structures though elaborate is debased and the carving coarse. Many temples in the State have sculptures of chiefs, Kalla and Marava chieftains or other donors. They are generally sculptured in the attitude of worship on the pillars of the front halls. How far they are conventional effigies or types rather than real portraits, it is impossible to say. They presumably reproduce the details of contemporary costumes, jewellery, etc., and are on that account of interest to the archeologist.

3.2.1. Múvarkóvil in Kodumbálúr

Kodumbálúr lies about 25 miles from the town of Pudukkóttai, and is a famous place of ancient renown in Tamil Nadu State, on the road to Kudimiyannmalai and Manaparai.

3.2.1.1. Puranical History

It is said in the Silappadikaram, and earliest Tamil epic of the golden age of Tamil literature, to have been situated in a strategic position of importance on the high road then in use between Uraiyyur, the Chola capital, and Madurai, the capital of the Pándyas. The Tamil work Periapuranam calls it the chief city of Konadu, Konattuk-kodiNágaram. It was formerly a
flourishing capital city ruled by a dynasty of Vélîrs called Irukkuvélîs, who were connected by blood with the Cholas but politically were subordinate to them. Idangalinayanar, who is reversed as one of the 63 Saivaite saints and mentioned in the Tiruthandakam by Sundaramurti was a King of this Vélîr dynasty. He was the patron of the Saivas, and an ancestor of the Chola King Vijayálaya, the founder of the Imperial Chola line, and his son Ádîtya were connected with this dynasty. Another prince of the line was Bhuti Vikramâ Kesari who built the Mûvarkôvil.

Kodumbálûr has taken different names at different times such as Irukuvélur (the town of the Irukkuvélîs), and Mangammal Samudram in recent times, when it was given away as an inam by Queen Mangammal to Dalavoy Lakshmi Narasayya on the birth day of Vijaya Ranga Chokkanatha. However its present name Kodukbalur is its oldest denomination which has persisted through the centuries.

3.2.1.2. Mûvarkôvil

The Mûvarkôvil holds an honoured place in the evolution of both South Indian architecture and sculpture. Originally there were three shrines side by side at the Mûvarkôvil temple. Out of these three, only two, the central and southern are now intact. Of the third or the northern shrine, the basement alone remains. Each shrine was composed of a garbhagriha and a closed ardhamandapa attached to its front. The three shrines stood side by side in a line with the distance of 13 feet apart from one to another. Each shrine is 21 feet square at the base with 32 feet high and the ardhamandapa measuring 18 feet square. All of them face west. There was a Mahámandapa 91 feet by 41 feet, common to all the three shrines, and a nandimandapa the basement of which has now been exposed to view. In front of the nandimandapa is the base of what must have been either a dvajas shrines,
each having a garbhagriha and an ardhamandapa, the basements of fourteen of which are now intact. Surrounding these sub-shrines was the tirumadil (boundary wall), a massive stone wall 3’ X 4’ in thickness with two openings, one underneath a gopura and another, near the north-eastern corner leading down by a flight of stone steps to a circular stone well 10 feet in diameter. It is very probable that there was a covered cloister all round the inside of the tirumadil linking together the sub-shrines.

Each of the existing two shrines is 32 feet high from ground level. They are built completely from basement to finial of well dressed gneiss blocks neatly and accurately fitted. Their walls are 5 feet in thickness. When viewed from inside the shrine chamber, the roof is seen to be composed of a number of courses of cut stones projecting one above the other.

The opening on top is closed by a single roof slab. According to the tradition and report, the stones of the fort of this place were transported to Tiruchirappalli for the building of the Tiruchirappalli fort, and the materials of the Muvarkóvil were used for the construction of the ‘fresh-water pond’ in front of the Muchukundéswara temple in this village, of a calingula in Minavelli village, and of the Śiva temple in Tiruchirappalli.

The plinth of each of the three central shrines rests on a lotus base. The kumudam is curvilinear as in all early temples, and above it runs a frieze of vyalas with projecting a makhara heads, with human figures sporting inside their gaping mouths. At each of the corners a makhara head juts out with its snout coiled up and with a gandharva. The walls are decorated with a series of tetragonal pilasters crowned with kumbam, kamalam and palagai successively. The palagai is large and massive, as in late Pallava and early Chola temples. The capitals are adorned with elegant scroll-work. The
Corbels are brackets with angular beveling, and the lower surfaces of the bracket-capitals is decorated with horizontal rows of roll ornament with a slightly raised band in the middle. But these rolls are not uniform as the Pallava structures. One of them in each corbel curves inwards.

The walls in the exterior side are provided with niches in the middle. Over the niches in the walls are curved in low relief arched tóranas spring from the mouths of a pair of makharas. On top of the walls and below the cornice runs a frieze of bhútaganas, a sort of cherules playing on different kinds of musical instruments. Above the wall runs a cornice which is as in the Pallava structures, thick and single arched and ornamented at close intervals along its whole length with kúdus crowned with trifoliated, finials instead of the spade shaped finals, found in the Pallava structures. In addition to this, the cornice in all its corners and the kúdus in it are carved with scroll work and its lower edge is also carved throughout its length with a series of semi-circles simulating lotus petals. Over the cornice are the vyalavari with heads of makharas jutting out at the corners. All these features occur invariably in structure of this type.

Each of the two intact shrine is crowned by a vimana rising in three tiers but diminishing in size. Each tier is being separated by a thick and single arched cornice which is similar to the tower most cornice in all its minor details. In the storey just above the first cornice, a small structure called kutam is placed in each of the four corners with a four sided curvilinear roof and a small four-sided finial above it. In the middle of each corner is the model of a building called salai with a wagon-shaped roof which reaches the second cornice. There are pilasters on either side of the wagon-roofed tops.
The neck (griva) below the ‘roof’ is also four sided with a niche projecting in the middle of each side. A row of bhútaganas runs round its edge close below the roof. In each of the corners of the topmost storey a seated bull is placed facing outwards. This is evidently to show that the temple is dedicated to Śiva. The roof portion terminates with two rectangular slabs one above the other, the lower one called ratnapitha and the upper one kamalapitha the latter is drawn out into petals. On the top a finial fits into a close fitting sockets in the centre of the kamalapitha. From what are left of the sub-shrines we may infer that their architectural features were similar to those of the central shrines.

### 3.2.1.3. Inscriptions

Kodumbálúr is mentioned as the scene of an engagement in the 8th century in which the Pándya King Maravarman Rájasimha (c. 740-765 A.D.), defeated the Pallava King Nandivarman Pallavamalla. The Sendalai records which are full of the exploits of Perumbigugu Suravan Maran-Muttaraiya chief and a contemporary and ally of Pallava-malla identify him with Satrubayankara, and attributes a victory at Kodumbai (Kodumbálúr)as having defeated the Pándyas and Cheras. Satrubayankara means “the terror of enemies”, and is almost synonymous with Satrukesari meaning “a lion to his enemies”. The Sanscrit inscription (No. 14in the Pudukkóttai State Inscriptions – 1929) in Grantha characters in the Muvarkóvil gives the genealogy of the Irukkuvéls from a King whose name is unfortunately illegible to Bhuti Vikramakesari, perhaps the greatest of them all. He was a contemporary of Madurantaka Sundara Chola Parántaka II and Áditya II.

The Irukkuvéls as the staunch allies and vassals of the Cholas, helped them in all their battles. The Sinnamanur plates of the sixteenth year (c. 916 A.D.) of the Pándya Rájasimha II give an embellished account of a surprise
victory that he won over the Vélir forces at Kodumbálúr in a was which ended, however, in the triumph of the Chola Parántaka I and his Vélir ally. During the Pándya wars in the reign of Sundara Chola Parántaka II, one of the commanders of the Chola forces was prince Parantakan Siriya Vélir of Kodumbálúr. In the reign of Rája Rája the Great, another Kodumabalur chief marched on an expedition to the north, evidently to Nolambapadi and Gangapadi, now parts of Karnataka State. We do not hear much of the Irukkuvéls after the reign of Rájéndra I, and nothing remains now of the past glory of Kodumbálúr except the Múvarkóvil and Muchukundéśvara temples.

There is a Kannada inscription on three stones built into the bund of the holy tank in front of the Muchukundéśvara temple. It mentions Vikramakesari-griham, which name must refer to the Múvarkóvil.

On the south wall of the central shrine of Múvarkóvil is a Sanskrit inscription in Grantha character which gives the genealogy of nine generations of the Irukkuvél chiefs of Kodumbálúr. The date of inscription has to be assigned to 10th century A.D. The inscription is mutilated both at the beginning and the end. The extant portion consists of 24 lines comprising eleven full stanzas in Sanskrit in various metres, and fragments of two others, one at the opening and the another at the end. The inscription occupies a wall space 4’10” in height and a pilaster in the wall, bears no letters, divides each line into two parts of the length of 2’8” to the left of it and about 1’ 5” to the right. The size of the letters is well over an inch, the ligatures sometimes even reaching two inches. The inscription ends with the name of a chief called Bhuti Vikramakesarin and tells that he had two wives named Karralippirattiyar and Varaguna, and had by his first wife two sons called Parantakavarman and Adityavarman.
The Mūvarkóvil was built by this Bhuti Vikramakesarin (a feudatory of Sundara Chola) at Kodumbálúr and has nothing to do with the three kings of the South as is generally supposed or with the three Saiva saints Appar, Sambandar and Sundarar. An inscription at Kodumbálúr tells us explicitly that the three shrines were actually built by the chief Vikramakesari in his own name and in the names of his two wives. Having built three shrines (vimanas) in his own name and in the names of his two wives, he set up Mahesvara (Śiva) and presented to a big matha (brihan-matham) to Mallikarjuna of Madurai who was the chief ascetic of the Kalamukha (sect) with eleven villages for feeding fifty ascetics of the Kalamukha sect. The Kalamukha sect is a division of Saivism. The Kalamukhas appear to be so called because they marked their forehead with a black streak, and they are said to be born of nara (human) and rakshasa (demonical) parents. The Kalamukhas teach that the means of obtaining all desired results in this world as well as the next are constituted by certain practices such as using a skull as a drinking cup, smearing oneself with ashes of the dead body, eating the flesh of such a body, carrying a heavy stick, setting up a liquor-pot and using it as a platform for making offerings to the Gods, and the like. A typical Kalamukha is wearing a bracelet made of Rudraksha-seeds on the arm, matted hair on the head, a skull and smearing oneself with ashes. Mallikarjuna belonged to the Atreya gotra and was the disciple of two teachers Vidyarasi and Taporasi.

3.2.2. Avudaiyarkóvil Athmanathaswami Temple

Avudaiyarkóvil is 49kms from Pudukkóttai and here is the most omate temple in the District, noted for its fine sculptures, the temple of Athmanatha. Avudaiyarkóvil is called Thirupperunthurai in inscriptions and intimately associated with Saint Manikkavasakar.
3.2.2.1. Puranical History

Manikkavasakar was the minister to the Pândya king probably Varaguna II. (862-880 A.D.)⁶⁹. The King sent him to the east coast to buy imported horses. On the way from Madurai. Manikkavasakar saw an ascetic seated under a “Kurunda” tree at Thirupperunthurai. This was Lord Śiva Himself. Forthwith manikkavasakr forgot everything mundane and became a disciple of the ascetic and with the money he had brought to buy horses built a temple, which must have been the origin of the present huge structure.

The Pândya king sent a message to his minister about his mission. On Lord Śiva’s instruction Manikavasakar returned to Madurai, and told the king that the horses would arrive on Avani mulam day. But two days before this, the king was informed of what the minister had done and in fury the king punished Manikkavasakar. On Avani mulam day beautiful horses did appear in Madurai and they were presented to the king. But actually there were jackals which Lord Śiva had transformed, for the time being. The horses became jackals again during that night. The infuriated king inflicted further severe punishments on Manikkavasakar, loading him with heavy stones and making him stand under the burning sun on the dry bed of the river Vaigai. The Lord, heeding his prayer, sent a flash flood in the river. The Pândya king realized that his minister was an elect of God, and begged his mercy. The saint solacing him, went back to Thirupperunthurai. Later, he achieved union with Lord Śiva at Chithambaram.

Manikkavasakar’s “Thiruvasakam” is a classic of mystic poetry. The work has been held in great veneration down the ages. Thiruvasakam mentions Thirupperunthurai. Many of its 656 stanzas were written here. The temple holds an honoured place in the history of Saivisam in Tamil Nadu.
3.2.2.2. Athmanathar Temple

There are no images, iconic or aniconic, in the sanctum. In the shrine of the Lord, only a Pitha, is under worship. This represents worship of the Formless God, Athmanatha. Likewise, in the shrine of the Goddess another Pitha in the form of Śri Vidya Meru Chakra, is worshipped. There is no flagstaff, no sculpture of nandhi, no festival image of the Lord (the Utsavamurthi). The Utsavamurthi of the temple is manikkavsakar himself, not of the Lord. This is a special feature in the Hindu religious practice in Tamil Nadu.

The temple, as it stands today, is largely a work of the seventeenth century. The temple which Manikkavasakar, built must have been a small one and was of brick and mortar. It must have been progressively enlarged from time to time until it received much of its present from in the seventeenth century.

One of the mandapam was built by Raghunatha Náyák of Thanjavur (1600-1634 A.D.) who appears in a portrait there. Another mandapam, the ThyagaRája mandapam was begun by Achyatappa Náyák (1560-1614 A.D.) and completed by Vanangamudi Muthu Tondaimán, who belonged to the Aranthangi Thondaiman line.

An absolute remarkable aspect of the temple is its stone cornices in the mandapams which resemble wooden “reaper” work. Composed of huge stones, they have been worked with a delicate minuteness appropriate to lapidary. The architects of the seventeenth century must have had powerful engineering devices to hoist these huge stones to such heights.
3.2.3. Muchukundéśvara Temple in Kodumbálúr

Muchukundéśvara temple is another interesting temple not to miss to visit at Kodumbálúr. It is situated nearly a furlong from Múvarkóvil towards north. It is also a protected monument\textsuperscript{70}.

3.2.3.1. Muchukundéśvarar temple

Muchukundéśvara temple is built completely of well-dressed and close fitting gneiss blocks. It faces east. Originally it seems to have been composed only of garbhagriha and an ardhamandapa attached to it in front. The closed Mahámandapa, an open pillared mandapa and Ammankóvil standing in front of them have been added at a later period. In Iscription No.144 of the Pudukkóttai\textsuperscript{71} list, The temple was built long before Kulottunga III and all the idols mentioned above should have been placed in the several niches at the time of the construction of the edifice but are lost through neglect. Hence new ones were installed at the time of the renewal of the structure.

The whole shrine is enclosed by a boundary wall (prákara) within which four small sub-shrines are seen standing close to the boundary wall and facing the main shrine, one in each of the two corners in the eastern side, one in the north-western corner and the fourth on the rear side of the main shrine.

The temple seems to have been repaired in the 13\textsuperscript{th} century when the Mahámandapa was built. There is an ancient circular stone well in the temple measuring 6’ 9” across, said to have a tunnel 2’ 9” in width below, probably an inlet for water from the tank in front of the temple.
An interesting specimen of a nandi is also found near the main road and the path that lead to the Muchukundéśvara temple. The large stone nandi, measuring 9’ from the foreleg to the tail and 8’5” round the neck, is comparable for artistic skill and majesty of appearance with the nandi in the Tanjore Brihadesvaraswami temple, but the latter is larger. Attempts to remove it to Pudukkóttai proved futile, and it stands there itself on a platform.

3.2.3.2. Inscriptions

Muchukundéśvara (Mudukundram Udaiyar) temple is an early Chola shrine. The excavations round the basement of the central shrine have disclosed four inscriptions dated in the reign of a Parakesari which mention clearly that the karrali or the stone temple of Tirumudukundram Udaiyar, the ancient name of the linga here was built by Mahimalaya Irukkuvél also called Parántaka Vira Cholan or Kunjaramallan, who appointed priests to conduct worship and endowed the temple with devadanam lands in Óllaiyurkurram and other places. Mahimalaya Irukkuvél was a contemporary of Parakesari Parántaka I and his successor Rájakesari Gandaraditya, and he built this temple in the 14th year of the reign of the Chola Emperor Parántaka I, i.e. about A.D. 921.

3.2.4. Śiva temple in Kaliyápatti

Kaiyapatti is a small village ten miles from Keeranur and 25 miles from Pudukkóttai, and is situate on the Pudukkóttai Keeranur-Kilikkottai bus route.
3.2.4.1. Kaliyápatti Śiva Temple

On the foreshore of a so called Samadikulam near Kaliyápatti is a small but an interesting Śiva temple. It is one of the earliest stone temple built in the Chola period. This is considered to be one of the best among the single-storeyed temples of Vijayálaya’s age.

This Śiva temple faces the east. It is a compact structure containing intact the garbhagriha, the griva and the sikhara. The stupi and the ardhamandapa have disappeared. The entire structure is built of well dressed granite blocks from basement to finial.

The central shrine (garbhagriha) is eight feet square. Its walls are one and a half foot in thick. They are adorned with pilasters, four on each side. Their brackets have an angular profile similar to those of the Vijayálaya Chólisvaram at Nárttámalai and the Śiva temple at Tiruppúr. There are no niches on the walls of the central shrine to house the usual deities. The cornice has, on each side, two kúdus, well adorned with scroll-work. Each corner of the cornice ends with a beautiful scroll called kodikkarukku. A frieze of yalis runs above this cornice. Higher up is a square griva with four niches one on each side adorned with kúdus above. These and the four corners of the sikhara are ornamented with scrolls of uncommon elegance and charm. The sikhara is four-sided and curvilinear resembling those of the Múvarkóvil at Kodumbálúr. There is a layer of ratnapitha, and above it a padmapitha. The stupi which adorned it is missing and its style should have been similar to that of the Múvarkóvil.

Of the ardhamandapa, the moulded basement alone is found in continuation of the plinth of the garbhagriha. The basement of the
nandimandapa and traces of the usual seven sub-shrines can be seen also the basement of the front gateway and of the walls of enclosure enclosing the whole set of shrines.

3.2.4.2. Inscriptions

The inscription found in the southern wall of the garbhagriha is important. This inscription is palaeographically assigned to the 9th or early 10th century. Balasubrahmanyam has identified that the inscription is of the 18th year of Parakesarivarman72, who is none other than Vijayálaya Chola, and fixed the date of the inscription as A.D. 868.

3.2.5. Kannanúr Bálasubramanya Temple

Kannanúr, also known as Rangiyam Kannanúr is a village at a distance of 22 Kms from Pudukkótai and about 3 Kms inside the main road Rangiyam. There are two temples close to each other on the eastern bund of the large tank at the village. The one close to the bund is the Bálasubramanya temple and other is dedicated to Vishnu. Both the temples are of considerable architectural interest.

3.2.5.1. Bálasubramanya Temple

The temple of Bálasubramanya contains of garbhagriham and ardhamandapam and belong to the 9th century. Originally the temple should surrounded by a wall of enclosure, of which only the basement and the pillars of the main gateways can be seen now.

This temple is a complete structural stone temple of the svayampradhana class with Subramanya as the main deity. The garbhagriham is square, its walls are thick and they are adorned externally
with pilasters which resemble those in the Śiva temple at Tirukkattalai and have elegant scroll ornaments, kalaśam, kumbham and palagai. The corbels have an angular profile.

The vimánam is of single storeyed type. The vimánam stands on a circular basement, and there are four niches in its griva portion which has scrolled kúdus crowned with simha heads on the four cardinal points. Images are found only in two of them and they are beyond identification due to weather beaten condition.

The shikara is bell-shaped with a beautiful curvature, convex, followed by a concave surfaces. The sikhara resembles that of the Kadambur temple at Nártttámalai, with this difference that underneath the stūpi here, there are two layers of lotus petals, padma and ratna pattikas, whereas in the Kadambar temple there is only one. It is crowned by an ornamented spherical stone stūpi of exquisite workmanship.

The ardhamandapam is about 8” Feet square forming an integrated structure with the main-shrine. Both the main-shrine and the ardhamandapam have entrances facing west, while the Mahámandapam has one facing south.

3.2.5.2. Inscriptions

It contains seven inscriptions. They are all of Pándyas. The earliest is of Maravarman Sundara Pándya I, who came to the throne in 1216 A.D., Therefore the mukhamandapam must have been built in the early part of thirteenth century.
3.2.6. Sundaréśvara Temple in Tirukkattalai

Pudukkóttai is a small village 5 km to the east of the Pudukkóttai town.

3.2.6.1. Sundaréśvarar Temple

The temple faces the east and a tank is seen in front of it outside the wall of enclosure. The temple is now approached both from the east gateway and the south gateway. The latter was nearly made by a opening in the southern wall of enclosure.

The Sundaréśvarar temple is a structural temple from the basement to the finial. It consists of a garbhagriha, an ardhamandapa attached to it in front, the seven sub-shrines of Parivara-deva and the boundary wall round them and they seem to be the only structures that were originally constructed. All the other structures, the mukhamandapa attached to the ardhamandapa and the shrine for the Goddess standing to the north of the central shrine appear to have been subsequently added. This is clear when the structural style of the mukhamandapa and the shrine of the Goddess in one hand and the garbhagriha and ardhamandapa in the other being compared. Moreover the latest king mentioned in inscription of the main shrine is the Chola King Kulettunga I (A.D. 1070-1118) and the earliest inscription in the mukhamandapa is the Chola King Kulottunga III (A.D. 1178-1216).

3.2.6.2. Inscriptions

The village is mentioned in its early inscriptions as Karkurichchi Tirukkarrali. This sacred stone temple is a Šiva temple, and the main deity of the temple, now called Sundaréśvarar, is referred to in early inscriptions as
Karkurichi Karralipperuman adigal or the Lord of the stone temple of Karkurichchi. The present name of the Tirukkattalai can be traced in a Vijayanagar inscription of the 15th century in which the main deity is called Tirukkattalai Isvara mudaiyar. Sundaresara temple is the only temple in Pudukkóttai area which has all the characteristic features of the architectural style of the early Chola period in its pristine glory, unimpaired. Moreover the latest king mentioned in inscription of the main shrine is the Chola King Kulottunga I (A.D. 1070-1118) and the earliest inscription in the mukhamandapa is the Chola King Kulottunga III (A.D. 1178-1216).

There are twelve inscriptions relating to this temple, of which one is mutilated, eight are Chola, one Pândya, and two Vijayanagar. Inscriptions of the fifteenth century dated in the reigns of Vijayanagar Emperors show that the village was under the immediate rule of the Pallavarayars of Vaittur – Perungalur. Śrirangan Pallavarayar and Vilitturangum Pallavarayar are among the donors to the temple.

3.2.7. Śri vyágrapuriśvara Temple in Tiruvéngaivasal

The village Tiruvéngaivásal is three miles from Pudukkóttai and is situated in the village which lies in between the Pudukkóttai, Manapparai and Pudukkóttai, Tiruchirappalli route.

3.2.7.1. Vyágrapuriśvara Temple

Tiruvéngaivasal is a well-known and an ancient place of worship. The name means the ‘sacred place or gate of the Tiger’ and refers to the story of the God Gókarnéśa of Tirugókarnam who here took the form of a tiger, to terrify and finally grant salvation to a cow that daily brought the sacred water for his ablution.
The main shrine faces east. It has been renovated, and the original structure should have been an early Chola structure. The reason for this conjecture is the presence of the Saptamatrika group, and other old idols within the cloister in the southern prákara. The present structure is of the Pándya style of the 13th – 14th centuries. The pilasters are polygonal in section with square bases having nagapadmas the padmas are drawn out into idols, and the corbels are of the pushpapódigai type with rudimentary buds.

There are niches in three sides of the main shrine. The niche in the north is empty, while the west contain a standing Vishnu. In the place of the south niche, a small roofed structure is constructed with the help of some fallen pillars, and an idol of Gnana Dakshinamurti is installed.

There is an ardhamandapa and a Mahámandapa in front of the main shrine of Śri Vyagrapurisvara. To the north of the artarala mandapa is the shrine of the Goddess Śri Brihadambál, facing south, which is late Chola or early Pándya structure with square pilasters, simple idals, square palagais and tenoned corbels in the temple processions. The Mahámandapa is a Chola structure with pilasters as supporting large palagais and corbels with tenons.

At the main entrance in the east to the temple is a mandapa with massive pillars supporting carved lions on its top. The base of the gopura is of the late Pándya style, but the upper part has been reconstructed.

Near the southern entrance is a shrine built in the reign of Rája Ramachandra Tondaimán, in which is kept the idol of Amman, slightly mutilated in its hand. It is said that when a new idol was installed, the old mutilated one was about to be thrown into the tank to the south of the
temple, and that Amman appeared before the Rája in a dream and directed him not to cast it away but to preserve it in a shrine.

3.2.7.2. Inscriptions

There are 15 inscriptions in this temple six are Chola, seven Pándya, one of the Vijayanagar and one of the Pallavarayar’s period.

The earliest inscription in this temple of Śri Vyágrapuriśvara is dated in the reign of Rájarája I (1011 A.D.) and refers to the God as Tirumerralai Perumallor ‘the Lord of the western shrine’. He is called Cudamani Vitangan in an inscription of the reign of Rájéndra I (1037 A.D.), which also mentions the Amman shrine which was probably built in this reign. Sadiron Irasan, also called Kullottunga Chola Kidarattaraiya, consecrated a linga called after him Sadira Vitangan, and instituted a festival, at which plays were enacted (P.S.I. 139 of the reign of Rájadhirája II, dated 1175 A.D.)76. An inscription of the reign of Rájarája III records that land endowed for a festival was to be allotted in equal shares to the God Vyágrapuriśvara or Tiruvengaivayiludaiya Nayanar and to the God Sadira Vitangan and his Amman. Four inscriptions refer to Santi kuttu or dances performed in the temple festivals to induce a feeling of repose. Those who played this dance were also called Santikutti. The temple seems to have been very rich and had devadana land in the villages of Perundanaiyur, Sellikudi, Mayilapur (now called Mayiláppatti), Orumanimangalam, Tiruvetpur (now called Tiruvappur), Kavalamangalam, etc. An inscription of the time of the Vijayanagar prince Kampana records the grant of Padikaval rights by the temple authorities and the residents to a chief of Irumbali. Tiruvéngaivasal had both a Sabha or Brahmin assembly, and an Ur or common village or town assembly, during the centuries of Chola and Pándya rule.
3.2.8. Agastiśvara Temple in Panangudi

Panangudi is a village situated about nine miles from Pudukkóttai in the Pudukkóttai-Annavausal road and a little to the south of the world famous fresco paintings in the rock-cut Jaina cave-temple called Śittannavásal. The temple is situated on the southern bund of the tank of the village.

3.2.8.1. Agastiśvara Temple

The Śiva temple is a conserved monument, in external appearance it is a very small, compact but beautiful edifice, built completely from the basement to the finial of well-dressed and close-fitting granite blocks. It is exactly similar to the structural temples at Kaliyápati (Kulattur taluk), Tiruppúr (Kulattur taluk) and Enadi (Tirumayak taluk), both in size and style of construction. This is a single-storeyed temple and is complete with its original sikhara and stupi. It consists of garbhagriha and the ardhamandapa. The basement of nandi mandapa and one of the subshrines can be traced from ruins. The moulded basement of the Mahámandapa which is buried below the surface of the ground can also be traced.

The garbhagriha is nine feet square externally and five feet square internally. The outer walls contain pilasters which are decorated with elegant scroll work. The corbels are plain and angular. There are niches on the walls of the garbhagriha, but no idols are found in them at present. The ardhamandapa is intact and forms an integral part of the original shrine. The cornice is provided with kúdus crowned with trifoliated pieces of stone. Its corners are decorated with scroll work. A frieze of bhútaganas is found below the cornice and a frieze of yali above it, with makhara heads at the corners. The griva above the cornice is four-sided with a niche in the centre.
of each of the four sides for idols. The niches are surmounted by large beautiful kúdu crowned with simha heads projecting into the sikhara.

3.2.8.2. Inscriptions

There are three inscriptions in this temple – one of the Chola King Kulottunga Chola III (A.D. 1178)\textsuperscript{77} and another of an unidentified Maravarman Kulasekhara Pándya and the third, the earliest dated in the fourteenth year of a Ko-Parakesarivarman on the northern wall of the temple. In the last mentioned inscription, the presiding deity is called ‘Panangudi Paramesvaran’.

3.2.9. Arankulanatha Temple in Thiruvarankulam

Thiruvarankulam is five miles from Pudukkóttai, and lies on the Alangudi road. It is noted for its fine ancient temple to Haratirthéśvara (Arankulanathar). Arankulanatha is in the form of a linga which is Svayambuva.

3.2.9.1. Arankulanatha Temple

The temple of Śri Haratirthéśvara and Amman Śri Bribadambá is not only ancient but also imposing in Pudukkóttai area and held in high veneration by devotees far and near. It has been the object of worship and benefaction of rulers and citizens from early times, and the inscriptions in the temple are the authority for the statement. The garbhagriha of Śri Haratirthéśvara (Arankulanathar) may by assigned to the beginning of the late Chola period. The pilasters above the plinth have simple idals without petals, the palagais are large, the corbels (pódigai) are tenon shaped and beveled. On top of each palagai are two yális standing on their hind legs as
if supporting the architrave above. Above the pilasters is a line of bhútaganas supporting a convex moulded cornice. The kúdus in the cornice are formed of foliage scrolls with human head figures within. There are niches in the walls.

The garbhagriha, ardhamandapa and Mahámandapa are of the same style. The earliest inscription in the central shrine is dated in the 14th year Kulottunga Chola III corresponding to A.D. 1218-19. The garbhagriha and the two mandapas in front are surrounded by a hundred pillared mandapa which was according to the Statistical Account of Pudukkóttai (1813) erected by one Gopulingam a Chola minister. Along the walls of the southern cloister are the figures of the 63 Saivaite saints. In this hundred pillared mandapa are sub-shrines of Ganesa, Lakshmi, Subrahmanya, Bhairava, Surya, etc. In the front part of the hundred pillared mandapa are the processional idols which are considered to be fine specimens of late Chola or early Pândya bronzes.

From this mandapa one has to pass through the second gopura erected by a Gangaiyaraya chief. The gopura is in the Pándya style with polygonal pilasters, idals with petals spread out, thinpalagais and corbels with pushpapódigai. There is a long corridor between the second gopura and the first or the main gopura. The roof of the corridor is supported by massive monolithic pillars (aniyottikal) with carved lions on top. These pillars are elaborately sculptured with figures of donors – Valanad Chettiyars, local chieftains, etc.

He built the old kitchen, and the Vináyáka shrine brought a flower garden, instituted services and festivals, and provided everburning lamps, torches, etc., for his merit and in his name. one of these, figures sculptured on the southern wall is that of Kattudaiyan Chettiyar who is believed to have
built this aniyottikal mandapa. This is also called Nakshata (star) mandapa in which the signs of the zodiac are sculptured in the middle part of the ceiling. To the north of the mandapa are the sabhamandapa or the “Hall of Dance”.

3.2.9.2. Amman Temple

A separate enclosure for the Amman shrine which is much simpler than that of the God. The architectural features of the Amman shrine mark the transition from the Chola to the Pándyan epoch. The yalis and the bhútaganas found in the central shrine are absent here. The Amman shrine or the hall where the Goddess is installed.

Among the objects of interest in the southern cloister of the hundred pillared mandapa is a slab with the figures of a raider on horse-back his attendants, bearing the inscription which an be translated as – ‘Hail’ ! Prosperity !. Vijaya Raya Mindar, also called Kandiyadevar of Rájéndra m, the servant of Vira-Pratapan’. It is not clear to whose servant he proclaims himself to be. Vira Pratapa is one of the titles assumed by the Vijayanagar chiefs of Penukonda, and the title being such a common one, it is quite possible that some of Náyák or Tamil chiefs assumed it. The idol of Ganesa in the western entrance to the temple is supposed to be directly in the path and effulgence Porpanaikottai Muni.

3.2.9.3. Inscriptions

As per the earliest inscription found in this shrine which dates to the 39th year of Kulottunga III (1217-18) was constructed by Kannudayaperumal, queen of the Nisadarája Chief of Piranmalai and daughter of the NisadaRája chief of Piranmalai and daughter of the
Nisadarája chief of Ponnamaravathi. The main Gópuram may be assigned to a late period in the Pándya epoch, and has the decorative pilaster motifs. There is an inscription on the wall of this Gópuram in Telugu mentioning that a kumbhabhiseka was performed by Rája Ramachandra Tondaimán Bahadur.

There are 65 interesting inscriptions in this temple belonging to the reigns of Kulottunga III, Sema Pillaiyar, the emperors of the second Pándya dynasty, Vijayanagar emperors and Náyák chiefs, Vijayálaya Tevars, the Tondaimán of Arantangi, the Pallavarayars of vaittur Perungalur, and the Tondaimán rulers of Pudukkóttai. The information’s that are recorded in the inscriptions convey an idea of the affluence of the temple in the past – its rich and costly jewels, festivals, cars used for the procession of deities, and lands and gardens endowed to meet the expenses of daily worship.

How prosperous the temple was is seen in Pudukkóttai State Inscription 607, which records that the residents of Vallanad unable to pay arrears of taxes for nine years amounting to 11,000 kasus mortgaged a jewel of the God, and with the money thus raised paid the taxes, and in return conveyed lands to the temple. There are 8 inscriptions reveal the agreements reached in the temple by the rival parties and compacts entered into by them not to engage in fighting in figure. An inscription dated A.D. 1218-19 says that the local assembly meet within the temple. It has continued to meet there in the succeeding centuries, and the caste “panchayats” of the Kallars and of the Chettiyars of Vallanad continue to meet in the temple. A sixteenth century inscription (P.S.I.746) refers to a Saiva matham situated in the south street then called Vallanadan perunderu.
3.2.10. Subrahmanya Temple in Virálimalai

Virálimalai is situated about 26 miles from Pudukkóttai, and is about 18 miles from Tiruchirappalli on the high road to madurai. It is a well known place throughout South India for its Lord Subrahmanya temple on a hillock. Virálimalai is a corruption of Viraliyurmalai or the ‘Hill of Viraliyur’. Virálimalai also takes its names from a ‘bold rock’ of ‘beautifully bended micaceous granite gneiss’ which it contains.

3.2.10.1. Purnical History

The origin of this temple is ascribed to Jnana varodaya, a native of Vayalur, six miles to the west of Tiruchirappalli. When he was a little boy, he played the truant one day to escape being flogged at school, and it himself behind the idol of Subrahmanya in the temple at Vayalur. There he remained shut up for the might unseen by temple servants, when the God Subrahmanya appeared to him and blessed him with the gift of poesy. On the next morning his parents discovered him in the temple and were delighted to find that he had suddenly become learned and wise.

Sometime afterwards, God Subrahmanya, so runs the story, came a hunting to the tract now called Virálimalai accompanied by this gifted boy, and found the country so charming that the God told the boy in a vision of his wish to have a temple built for him on the top of the hill at Virálimalai. Thereupon the boy Jnana varodaya communicated this good news to Alagiya Manaval of Perambur, who was then the chieftain of this tract. Alagiya was also granted a vision of the Lord in answer to a hymn of the ‘boy’, but the vision was so dazzling that the chief lost his eyesight for a while. The chief built the temple, and become one of his most devoted worshipper. The boy Jnana varedaya became the first trustee of the temple.
 Portions of the temple were extended by the Kumaravadi and Marungapuri chiefs who were the vassals of the Madurai Náyáks. Ladatory songs are still sung in praise of the Perambur chiefs during one of the temple festivals at ‘the Eastern gate mandapa’.

One Karuppamuttu Pillai, a minister of one of the Kumaravadi chiefs was in the habit of visiting the temple every Friday. Once after he had set out from his house, he found that on account of heavy showers, a trn had burst and the Mamundi stream, lying between Kumaravadi and Virálimalai, had become unfordable. He concluded that he had to spend the night without meals and what was more important to him without smoking. The God, however, appeared before him in human form, kindly supplied him with a cigar and light, and arranged for his visiting the temple that night without difficulty. The grateful devotee ordered that henceforth cigars should be offered to the God at the time of the last puja of the day along with food and other eatables and distributed among the Brahmins and others visiting the temple. It is said that, after the tract passed into the hands of the Tondaimáns, a ruler of Pudukkóttai ordered the offering of cigars to be stopped as inappropriate to such a superior deity as Subrahmanya, and that is said to have appeared to the ruler in a dream, exhibiting, his injured body and explained that it was impossible for him to get on without smoking, with the result that the cigar offering was permitted to be continued.

**3.2.10.2. Arunagiri Nathar**

Arunagiri, the great Saiva Saint who is believed to have lived in the middle of the 15th century, visited Virálimalai, and sang in praise of the God here, expressing some of his mystic experiences in his famous hymns called Tiruppugal.
Subrahmanya Mudaliyar, son of Ekanáyaka Mudaliyar of Kunriyur, both the ministers of Vijaya Raghunatha Raya Tondaimán, were greatly devoted to this temple, and is the hero of a verse drama called Virálimalai Kuravanji which is still staged annually by the dancing girls here.

3.2.10.3

i. Subrahmanya Temple

The ascent to the top of the hills made by a series of flights commencing at an entrance close to the ardhamandapa. To the north of the first landing, about half-way up there is a natural cavern in which there is now a shrine containing a linga, an Amman, Ganesa, etc. At the top is a mandapa from which one enters the main gopura facing south. More steps lead to the northern prákara. The mandapas are of the Madurai style, and the one of the extreme east affords a panaromic view of the country round as far as the Tiruchirappalli rock fort.