INTRODUCTION

The vast majority of the people of India belongs to the religious tradition that has come to be known as Hinduism. Hinduism is one of the most ancient religious traditions of human kind\(^1\). Hinduism is a very complex religious system including a wide range of particular beliefs and practices\(^2\).

Hinduism consists of six systems namely Saivism, Vaishnavism, Ganapathiam, Kaumaram, Souram and Sakham. The basic elements of worship in the temples and worships were derived from Vedas and the Puranas. Saivaites worship Siva as the supreme deity and Vaishnavites Vishnu\(^3\).

Hindus who viewed Siva as the supreme deity are known as Saivaites. Among the various localized sects of Saivism are Kashmir Saivism, Vira Saivism and Saiva Siddantha\(^4\). Saivism refers to the faith which prescribes the exclusive worship of Siva. Siva is considered the most powerful of the Traid.

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\(^1\) Varada Raja V. Raman, *Glimpses of Indian Heritage*, Bombay, 1993, p. 2


\(^3\) E.O. James, *Comparative Religion*, London, 1938, p.138

Saivism is anterior to stone age\(^8\). Some scholars speculate the origin of Siva in prehistoric Harappan Culture (2500 B.C) and conjecture about his non-Aryan or pre-Aryan origin.\(^9\)

Sir John Marshall formulated this hypothesis and called a seated horned figure as proto Siva. According to scholars, the worship of Siva was originally prevalent among the people who lived in the Indus Valley and was later adopted by the Aryans in the name of Rudra\(^10\).

A large number of conical and cylindrical stones have also been regarded as Lingas or phallic forms of Siva. Along with divine images people also worshiped trees, animals, fire and water\(^11\). Sir John Marshall mentioned that Saivism was the most ancient faith in the world.

Though the Rig Veda (1500 B.C) contains no direct mention of Siva, it speaks of him as Rudra who is the early Vedic predecessor of the great later Hindu deity Siva in the Rig Veda. Rudra is a storm God who...

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11 R.C.Majundarad P.N. Chopra, *Main currents of Indian History*, New Delhi, 1984, pp.8-10.
He is worshipped in different forms. The Lingam or Phallus, with its used a companiment is now the universal and sole emblem of Siva. Siva typifies both destruction and reproduction but he is generally regarded as the deity in the character of destroyer.5

Saivam means that which has connection with Siva. The word Saivism has its root in Sivam. Saiva religion deals with (pati) god (pasu) the souls and (pasam) bondage and Siva is its supreme God. The Sivam stands for love the good, the auspicious and the supreme bliss.6

The distinctive sign of the Saivites is the Lingam. They sometimes wear it fastened to the hair or round the arm enclosed in a little silver tube, but more often they are having it round the neck and the silver box containing it rests on the chest and instead of the Lingam many of the devotees of Siva rub their fore heads and various parts of their bodies with the ashes of cowdung by way of showing their devotion.7

The excavations in Mohen Jadara and Harappa reveal, the idols of Saivism goes back to a very earlier period. Sir John Marshall says that


shows his destructive and wrathful tendencies. The name which means (rud to cry) shows Rudras association with storm and thunder. His shafts of lightening slay men and cattle. He is the Asura of high heaven.

In the Yajur Veda he is shown as an archer whose malevolent arrows bring destruction to men and cattle. In the Atharvana Veda he is the cause of fever and poison.

The Rig Veda too asks Rudra not to afflict children and village with disease. This dark side of Rudra's character however has its obverse. The same Vedas also call him the great physician possessing healing medicines which are capable of bestowing health. Thus, in the Rudra of the Rig Veda has the fundamental ambiguity of storm itself.

In India the monsoon storm is awaited with great hope but it manifests both creative and destructive forces. Its fructifying rain is

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12 Rig Veda 1, 114:10
13 Ibid., 2:1:6
14 Vajasanayl Samhita 16:18:28
15 Rig Veda 1:114:1:7:46:2
16 Ibid., 1:43:4, 1:114:5, 2.33.2 and 47, 46:3.
18 Glenm Yocom, Hymns, to the Dancing Siva, Columbia, 1982, p.17
positive force which probably contributes to Rudra's assimilation of elements associated with fertility and earth, and his relationship with cattle is a prime symbol of fertility\textsuperscript{19}.

Perhaps because of his much feared power to slay cattle, he is invoked as Pasupa\textsuperscript{20} or Pasupathi\textsuperscript{21} which later assumes such central significance in Saiva philosophical terminology. In the Yajurveda there appears a literary addressed to the hundred forms of Rudra called Sataudriya. It depicts a rather fearful figure, incorporating a startling collection of paradoxical and incongruous, grotesque and terrifying attributes\textsuperscript{22}.

By the time of Svetesvatara Upanishad, Siva was absorbed in the Vedic pantheon and was given a lofty position as Mahaveda. Siva means the auspicious or kind one. This led to the full flowering of Rudra, Siva as a monotheistic deity in the epics and puranic literature. The earliest specific mention of Siva by a foreigner is traceable to Megasthenese. Patanjali of the second century B.C. speaks of the Siva bhagavatas or

\textsuperscript{19} Rig Veda 1:114:9

\textsuperscript{20} Atharvanaveda 2:34:1, 11:2:1, 11,12,28, 11:6:9, 15.5.3

\textsuperscript{21} Yajurveda Vajasamyisam hita 16:1-16.

\textsuperscript{22} J. Brucelong, Siva nd Dionysos – Vision of Terror and Bliss in number 18, Fase 3, Dec 1971 p.82.
devotee of Siva. This devotion to Siva developed under the Sungas and later under the Guptas. Bhakti movement of seventh to ninth century A.D. Saivism commenced in the Kannada country but it reached a great height in Tamilnadu.

Siva worship first started into fire worship, then developed as sound and subsequently as idol worship. In Tolkappiam\textsuperscript{23} in the Sutra beginning with Theivam Unave Mamaram, the word 'theivam' indicates light. The Sangam poet Madurai Kannattanar indicates that Sivan and Thirumal are the two great gods of ancient time\textsuperscript{24}.

The word 'Sivan' does not occur in the Sangam works. However Siva is referred as the god seated under the banyan tree.\textsuperscript{25} It has been said that Siva preached the message of the Vedas to the people of the world\textsuperscript{26}. He is believed to have created the Pancha butas. Maduraikkanchi says that the Lord with axe is the creator of water, earth, fire, air and the stars.\textsuperscript{27}

\begin{itemize}
\item[23] Tolporul - 20
\item[24] Aham 360:6
\item[25] Thirumurugu 256 Kali 81
\item[26] Aham 181
\item[27] Madurai, 443-545
\end{itemize}
Siva is called by several names. He is called Mukkatselver as he has three eyes\textsuperscript{28}. He is also called Kariuntikkadavul since he has devoured the poison which emerged from the ocean as a result of the churning of the ocean by the Devas and Asuras. He wields Mazhu (pick axe). He wears goddess ganges crescent\textsuperscript{29} moon and Konraigarland\textsuperscript{30}. He mounts on the bull and the bull is also engraved in his flag\textsuperscript{31}. The Asuras who flew on three forts and gave untold misery to the Devas. At the request of the Devas, Siva destroyed these forts\textsuperscript{32}. Ainkurunoorur, Pathirttru Patthu, Kalithohai, Ahananuru and Purananuru, the five of the eight anthologies have invocation verses in praise of Lord Siva. Scholars attest a heavy antiquity to the worship of Siva in Tamilnadu\textsuperscript{33}. The advent of Saivism in the Tamil country was mainly in the form of the Pasupata Saivism. The findings of Linga at godimallam,

\textsuperscript{28} Puram Kali 2, Aham 81
\textsuperscript{29} Malaipadu 83, Puram9, Pari 8
\textsuperscript{30} Aham 220 Puram 56, Kali 38,
\textsuperscript{31} Thirumurugu 153 – 191, Pari p.8, Puram Invoc V
\textsuperscript{32} Puram 55-1-5, Pari 5:25
\textsuperscript{33} P.S.S.Sastri, (Tamil) Sanganurkal Umvaidha Markamum, Madras, 1975, p.53
Amaravathi Bhita etc in Andhra Pradesh suggest that the early wave of Pasupata Saivism reached this part of the peninsula around the second century B.C. The revival of *Brahmanism* in the north during the fourth and fifth century A.D. penetrated to extreme south. Bhakti Movement of Saivism commenced in the Kannada country but it reached a great height in Tamil nadu. Therefore the Bhakti cult of Saiva nayanmars also meant to revive the Siva cult of Sangam age$^{34}$.

In the religious sphere south excelled the north. Tamil country in the South contributed much for the promotion of modern Hinduism. At one time the onward march of Buddhism and Jainism in the Tamil country went unchecked. Saivism and Vaishnavism emerged as a Volcano to sweep their rivals in Tamil country and formed an essential component of the Bhakti movement that flourished upto the ninth century A.D.

The Saivate nayanmars composed emotional songs employed for the adoration of Siva$^{35}$. They went about the country visiting the Siva temples and adorned Siva with their ecstatic devotion collected later as the Devarams.

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The Bakthi cult of Nayanmars produced a great upsurge and mass awakening. This resulted the enrichment of the spiritual and moral standards of the life of the people and the temple was the centre of this new efflorescence. The first three Nayanmars, Appar, Sambandar, Sundarar sang many devotional songs.

The Saiva agamas are first mentioned by Sundarmurthi and Thirumanthiram of Thirumular of ninth century A.D is the earliest work to reflect the theology of the agamas. Manikkavasagar who frequently speaks of the agamas as revealed by Siva and openly expresses his dislike of the Vedanta by which he means the monism of Sankara (788–820 A.D).

By the side of pure school of Bhakthi represented by the three saints of Devaram and Manikkavasakar there existed other types of worshippers of Siva whose tenets and practices are guru, some and repellent to modern state such were the Pasupathas, Kapalikas, Kalamukas and others. Kalamukha sect of Saivism became powerful during the 8th and 9th century A.D. The Kalamukhas imbibed certain essential features of the Agamas. There is a reference from the
inscriptions that Kalamukha Brahmanas of the Saiva sect were found in the north Arcot district in the early part of the 10th century A.D36.

In the beginning of the 11th century A.D in the Aringisuara temple at Melpadi in the North Arcot District amateuring of the Lakulisa – Pasupatas, formed a branch of the kalamuhas37. Another reference from the records a gift by a certain vinnagar vayiramegan to a Kalamuga (Brahman) of sect of Dasa Puriyas38.

The Kalattur and Thirovanath-Koyil inscriptions mention Gomadattu Sailarasi Pomsita and Jhanarasi Pandita who were the owners of these temples and belonged to the Kalamuka or Lokulisa pasu patasect, one of the oldest sahisms of Saivism at the end of the 12th century A.D39.

The Kalamukas built temples as instructed in the Siva Agama’s and added many monastic colleges for higher learning. Hospitals and maternity homes were also founded by the Kalamukas for the benefit of

37 H.M. Nayak and B.R.Gopal Op cit., p. 68
38 E. Vol VIII, p. 294
39 ARE 1907 No. 129
the local population. Many mathas in Tamilnadu were organized by Kalamuka monks\textsuperscript{40}.

Another Saiva sect was the Kapalika Sect. The Manimekalai, an epic, contains a brief reference to the Kapalika ascetics. It is said that the Kapalika were called Sudalai nonbigal. The Devaram hymns also mention the yoga practices associated with Kapalikam.

The age of imperial Cholas (850 – 1200) was the golden age of Saivism. The devotional songs of first three Nayanmars were compiled by Nambiyandar Nambi under the title of Devaram in the middle of 12\textsuperscript{th} century A.D. During the reign of Raja Raja I hymns were arranged by the Nambiyandar Nambi and continuously added to till about the middle of twelfth century. In the medival Tamil nadu, especially under the imperial Cholas, the Devaraja cult introduced new form of Saivism which centered on the worship of Linga, the formalised phallic symbol of Siva, with which the prosperity of the kingdom was believed to be bound up\textsuperscript{41}.

\textsuperscript{40} ARE 1908 No. 85

\textsuperscript{41} ARE 1912 No.191
In this new form of Saivism the increasing association of the earthly king with a deity could be clearly seen in some royal rituals such as naming of Linga, for instance the Linga placed in the sanctum of the imperial temple was often named after the king who had donated it. Thus Linga donated by Raja Raja I came to be called as the Raja Rajaswara Linga as the Linga donated by Udayaditya to the Udayeshvara temple at Udaipur came to the Known as the Udayaswara Linga\textsuperscript{42}.

The recital of the sacred Siva hymns of the Devaram are referred for the first time as being instituted by Raja Raja I, Rajendra Chola I, appears to have supported the cause of Saivism by going a step further than his father and setting up the images of some of the famous Saiva saints in the temple of Raja Rajeswara at Tanjore. A matha or a resthouse under the name Tiruvagisam Rajendra Chola was built in his time at Uyyakondam Thirumalai. Thus Saivism appears to have gradually grown stronger and stronger under the patronage of the Chola kings so that in the beginning of the thirteenth century A.D a number of mathas presided over by Saiva sanyasis spreading their influence over a pretty large portion of the Tamil country\textsuperscript{43}.

\textsuperscript{42} D. Dayalan, \textit{Early Temples of Tamil Nadu}, New Delhi, 1992, p. 14
\textsuperscript{43} D.G. E. Hall, \textit{A History of South East Asia}, New York, 1965, p., 93
All this must have been inspite of the teachings of the great Advaita philosopher Sankaracharya whose doctrines are well known. The philosophical expositions of the Advaita teacher does not exclude the methods of pious devotion to be practiced in the first stages of spiritual development but insists on strict adherence to the paths of karma as laid down in the Sastras.

On the other hand, the Saiva creed does not appear to have paid much attention to Sastric karma but taking unskilled devotion to Siva as its basis. It received into its fold all classes of people without any distinction of caste. This catholicity of the Saiva faith rendered is not very popular with the orthodox Brahmins but the nonBrahmins classes eagerly look to it and in the beginning of the thirteen century A.D it was apparently very influential with its centers in many places of which one at Tiruchchattimurram and another at Sembarkkudi. The mathas of Siva sanyasis called Siva Yogis or Maheswaras were mostly named after the Brahmin Saiva saint Thiruganasambandar and the nonBrahmin saint Thirunavukarasar.

The Prabandha form became dominant and the systematic treatment of Saiva Siddhanta in philosophical treaties began Great Siva temples were built. A new and celebrated hymns on the model of those
of the previous period (1133 - 1150) were composed in the reign of Kulothunga III and standardized in a great purana by Sekkilar. Kalladanar, the author of Kalladam, can perhaps identified with the author who figures in the eleventh book of the Saiva cannon. He is said to have chosen one hundred verses from the Tirukkovai as the basis of his work which deals with the sixtyfour sacred sports of Siva.

Two developments in Saivism occurred in the 12th and 13th centuries in the Tamil country. The first is the development of the Tamil Saiva Siddhanta philosophy based on the Agamas. The first definite formulation of the philosophy of the Tamil Saiva Siddhanta was in the work of Meykanda Devar, a pious vellala who lived early in the thirteenth century on the banks of the Pennar river, south of Madras. Meykandar wrote basic text of Saiva Siddhanta philosophy under the impact of Vendantha which is distinct from the teachings of Saiva Nayanmars.

The Saiva Siddhantha philosophy had as its source the twenty eight Saiva Agamas, hymns of Saiva saints and philosophical works of Saiva thinkers. God is identified with Siva. The soul “Siva” is of the same essence as god but not identical. It is saved by the divine grace. His “Siva Gnana Bodam” a translation into Tamil verse of twelve Sanskrit sutras
from Raurava Agama is looked upon as the fountain head of dogmatics of the system\textsuperscript{44}.

The other development in Saivism was the growth of Virasaivism or the Lingyat cult in Karnataka and Telugu country. Basava, the prime minister of Kala-Suri-king Bijjala, at Kalyani (1156) is usually regarded as the founder of sect Lingayat tradition. That sect is very old and was founded by five ascetics like Ekorama, Panditaradhya, Revana, Marula and Visuaradhyaa who were held have sprung from the five heads of Siva.

Virasaivism refuses to reorganize any caste distinctions maintaining that the Lingam makes all men equal. If even a Pariya joins the sect, he is considered in no way inferior to a Brahmin. Wherever the Lingam is found, that they say is the throne of the deity without distinction of class or rank. The Pariah's humble hut containing this sacred emblem is far above the most magnificent palace where it is not\textsuperscript{45}.

As a religious sect Vira-saivism has certain philosophical concepts. It believes in the unity of god Siva and Sakthi as the ultimate reality.

\textsuperscript{44} S. Manickam, Facts of History A Specturm of Thought, Madurai 1998. p. 153

\textsuperscript{45} Abbe J.Dubois, op.cit., p. 117
According to them Siva represented the silence, while Sakthi the dynamic force. As such Siva and Sakthi stand in relation of Saria and Sarini.

Virasaivism did not bother about the various philosophical concepts of a complicated nature. Its concepts were plain and simple. The quiet essence of this religion contained in what is called the shotsthalas and ashtavaramas. The sthalas are of two categories linga sthala and angasthala.

Lingayat regard Siva as supreme and must worship him only hence the name Vira saiva, stalwart saivas. They must also worship each his own chosen guru. Each Lingayat man or woman carries a Linga about his person, usually in a silver or wooden reliquary suspended from the neck. Reverence is paid by Lingayats to the sixty three Nayammars of the Tamil country whom they recognize as poratanas (elders) and to seven hundred and seventy latersaints among who are included Manikavasagar, Basavar and his chief disciples.

The Ardhya Saivas of Telugu country followed Mallikarjuna Panditaradhya, a contemporary of Basava, in refusing to accept the latter rejection of the veda and reunication of caste. But the relations of Ardhhiya Saivism with Lingayatism were friendly and both joined
together in the fourteenth century in resisting the inroads of Muslims and in preparing the way for the foundation of Vijayanagar.

After the Sivagana bodam (of Meykantadevar) the next work of importance on Saiva doctrine is the Siva Gana-sittiyar of Arunandi, reputed to have been the first guru of Meykandar's father and then disciple of Meykandar himself. The Unmai-Vilakkam of Manavasa Ganga Duandar of Tiruvadi (South Arcot) is the simple of the manvars of the doctrine true to the essence of the Agamas. Umapathi Sivacharya was the author of remaining eight works which complete the tale of fourteen Saiva Siddhanta sastras.

During the time of Vijayanagar rulers, all types of religion found encouragement and most of the famous temples of South India were enlarged at this time.

TEMPLE WORSHIP

As God fearing people, the Tamils never preferred to settle in villages which had no temple and considered such villages as haunted places and unfit for human habitation. The temple is a place where God
dwell in various forms embodied in sacred images or symbols of deities which constitute the most important part of Hindu art\textsuperscript{46}.

A temple is a divine place where the people are assembling together without considering economic, social status, religion, caste, language and education for worshipping the god.

Generally, the temples and their custodians decided the rules and regulations for the movement of the people. They wielded vast influence in the state through the possession of wealth. Ownership of vast estates, control of markets and credit occupation of key positions, celebrations of festivals, promotion of art and literature and above all the authority to decide the social status.

The right to enter certain parts of the temple, the right to participate in certain ceremonies rites and festivals were the important visible expressions of the accepted hierarchy of communities and individuals in society.\textsuperscript{47}

\textsuperscript{46} George Michel, \textit{The Hindu temple and introduction to its meaning and forms}, New Delhi, 1977, pp.61-62.

\textsuperscript{47} Makin Marriott, \textit{Caste Ranking and Community Structure in Five Regions of India and Pakistan}, Poona, 1966, p.33.
The temple one of the pivotal institutions at Hindu religion plays an important role in the every day activities of the people. Temples promote the holy Justice throughout the land. It is also found that so long as these ancient institutions are duly maintained by the ruling race, there will be prosperity in a country and famine will not visit the land.

The temple is not merely a place of worship. It has filled a large place in the cultural and economic life of the people. Its construction and maintenance offered employment to number or architects and craftsman who vied with one another in bold planning and skilful execution. The making of icons in stone and metal gave scope to the talents of the best sculptures of the country.

The daily routine especially of the large temples, gave constant employment to number of priests, Choristers Musicians, girls, florists, cooks and many other classes of servants. The periodical festivals were occasions marked by fairs, contests of learning wrestling matches and every other form of popular entertainments.  

According to the Hindu conception there is no place without is not rule by God. People thought that worshipping God in temples purifies

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the heart helps in controlling the passions and enables the devotees to lead a virtuous life.

According to section 6 (2) of the Tamilnadu Religion Charitable Endowment Act, 1959, corresponds to section 6 (17) of the Act XI of 1951 and section 9 (12) of the Act II of 1927. 'A temple is a place used for public religions worship and used as at right by the Hindus community of any section there of as a place of public religious worship. It may include any place irrespective at the installation of idols or a building with a tower devasjasthambam or sthupa.49

Like Hindus, the other religions, Christians and Muslims are also worshipping their gods in churches and in mosques. Temples provide mental peace to the devotees. So God worship is inter-wovan in every man's life fabric. Thus temple is closely related to the society as well as individuals.

The temple was known as koil or Kottam or devalayam in Tamil. God was kon, iraivan, and kadavul. It was considered charitable and proper for kings to grant ornaments and other valuables to the temples.

The temple is a material record marking definite stages in the spiritual evolution of man. The temple forms part of India's heritage.

Broadly speaking there were Siva and Vishnu temple forms of worship were becoming more and more complicated and apart from vedic elements and tantric rituals new form of devotional worship were being introduced. The Sacred Hymns composed by the Saiva and Vaishnava leaders of Bhakti Movements came to be in rested with the status given to the vedas.50

In sangam literature the temples were variously known as kovil, nagaram and kottam. After the sangam period the temples formed an important land mark in the monumental history of Tamilnadu.51

Temples had different origins from dolmens and huts of the primitive or the Buddhist stupa. The shape of the hut resembles the shape and reminds the top of the central shrine called Vimana.52

51 Ibid., p.270.
In ancient period early man had the fear at nature. So he started worshipping nature. The basis of religion was the worship of nature in its various forms as all of their gods represented one or other phenomenon of nature. In the *Rig* vedic period the worship of gods like *Indra, Varuna, Agni & Surya* were popular.\(^5\)

There was the basis of the origin of idol worship in which he gave a shape to the construction of temples of places of worship of god where the devotees came.

In the medieval period religion was given more importance as various religions developed and reached its zenith like Islam and Christianity. Hinduism is one among them and its architecture developed along with it. Temple is an edifice for worship as deity. India is a land of temples. Avvaiyar the well-known Tamil poetess said "Don't live in a place where there is no temple"

In India many temples of Buddha, Siva and Vishnu are found. For instance, in the southern parts of India there is no town without a temple. In each village or town there would be at least one big temple. In India

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temples were not in existence during the vedic period and all our magnificent temples seen now are of later day origin.

In the distant past all beautiful inspiring places in nature were made use of for worship of the creator. Sacrificial fire was utilized as the medium between man and the deity. This more of worship in course of time gave place to temple worship.

A number of temple are found all over Tamilnadu and hence Tamilnadu can truly be said to be a land by temples. Also the Tamil proverb "Kovil illa ooril kutiyirukka vendam" (one should not live in a place without a temple) reveals the fact that there are temples in all the nook and corners in Tamilnadu.

The temple is essentially a vehicle of religion built for the fulfillment of the spiritual desires of the people although the temple was a center of worship, it also had under socio-cultural dimensions in India particularly in Tamilnadu. It is believed that it is he who is the great in the word. It is his highness, by which, the world exists. It is his unique power, that two great lights of sun and moon twinkled stars, shrine in the world. It is grace, by which the human beings receive everything to lead life.
As such the Muslims worship the God in the name of Allah in mosque; the Christians in the name of Jesus Christ in church and the Hindus follow the worship of God in varied names what they desire. The aim of worship primarily to appease the gods and thereby to obtain from them the deserved material objects in life. It is also the aim of some people to get free from the cycle of birth and death.

Hinduism is perhaps a major religion in India that has not started by any prophet unlike other religious. It is developed primarily among the Aryans and absorbed influences from diverse sources.

In Hinduism, there are two main groups - Saivites and Vaishnavites, the former worships Lord Siva, the latter worships Lord Vishnu. There are a number of temples in Tamilnadu for the Siva and Vishnu. The kings constructed these temples in different periods.

The temples wielded vast influence in the state through the possession of wealth. Ownership of vast estates, control of markets and credit occupation of lay positions, celebration of festivals and above all the authority to decide the social status. The right to enter certain parts of the temple, the right to participate in certain ceremonies and the order of precedence in certain rites and festivals were the important visible
expression of the accepted hierarchy of communities and individuals in society. The temple was not only a place of worship. It filled a large place in the cultural and economic life of the people.\textsuperscript{54}

The images that were formed under the trees became temples made consequently on bricks being used for constructing temples. Since then several kinds of temples have come into existence. This statement is strengthened by Sangam classic which refer to ‘kottam’ a popular word for the Tamil. Kalithogai and Purananuru also refer to the existence of temples as ‘Katavulkati nagar\textsuperscript{55} and Murugan Kottam\textsuperscript{56}.

Silapathikaram contains reference about Siva temple. The existing early temples were simple in structure. However the Bhakthi movement that ushered in sixth century in the Tamil country helped the expansion of religious activities and extension of temple construction on a rapid scale. Moreover, the subsequent political vicissitudes of the Tamil land gave a tremendous Philip to those religious activities.

\textsuperscript{54} Makim Marriott, op.cit., 1996, p.33.

\textsuperscript{55} Kali 84 - 6,7

\textsuperscript{56} Puram 299
The arrival of the Pallavas and the Pandyas in their respective regions heralded a new epoch in the history of temple construction. They not only intensified temple building activities but introduced the durable stone as building material. This is evident from the Mandagapattu inscription of Mahendravarman, which states about temples without the timber, the brick, the mortar and the metal, for the Trimurthis Brahma Vishnu and Siva which were caused to be constructed by Vichitrachitta.\textsuperscript{57}

The distinct variety of Dravidian architecture that flourished was in Pandyanadu also. The oldest surviving early Pandya shrine of rock cut temple of Siva exists at Kalugumalai. The super structure of Pandya temples are much more richly ornamental than those of temples in pallava system.\textsuperscript{58}

The raise and growth of Bhakthi movement (6-9 AD) and Brahmanism in Tamil country induced its patrons to built more temples. Many of the great temples that are observed in Tamilnadu had their origin after the Bhakthi cult had attained its importance in the Hindu religion.\textsuperscript{59}

\textsuperscript{57} EL Vol XVIII p.17
\textsuperscript{58} K.A.Nilakanda Sastri, op.cit, P.457
\textsuperscript{59} S.Krishnaswamy Iyenger, Contribution of south India to Indian culture - Chennai.1932.p.10.
The Chola kings took lead in this. They built Siva and Vishnu temple. Chola architecture developed from 850 AD to 1250 AD.

Most of the early temples of the Pallavas were built with a kind of soft stone. But the Cholas used the strong granite stone. Vijayalaya, the founder of later Chola empire had built the Nisumbhasudani temple at Tanjore and it is supported by the Kanyakumari inscription of Vira Rajendra. The maturity of Chola architecture found expression in the two magnificent temples of Thanjore Brahatheeswarar temple by Raja Raja I and Gangai Konda Cholapuram temple by Rajendra I Vaishnava Temples at Cheranmahadevi, Thirukadiyam and a host of others speaks appeal\textsuperscript{60}.

The structural temples were further improved during the age of later Pandyas (1150 - 1350 AD) with raised lofty gopuras at the four gates of entrance for the temple and to construct separate temples for goddess (Amman). The last stage of Vijayanagar art rightly known as Madura Style as they found most encouragement from the Nayaks of Madurai (1600-1700 AD)\textsuperscript{61}.

\textsuperscript{60} S.R.Balasubramanian, op.cit., P.43.

\textsuperscript{61} K.A. Nilakanda Sastri, \textit{The Colas}, Madras, 1975, p.36
The famous temple dedicated to the Lord Tiruvaludisvarar was built during the Sangam Pandyas. The presiding deity Tiruvaludisvarar is the form of Lingam. His divine consorts is known as Gomathi amman. Seven times daily pujas and 14 (fourteen) festivals in 12 (twelve) months are conducted. It preserves many epigraphs on its walls dating from the period of early Pandyas to that of later Cholas.

The temple complex with many additions and renovations through centuries provide a rich field for the study of Dravidian Architecture and iconography. This temple has also a rich collection of stone and metal sculptures. In addition, it occupies a unique place in the history of Saivism in South India. Manichavasagar had sung in praise of god of this temple.

Tiruvaludisvarar temple through its history maintained supremacy not only over the society but also over the surrounding villages. It represents the achievements and aspirations of the people effecting the contemporary social, economic, religious and political life of the people.

The trend and tracts record of temple studies generally pursued were of traditional type of ideographic case histories of individual temples, predominantly by historians were the characteristic feature of the
academic history of temple studies. The temple as the pivot of medival society with its other social institutions and formation is the detailed analytical subject matter of this.

The epigraphical records mainly related grants of kings and people which were for worship and services to deities. There are thirty three inscriptions found on the walls of Tiruvaludisvarar temple. Ten inscriptions are found on the north wall of the central shrine. One inscription is found in the north west and south wall of central shrine. One inscription is found on the south wall of central shrine.

Two inscriptions found on the south side of Artha mandapa. One inscription is found on the south side of entrance in to the Artha mandapa. Three pillar inscriptions are found on the north side entrance of the Artha mandapa. One inscription found on the north wall of Artha mandapa. One inscription is found on the south wall entrance to the Artha Mandapa. One inscription is found on the northern side of Artha Mandapa. One inscription is found on the slap set up near the Kasiviswanatha temple.

Four inscriptions are found on the north wall of the temple. Two inscriptions are found on the south wall of the temple and two
inscriptions are found on the west wall of the kitchen inside the temple. Thus totally thirty three inscriptions are found on the walls of the temple. These inscriptions are in Tamil. These records give details about the gifts allotted to the temples and devathana lands. It also gives details of arrangement for *Pujas* and Festivals.

The *Sthalapurana* of the temple provides valuable information regarding the festivals and origin of the temple. Pujas and festivals furnish first hand information.

The temple administrative records are found in the office of executive officer of this temple in Perunkulam. Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Report on Indian Epigraphy, South Indian Inscription, Volume XIV also give more general information about the Tiruvaludisvarar temple. These reports also give information about *Devadhana* lands and donation allotted to the temple.

"Temples of South India" by K.R.Srinivasan, "The Colas", "A History of South India" by K.A.Nilakanda Sastri and "Temples of Tamil Nadu" by R.K.Das, "V.O.Chidambaranar District" (Orum Palam Sirappum) - (Tamil) by Sundrarajan, "Thennattu Kovilgal" (Tamil) by Radha Krishna Pillai, "Tiruvaludisvarar Tirukovil Varalaru" (Tamil) by
"A History of Tinnaveli" by R. Coldwell. "History of Venkateswaran K. Rajyan form an important secondary source. The primary sources throw a mine of information regarding the construction and general history of this temple.

"South Indian Festivals" by P.V. Jagadese Iyer, throws information about Pujas and Festivals performed in this temple. Medieval literary works like Thiruvaimoli is useful to trace antiquity of Perunkulam. Apart from the literary works journals and articles are listed in the bibliography, which contain useful information about this temple.

All the available literary works and other sources do not give a full picture of Perunkulam and its temple in respect of historic socio, religious, artistic and architectural features. Hence an attempt is made in the following pages to examine the history of Tiruvaludisvarar Temple Perunkulam in a very detailed manner.

SCOPE AND PURPOSE

The proposed thesis makes an attempt to bring out the origin and growth of temple, to discuss the authorship of temple complex, to make critical study on different sections of the society, to bring out architecture of the temple and to discuss the daily, monthly pujas and annual festival.
and important customs connected with the temple. This research work covers the period from the ancient to present day.