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RESEARCH ARTICLE

HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE OF ARULMIGU AGATHEESWAR TEMPLE IN VILLUPURAM: A STUDY THROUGH SCULPTURES

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Abstract

This article mainly focused to reveal the historical importance of Arulmigu Agatheeshwar temple through sculptures. India is the museums of religions where lot of religions originated and existed still date. All religions having been followed unique customs and ceremonies for utilizing their vision and ideas. Every religion has to relates with the trees which having characterized nature and medicinal benefits. Though the Hindu religion is having several trees as sacred and held in the temples premises, also related with God and Goddesses. Some of the minor deities placed under the trees for the protection of city, town and villages. The sculptures are a testament to the evolution of civilization since its inception, fashioned from durable materials such as wax, ivory, stone, clay, wood, metal, and bone. Sculptures reveal the progress of art and form a visual expression where designs are created in space. Sculpture is a universal art form that has been present in almost every culture throughout history.

Key words: Sculpture, Hindu religion, God and Goddesses, evolution of civilization, the Cholas

Introduction

Arulmigu Agatheeswar temple situated in Vikkiravandi, numerous divinities revered in separate sub-shrines. The worship practices and artistic representation of these deities date back to the fringes of early south India, specifically the northern regions of Tamil Nadu, between the sixth and tenth centuries. The term "fringe" encompasses the depictions of

Durga, Ayyanar, Jyesta, Ganesa, hero stones, rock art sites, and natural forms. These elaborate ritual centers were supported and revered by all sectors of society, including royalty and Brahmanas. The sculptures are a testament to the evolution of civilization since its inception, fashioned from durable materials such as wax, ivory, stone, clay, wood, metal, and bone. Sculptures reveal the progress of art and form a visual expression where designs are created in space.

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Sculpture is a universal art form that has been present in almost every culture throughout history.¹ This article mainly focused to reveal the historical importance of Arulmigu agatheeshwar temple through sculptures

Sri Agatheeswarar

Once in a while a living human can moreover get such Easwar title due to their solid Agni puja towards Ruler Kailasa Rudra Murthy. Illustrations are Agastheeswarar (holy person Agasthiyar) and Ruler Ravana (Ravan Eswar). Each Eswar god is an unceasing human soul who gotten the divined title as Easwar from Ruler Siva due to their energization to Ruler Siva in their human life. Lord Ravana;s spouse Mandodhari was a true lover of Ruler Siva. Holy person Agasthiyar lived with his spouse Hack Mudra. These ladies accomplished salvation and gotten the Easwar goddess title.²

All Easwar divine beings have five components enormous vitality taking care of powers, and consequently they revered with *Na Ma SI Ya Ya* mantras and called Ruler Siva. A few Rishi's souls gotten their Easwar title from Adhi Paraasakthi, and they will dwell within the Aadhi Parasakthi sanctuary. These Easwar divine beings, Mahrishis, Brahma rishis and defensive divine beings work as divine entourage beneath the command of Master Kailasha Rudra Murthy. The aprivar divine beings and male defensive divine beings beneath Easwar divine beings are moreover advanced as Easwar divine beings when such unceasing souls exist for more than 2000 a long time and learned were effectively, and numerous enormous was vitality taking care of abilities in their interminable life.

Other than these Easwar divine beings that dwell in Siva sanctuaries, numerous souls of holy people and Rishis gotten Easwar titles still wandering around in profound forests/mountains etc., where inexhaustible water, fire, and discuss infinite vitality exists. Such souls will be retaining nature's free – roaming vitality particles andstrengthening their souls to keep their interminable life at whatever point any modern Ruler Siva or Easwar god's sanctuaries are developed, at that point exceedingly talented undying human's souls are designated over there by the Ruler

Kailasha Rudra Muthey, and Nandi Easwar will administer them. Such recently designated souls will get the Easwar god title in that unused Siva sanctuary .A few of the unceasing human souls might trigger the intellect of a few lovers, and thus such lovers developed a Siva sanctuary for an Easwar god. Hence, numerous Easwar god sanctuaries were built.

Additionally, numerous ladies, who adored Sri Parvathi Devi, gotten the Parivar goddess status through Saktham adore. Hence in each such Ruler Siva Sanctuary there will be Parivar Goddesses as Ambal, Amman, or Devi/Mata. They perform the divine duty of Sri parvathi Devi in that Ruler Siva/Eswar sanctuary. But they are not avatars of Sri Parvati Devi. They are free female unceasing souls.

All Easwar God sanctuaries have an impressive divine entourage, and subsequently numerous gifted virtuous souls dwell over there. These sanctuary are involved with numerous parivar divine beings, defensive divine beings, navagrahas, souls who gotten the Ganapathy and Murugar titles etc., the prime defensive divine beings are Sri Bhariavar, Chandikeshwar, Veerabhadrar, Kali Devi etc. In a few Siva or Easwar sanctuaries, the Navagrahas (nine planets) such as Saturn are adored as Sani Easwar in an select moolasthananm where one of the genuine souls who have enormous aptitudes to control the sick impacts of the Saturn planet's enormous vitality dwells and favor the lovers in that sanctuary.

Ruler Kailasa Rudra Muthry features a tremendous divine entourage beneath him. The primary level parivar divine beings beneath Ruler Kailasa Rudra Murthy are Easwar divine beings. Different Easwar titled divine beings dwell at numerous sanctuaries, and they run the show a tremendous enormous zone around their sanctuary and favor the admirers of that zone. In each god or Ruler Siva sanctuary, there will be one Easwar god dwelling within the moolasthananm , and beneath him, there are numerous souls that work as his parivar divine beings. These parivar divine beings live in little garba-grihas and are revered with divine titles such as Ganapathy, Murugar, chandikeshwar, Kala Bhairavar, Veera Badrar, Kali Devi, and different other Amman Goddesses. These parivar divine beings too dwell

within the moolastahnam of an free templ and are adored as the temple's prime god.

Siva Linga

Siva fundamentally speaks to *SI*(fire eleent) and *Va*(air component) enormous vitality. Siva Linga speaks to the shape of enormous vitality. The shape of a particle (i.e., enormous vitality) is circular. Siva Linga is additionally delineated with a raised wind on beat of it. Raised head of a wind speaks to the sudden rise of vitality. When a symbol of Siva LInga with a wind is revered, the stored enormous vitality within the worshipper's body and braining cells are raised all of a sudden due to reflection characteristics. It is vitality – boosting. When OM is inserted in a Siva Linga , it speaks to all categories of enormous vitality vibrations

Within the universe, one of the characteristics of infinite vitality is flexibility. For more than 15,000 a long time, amid the reveere of Ruler Kaliasha Rudra Murthy, Numerous holy people and rishis utilized the Siva linga image as an icon of Ruler Kalisha Ruda moorty. They did not utilize appropriate human molded icons for adoring Ruler Rudra murthy.³

Sri Valli or Sri Deivanai

To begin with at that point, the title of valli. The Tamil historical underpinnings may be a basic and straight forward induction. According to an old and persistent tradition, the title of the individual is determined shape the title of the plant, found in *ta ma ka kod tu* and *te* and a number of tribal dialects. The creeper has a place to the discourse. It incorporates a winged stem and both wild and developed assortments, the cultivated assortments have eatable baboon's roots. It is mentioned within the glossary of the 99 plants for the esuriency region found in *kuruincipattu* attributed to Kapilar.

Within the most punctual Tamil writings, the term valli in its meaning of this inching plant happens at least 18 times. The sri.valli moreover valli creeper, inching plant, is nearly without question determined from Dravidian, since the Sanskrit term of dogs generally late, has no plausible Aryan etymology, and alludes to a plant commonplace for tropical India.

Sri Vishnu Durga

Some time recently the infinite creation, Goddess Durga was evoked by Master Shiva from his cleared out half to be the portion of his Shivlok. Durga could be a female vitality that defeated the devil Mahishasura who was making devastation on soil. It is accepted that Goddess Durga is the same energy (ray) that came out of the mouth of Master Vishnu and blended with rays emitted by other divine beings. She may be an immaculate shape of vitality and is additionally alluded to as the '*shakti*' of the generic outright. This prevalent Hindu mythology goddess is additionally adored in nine diverse avatars like the *Kushmanda, Chandraghanta, Bramcharini, Shaliputri, Skandamata, Katyayani, Kalaratri, Mahguri, and Mahakali* amid the Durga Puja. Goddess Durga in Indian mythology is also accepted to be the partner of Master Shiva within the frame of Parvati. Goddess Burrowed ahs eight hands, which hold a trident , a sword , a snake, bell, a drum, a shield , a container, a bow , a wheel, a conch –shell , a mace , an bolt and w a water pot. She is appeared wearing a garland of skulls and situated in a yogic. Sukhasana pose on twofold lotus or on a tiger/lion.⁴

Tevayni

Generally Tevayani Amman and her tradition salute from North India where they are related with Hindu ministers of the Dasanami arrange established by Adi Sankaracharya within the 8th century A.D. Myth an history combine to clarify how Thevayani Amman came from North India to Kataragama to recuperate her wayward spouse Ruler Murugan. Centuries prior, it is believed, the Kataragama God's senior life partner Tevayani amman incited Kalyan Giri swami to take off North India and come south to discover her lost spouse and bring him domestic.

The sage is said to have found Master Murugan in Kataragama. Kalyana girl swami requested master Murugan to go with him to India, but Valli Amma mediated and begged Giri swami never returned to India but remained and asked Thevayani Amman to come and settle in Katargama also. Thevayani Amman came and since that time all three deities live happy to gather in Kataragama.

Sri Chandikeshwara

Chanadikeshwara could be an oar of Go which is frequently seen in conjunction with Master Shiva. In truth, nearly all the shrines of Ruler Shiva feature a representation of Chandikeshwara. It is beloved that no revere is total without paying visits to him and consequently demotes make it a punt to visit Ruler Shiva. There's a wonderful legends which unfolds the story of his put of worship, Since Chandikeshwara was a little child, he was a staunch and lover of Ruler Shiva. In reality, he sued to create thousands of lingsms of Master Shiva and intervned before him all day long. The lingaams where casted beautifully out sand and he took pains to ensure that each lingam was idealize in ties shape a structure. Assist, he moreover utilized to cut the bovines and take out the drain which at that point he advertised to Ruler Shiva. This was his normal movement. This usually bothered his guardians since they were pissed with his movement of playing with sand and drain all day long. One day when Chndikeshwara went for his normal chore of milking the dairy animals, his father entered the spot where he had made his lingams and begun shouting at him. In arrange to discover hello their child, he by mistakenly ruined one of the lingams purchase venturing into it. This had been casted and kept by Chndikeshwara . This made Chandikeshwara irate and pitiful and out of outrage he cut off the appendage of his fatter. Satisfied with such dedication and commitment Ruler Shiva gave darshan to Chandikeshwara and gave him a boon the statue would continuously lie beside his possess symbol. He further, gave back his father's appendage. Since, his contemplation and look for his favors, lovers make distinctive make sorts of sounds with their fingers some time recently entering the sanctuary.⁵

Sri Swarna Bhairava

Ruler Kaal Bhairav may be a delicate and kind. He is the attendant of time and gives boons to those who suspect time and utilize it for constructive activates. The Kall Bhairav Ashtami could be a incredible day to conciliate Master Bhairav because it is accepted to be his birthday. There are 8 sorts of Kal Bhairavas and they are known as Ashta Bhairavas They are the Asithanga Bhairavar, Chanda Bhiravar, Kapala Bhairavar, Krodha Bhairavar,

unmatta Bhairavar, Bhishana Bhairavar, Ruru Bhairavar and Samhar Bhairavar. Separated from these 8 shapes or Ashta Bhairavas, there's a critical shape of Kall Bhairav knowns as the swarna Akarashana Bhairava. As per puraas , is Said that there are 64 shapes of Kaal Bhairavas and they are grouped beneath 8 main shapes and each of these 8 shapes implied a diverse shakthi that awards boons to gives.

The asisdanga bairava presents one with inventive capacity. The master bhairava acts as the divine educator. Chanda Bhairava gives one with incredible energy to overcome enemies and rivals Kroda Bhairava gifts one the control to require initiative. Unmatta bhairava makes a difference an person control their self image and arrogance narcissism. Kapala Bhairava puts a conclusion to all thankless work and activity. Bhishana Bhairava invalidates the evil impact, spirits and all negativity. Smahara Bhairava makes a difference to attain total dissolution of negative karamas of the past.⁶

Sri Navagraha

The Navagraha or the nine planets are respected by the Hindus as of the most noteworthy mysterious significance. Navagrahas are considered to play a major part in choosing the predetermination of man. the Navagrahs are Surya(sun), Chandra(Moon), Mangal(Maras), Budha(Mercury), Brihaspati(Jupitro), Shukra(Venus), Shani(Saturn), Rahu(North Lunar Hub), and Ketu (South Lunar Hub). It is accepted the nine planetary gods' impact human lives and is responsible for all great or awful time, one faces in life, the details or the nine planted divine beings in Hindu religion.⁷

Sri Suriyan and Sri Chandran

Sri Suriyan is found on the righter side of the entrance confronting toward the western side. Figured to the dispeller of darkens, healer of infection and illuminator of the world, God surya remains an critical character of Hindu sanatan dharm. Surya is known by a few names like Vivasat(Brilliant) Savitr(Nourisher), Bhaskara(Light Creator), Dinakara (lord of the star groupings), Shasriirana (of 100 rays). One of the legends of Hindu sanatan Dharm clims that Surya is the osn of Kashyapa (a vedic sage) and Aditi (infinite

hurls). It is accepted that Vishwakarma made a few weapons from the blazing flames of surya like that of discus of Ruler Vishnu. Surya was to begin with specified within the Rig Veda and after that was spoken to as an entryway help in 2nd century BCE. He is worshipped in numerous forms but two of the foremost common shapes of the god are Arka and Mitra where Arka is adored in North and Eastern India.⁸

Chandra

Chandra is lunar divinity and is additionally known as soma. The moon speaks to the intellect, famine, nature, beauty and bliss. Chandra has as it were an expert and two hands but no body. He is appeared holding white lotuses in his two hands. He is accepted to ride his chariot over the sky each night, pulled by ten white steeds or an eland. He is additionally called nishadipati and kshuparka. Ruler Chandra is additionally one of the Divine beings of richness. Chandra is the god of Karka rashi or cancer zodiac sign. The mental stability and well being of an individual largely depends on the situation of the moon in his horoscope. As soma he manages over samovar or Monday and gemstone is pearl.⁹

Mangala –planet Mars (Angarka, Kuja)

Mangala, also called Angarka, is a cruel god with four hands. He is believed to be the son of Prithvi or Bhumi, the earth goddess. He is Tamas Guna by nature and represents energetic action, faith and ego. Mars is revived as a hot planet and as a protector of the Dharma. He holds weapons in both of his hands while the other two hands are held in Abhaya and Varada mudras. Mesha rashi (Meditation) and Crishchika rashi (Vrischigam) (Aries and Scorpio signs) are ruled by Mangala or Planet Mars. He controls the muscular system of the body and also governs the nose, head and circulatory system. His vehicle is Ram and his color is red. Mangala Mars's day is Tuesday and Gem is Coral.¹⁰

Budha-Planet Mercury

Budha is the son of Chandra (the Moon) with Tara (Trakal), he is generally depicted with four hands, three of his hands holding a sword, one shield and a mace,

while the fourth is held in the usual Varada mudra. He rides on a carpet, or an eagle, or a chariot drawn by lions. Mercury represents himself riding a carp, or an eagle, or a chariot battered by lions. Mercury represents the intelligent communication. He is also the god of Merchandise, a protector of merchants, the planet governor of the nervous system. Its color is green, its day is Wednesday or Budhwar, and its jewel is emerald. Budha is the do of Muthuna Rishi and Kanya Rashi in Astroloty.¹¹

Brishaspathi –Planet Jupiter

Brishaspati, also known as Brahmanspati, is the guru of the *devas* and is praised in many hymns of the Rig Veda. He is sattava guna and represents knowledge and teaching. He is often known simply as Guru. Brihaspati is described as being yellow or golden in color and holding a staff, a lotus and its pearls. Jupiter symbolizes knowledge, love and spirituality. The planet rules the flesh, kidney, liver, fat, and arterial system. The day of Jupiter is Thursday and the gem is sapphire. Dhanu Rashi and Meena Rashi are ruled by Brishapati or Planet Jupiter

Sri Dhakshina moorthy

The earth deity Sri Dhakshina was placed on the left side of the temple entrance facing south. Dakshinamurti is one of the twenty-five athletic forms of Shiva. The origin of this form is interesting. Once Daksha, the father-in-law of Shiva, offended him and his consort Uma by not inviting them to a sacrifice he was performing. Uma went there without an invitation, but when she was offended, she jumped into the fire pit and destroyed herself. This enraged Shiva. He created Virabhadra from his hair that had destroyed Daksha. Then Shiva withdrew into a forest and sat under a banyan tree deep in meditation, after some time Shiva gave up his penance and remarried Uma, now incarnated as Parvati.¹²

Rishabha Dakshinamurti

Dakshinamurti is a statue of a Hindu god that is located on the southern side of the Devakoshta (height of 4 feet) of the central shrine in standing position. Generally, the statue of Rishabha

Daksinamurti is sculptured as seated or standing surrounded or not by rishis. But this statue is

different, because it is portrayed in a standing position. This statue reflects the Chola's Architectural Intelligence. Daksinamurti usually is depicted with four arms. Here, he also has four arms. In his upper left hand, he clasps a bunch of palm-leaves which means he is the Guru of established teachings. His lower left hand holds a flower. His upper right hands place in the Rishabha's head. His lower right hand holds the rosary (aksha mala), which reflects the seeds of wisdom.¹³

Sri Nandikeshwarar

Nandi is a rishi and one of the most famous gods in the Lord Siva pantheon. He's known as Lord Nandhieswar and is the chief god in Siva's entourage. Nandi is often depicted as a bull, which represents his strength and power. He's always close to Lord Siva, symbolizing his unwavering support for the god. Nandi is also known for his cosmic energy abilities, which are similar to those of Lord Siva. But even though he's quite powerful, Nandi always behaves respectfully and waits for instructions from Lord Siva.

To sum up, India is the museums of religions where lot of religions originated and existed still date. All religions having been followed unique customs and ceremonies for utilizing their vision and ideas. Every religion has to relates with the trees which having characterized nature and medicinal benefits. Though the Hindu religion is having several trees as sacred and

held in the temples premises, also related with God and Goddesses. Some of the minor deities placed under the trees for the protection of city, town and villages.

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