

# ***The Vijayamangalam Temple Village - Historical View***

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## **ABSTRACT**

The temple is the focus of all aspects in everyone life especially in the Hindu community. It is discriminated as religious, cultural, educational and social. The temple is also the place where one can transcend the world of man. Nageeswaser, someshwarer, Kariyavaratharaja perumal temple and Vijayapuri Amman temple located in Vijayamangalam. The region comprised in the district can be portrayed as a long plain gently sloping towards the river Cauvery in the south east the three major tributaries of river cauvery via Bhavani, Noyyal and Amaravathy drain the long stretch of mountains in the north.

Vijayamangalam , a reputed town was popularly known as „Tamil Mangai“ „Senthamil Mangai“ and „Tamilser vijayamangai“. It was known for its richness and fertility that it was eulogised as “sadha swarkapuri” (Heaven) by poet and many men of letters in Tamil Nadu. “Kong Velir” who wrote the epic Perungathai kappiyam , „Adiyaarku Nallar“ the one who wrote the meaning of the epic Silapathikaram in prose form, and Karmegapulavar“ the author of Kongumandala Sadhagam“ were born in Vijayamangalam. The Saint Bhavanandhi who wrote nannool, a Tamil Grammer treatise was born in Seenapuram, near Vijayamangalam.

**Key Words:** Mandalam, Kongumandala Sadhagam, Netai kopuram, Linga, Sthala Viruksha

## INTRODUCTION:

Vijayamangalam is one of the ancient and important place in Perundurai. taluk located in Erode District. „Kong nadu, was divided into four in groups, they are north kongu, south kongu, upper kongu and lower kongu. In that vijayamangalam is situated in north kongu<sup>1</sup>. Once “Vijayamangalam” was the headquarter of “kuruppunadu” which was one among the 24 taluk of “Northern kongu nadu” at the north east of Tamil Nadu. The great Tamil poet Masnikavasagar mentioned about „Nankuruppunadu“ in his book “megavidu thoodhu”.

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Vijayamangalam was once a capital of Kongu Nadu and it was also capital for Kuruppa Nadu, one of the 24 sub divisions (as Nadu) of Kongu mandalam. Kuruppa nadu was once flourished with Jains and their Culture. The purpose of my visit was to peep in to the old culture. Once the Jains dominated places in Kuruppa Nadu are Vijayamangalam, Thingalur, Seenapuram, Chengappalli, Nirambaiyur. Of these Chengappalli does not have trace of Janism and Nirambaiyur has vanished from the map. The Tamil grammar „Nannul“ was written by Bhavanandhi was from Seenapuram, „Silapathikara urai“ author Adiyarkku Nallar was from Nirambaiyur, „Perungadhai“ was written by Kongivelir and Kongu sathagam was written by „Karmega Pulavar“. All are from Kongumandalam, Kuruppa Nadu. Also Silamoortham of 5 Sanga Pulavars with olai suvadi in their hands is available at the Vijayamangalam Jain temple. Hence present Tamil scholars strongly believe that there might be a Tamil sangam at Vijayamangalam. The „Kuruppa nadu“ has an influence in today’s culture also. This is used during Betrothal ceremonies and also in worshipping of Kuladeivam.

In olden days it was a business centre. The foreign coins were unearthed during ASI excavation. Latter the main profession in Vijamangalam was weaving. About 50 years before the

handloom weaving was in full swing in Velliraveli, Devanampalayam, Veerasankali, Vijayamangalam, Kaikolapalayam, etc. The weaving was mainly done by the Mudaliyars, a caste in Tamil Nadu. The mudaliyars are also called as „Kaikolar“ and the place Kaikolapalayam was named after them. Even today one can find two towns named “Pulavar Palayam “ which means the residence of poets, in the north and southern sides of Vijayamagalum. This was the town where “the fourth Tamil Sangam” was constituted to propagate knowledge and enhance the glory of the native tongue, Tamil<sup>2</sup>. Thus town has rendered a good deal of service to spreads the glory of Tamil language far wide.

King „Nannan“ who was ruling over „Anamalai“ near pollachi was a contemporary of the chera king “kalangai kanni Narmudicheral“. There was enmity between „kosalas“ and Nannan“ that kosalas waged a war against Nannan, the king of Anamalai. They cut off a mango tree, which was considered the symbol of nannan“s valour and defence. The Kosalas“ were backed up by the chera king Kalangai kanni Narmudicheral that Nannan migrated from Anaimalai and became the king of perundurai. Instead of a mango tree, he natured a „Vaagai tree“ as a mark of his valour and defence. Later, he named the area under his control as „Vagaipudur“ 9 (a place of success) the word, vaagai“ means Victory. As by Auvai s. Duraisamy pillai, Latter when the Jains came from North India in the first country A.D. they must have changed the name „Vaagaipudur“ (a pure Tamil name) into “Vijayamangalam” (north Indian name) for their Convenience. Hence then it has come to be known by the name.

### **TEMPLES IN VIJAYAMANGALAM:**

A Temple in the original sense of the Latin word “Tempulam” meant a rectangular place marked out for the purpose of observations. In the extended sense meant consecrated place or a building rectangular in shape where the idol of god was housed<sup>3</sup>. In the earlier days in India the temples and the images of gods were made of wood. As the temples built by wood and other perishable materials decayed in course of time, stones used in the place of wood.

Kovarthanambigai temple, Nageswarar temple, Someswarer temple, Kariya manicka perumal temple, Sri Chandraprabha Theerthangar temple and Vijyapuri Amman temple has been planned and built-up in accordance with Aagamanga sithanthangal sastra. Above these temples consists of one rectangular enclosures round the sanctum. The enclosures called praharas are

breached and marked by gopuras. The main entrance of Nageeswarar temple, Kovarthanambigai temple, Kariyavaratharaja Perumal temple and Vijayapuri Amman temple faces south.

### **KOVARTHANAMBIGAI TEMPLE**

At the eastern side of Vijayamangalam, the temple of the deities' kovarthanambigai and Nageswarar is situated. At the western side of the temple, Chithira Mezhi Vinnagar Kariya Maanicka perumal temple, and Mariamman temple are situated. Vijaya Ganapathi temple and Nalla Kinatru Pillayar temple are at the heart of the town Vijayamangalam<sup>4</sup>. The Temple of Chandra Praba Theeathangarar, after the name of the eight holy saint of samana religion, is at the Northern side. This temple is popularly known as "Nettai kopuram" (the tallest tower), Also „Vijayapuri Amman Temple“ which has a reference in the holy epic „Mahabharath“ is there. It is believed that Arjuna one of the pancha pandavas, who is known for his archery, left his bow (kandepam) at his temple, when he was in exile with his brothers<sup>5</sup>.

The naturally formed idol, "Linga" is in the shrine of Lord Shiva. The impression of the horns of a cow is visible at the top of the idol. So, it is believed that, once, „kovarthanambiga“ the „goddess of cows“ came covers there every day to worship the idol, Linga by secreting milk on it<sup>6</sup>. Apart from that, it is believed that two cobras used to come over their everyday to perform Pooja, offering flowers to lord Shiva. May be that is why, lord Shiva (Linga) in the shrine is called "Nageeswarar" the god of cobras. The inscription of two cobras offering flowers to Lord Shiva could be seen at the doorway of the shrine of "pancha Linga". This west faced temple is situated at the southern side of vijayamangalam. Every year we could see the sun rays fall on the idol at 6.00 p.m in the first week of February. When we came round the shrine of Nageeswarar <sup>7</sup>, we could see the idol of Vishnu Durga facing North, Lingothpavar facing south and Lord Dhatchinamurthi facing south.

### **NAGESWARAR TEMPLE**

The temple of Nageeswarar covers a vast area of about 1.29.5 Hectare. The west facing Nageeswarer temple at the eastern side of Vijayamangalam occupies 4950 square feet consisting 210 feet length east – west and 165 feet length north-south surrounded by a compound wall. Kariyavaratharaja perumal temple covers the area of about 0.48.0 Hectare, and someshwarar temple covers the area of about 0.24.0 Hectare. The famous song Thirupugazh which begins in

the line kalaga sampramath thalevi losana.....”<sup>8</sup> were sung by the poet Sri Arunagirinathar, eulogising the idol of Lord Shanmuga Subramania in this temple. The idol of Lord Shanmuga Subramania is of six feet height, carved out of a single stone called monolithic marvel.

There are separate shrines for „Navagraha“ Lord“ Saneeswara“ Lord Sandikeswara, Lord Birava, Saptha kanniyar, sixty three Nayanmars and the Sagasthra Linga, Lord Nageswara“’s shrine is surrounded by four big halls (mandabam) such as Arthamandapam, Maha Mandapam, Snabana mandapam, and Nandhi mandapam. In the same was goddess kovarthanambiga“’s shrine includes Arthamandapam and Mahamandapam.

Just thirty feet ahead of goddess Kovarthanambigai“’s mandapam is the shrine of „Thathathreya“. It is also called the shrine of Nallandavar”. The standing posture of Thathathreya (a holy saint) is curved out of a huge pillar. It is believed that this shrine of Thathareya was constructed over there to reduce the over whelming holy power of the goddess Kovarthanambigai. All idols and inscribed figures in this temple are very much attractive and lively. The idols made of brass or copper metal are usually taken by a car around the town along the streets for the people to worship at the time of car festivals. These idols of deities have separate shrines in the temple.

Every shrine has got a tower. There is a big hall at the entrance of the temple which proclaims the skill of sculptors in architecture. But there is no main tower at the entrance. The idol of Narasimbamoorthi and Anjaneya are in bass relief in the pillars at the entrance.

In the ceiling of the northern side of the tower, Ozhagappandhi the news about the construction of the temple was inscribed in the year 1968 B.C. The inscriptions state that the construction work must have taken place at the time of Rajalinga Manickavasagar.<sup>9</sup> Also stated that work was in the months of April and May 1883. Vilva tree is considered as the holy tree (Sthala Viruksha) of the temple. There is also a well with holy water.

## **THE HISTORY OF BOOTHAKINARU**

It is believed by the people that the well was dug by a male ghost in the good old time of Aadheenakarhar Manickavasaga Swamy. Once upon time M.V. Swamy visited a village called Keeranur, near Palani the male ghost was enslaved by him and it. became his disciple and did

service to its master for many long years. Then, the ghost got relieved of the spell of his curse. He was rejoiced and dug the well in Nageswara temple, in remembrance of his service to his guru(master). The well is called “Boothakinaru” [the well of a ghost], The male ghost is named “Pallakku Muniyappn.”<sup>10</sup>

### **SRI KARIVARADHARAJA PERUMAL TEMPLE**

Some of the important features of this temple are... This temple is called as Chithramezhi Vinnagaram Arulmigu Sridevi Boodevi Samedha Sri karivaradharajaperumal. The temple is facing east with Garudathoon is in front. There is no Rajagopuram and only small mandapam with arch. The temple is at a lower place than the outside. Garudalvar is in a small mandapam. In the front mandapam only Ganapathy. In the maha mandapam Veera Anjaneyar, Thirumangai Alwar, Sri Visvaksenar, Sri namalvar and Sri Ramanujar. In the arthamandapam dwarabalakars are only big size Nagars. This shows that the Kongu region Nagars are worshiped generally. In the sanctum Sridevi and Boodevi Samedha Sri Karivaradharajaperumal. The temple was constructed during 12th century. Epigraphs are available at the base of the sanctum outside wall.

### **SRI NAGESWARASWAMY SHIVA TEMPLE**

Iraivan : Sri Nageswaraswamy Iraivi : Sri Govarthanambigai Some of the important features of this temple are... Nagars under a Bodhi ( Arasamaram ) tree in front of the temple. The Rajagopuram is under construction and in front there is a vilakkuthoon or Garuda thoon. The temple is facing west, since the temple was built by a Kelrala Chera Kings. ( To face their direction) In mahamandapam Sannadhi for Sri Valli Deivanai samedha Sri Subramaniyar, Bairavar, a Big size Nagar and 5 Shiva Lingams of Panchabootha sthalangal and Sandikeswarar. In koshtam Ganapathy, Dhakshinamurthy, Durgai, Lingothbavar, Brahma. Dwarabalakars are beautiful. Man and Mazhu on the left side dwarabalakar and soolam and damaru on the right side dwarabalakar.

### **SOMESWARA TEMPLE**

A west facing Someswara temple is situated between the Nageswara and Perumal temple. It is also known as Milageswara temple. The idols of Linga , Nandhi and Vigneshwara

are there in the temple. The Nageswarar, Kariyamanichka Varadharaja Perumal and Someswara temple are at the heart of the town Vijayamangalam, easily accessible the people Near the main road. Now all these temples are under the control of Hindu religious and endowment department of Tamil Nadu. Supervised by the officials of Vetri Velayutha samy temple in oothukuli.

### **JAIN TEMPLE**

Vijayamangalam was an ancient Jain temple that belonged to the Digambara Sect. Once it served as a popular pilgrimage centre but now it is in a ruined state and thus abandoned. The Digambar Jain temple complex is about 20 km from Erode. While driving down from Coimbatore, it is 27 km from Avanashi on the NH-47. The temple has now been taken by the Archaeological Survey of India. The temple is believed to have been built in the 6th Century. The principal deity of the temple is Lord Chandraprabha. The temple was once a popular place of worship for the Jains. Presently the temple is now in a dilapidated state and has undergone the ravages of time. According to the history of this temple, it was visited and deeply revered by the devotees of the Digambar Sect. The presiding deity of the temple, Chandraprabha Swami is a 30-cm idol. However, the idol had been stolen from the temple. Instead of the idol of Chandraprabha, now an idol of Kushmandala Devi and that of Lord Mahavira can be seen here. The temple is presently visited by very few devotees.

### **SRI VIJAYAPURI AMMAN TEMPLE**

Sri Vijayapuri Amman Temple was constructed in accordance with Architectures of the south Indian Temple tradition. The temple was planned as per the Aahama vithikal ( rules ) and the various structural part of the temple were such as in other south Indian Temples

### **CONCLUSION**

Nageeswaser, someshwarer, Kariyavaratharaja perumal temple and Vijayapuri Amman temple located in Vijayamangalam. The region comprised in the district can be portrayed as a long plain gently sloping towards the river Cauvery in the south East the three major tributaries of river cauvery vig Bhavani Noyyal and Amaravathy drain the long stretch of mountains in the north. At the Eastern side of Vijayamangalam the temple of the deities Kovarthanambigai and Nageeswarar is situated at the western side of the temple kariyamanicka varatharaja perumal

temple. And mahakaliyamman temple are situated. A west facing someshwara temple is situated between the nageeswara and perumal temple. It is also known as Malleageeswara temple. The idols of Linga, Nandhi and vinayagar are there in the temple. To conclude these temples occupy an important place in the religions history of Tamil Nadu It is an evidence of religions tolerance that this town possesses Saiva, Vaishnava and Jains temples.

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