

GROWING TOURISM AND HERITAGE SITE OF KANCHIPURAM DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT:

Maintaining one's culture, values and traditions is beyond price. Culture consists of connections, not for separations: to specialize is to isolate. *One of the 'seven holy cities of India', Kanchipuram, also known as Kanchi, is called as the golden city of a thousand temples. Kanchipuram is one holy city for both Shaivites (Shiva worshippers) and Vaishnavas (devotees of Vishnu), it continues to overwhelm the visitors with its spiritual temples with their sculptures and architectural beauty.* Early 8th century CE Kailasanath temple is one of the most remarkable structures existing from ancient India. Culture is the widening of the mentality and the strength of mind. In this paper, historical importance of our past glory of ancient city of temples in Tamilnadu, South India. There is scope for further looking at the links between the historic environment, sense of place and social capital using in-depth qualitative approaches. Historic protection takes place in such varied sets and settings that students have opportunities to learn real-world lessons not only in history but also in math, sociology, environmental studies, urban planning, transportation issues, economics, building crafts, and many more disciplines.

Key Words: Architectural, Traditions, Culture, Temples, Administrative

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Kanchipuram, also known as Kanchi or Kancheepuram, is a temple city in the Tondaimandalam region, Tamil Nadu, India, 72 km (45 mi) from Chennai. The city covers an area of 11.605 km² (4.481 sq mi) and had a population of 164,265 in 2011. It is the administrative headquarters of Kanchipuram district. Kanchipuram is well connected by road, train and the nearest domestic and international airport to the city, which is located at Tirusulam in Kanchipuram district. Kanchipuram is one of the most sacred cities in southern India and the second holiest after Varanasi. Also named as "The City of Thousand Temples", Kanchipuram is an important holy pilgrimage for Hindus. People travel from different places to admire the splendid stone carvings, temple chariot processions and shrines.

1.2 WHAT IS HERITAGE?

Our heritage is a legacy from our past, a living, important part of life today, and the stories and places we pass on to future generations. The nearest cities are 75 km from Chennai, 68 km from Vellore, 65 km from Mahabalipuram, 108 km from Tirupati & 127 km from Pondicherry. Kanchipuram or Kanchi is one of the most well known pilgrimage place in Tamil Nadu. It is a temple town and the headquarters of Kanchipuram district. Kanchipuram is one of the most famous weekend getaways from Chennai and one of the main Places to trip in Tamilnadu.

Kanchipuram has rich history and it's one of the oldest cities in India. The temples of Kanchipuram are known for their splendor and immense architecture. The architecture of Kanchi monuments were trendsetter with great sculpture work and unique style and became a benchmark for South Indian architecture.

The city is the capital of Pallava Dynasty, and most of the known temples built during their period. On the 3rd - 9th century CE, Kanchi was the capital of the Pallavas. They ruled over the region extending from Andhra Pradesh to the river Kaveri in the south. They were a great marine contacts China, Siam, Fiji, etc., through their chief Port Mamallapuram. After

the fall of pallavas the Cholas ruled Kanchi from 10 -13th century and Vijayanagar kingdom ruled 14th to 17th century and at the end controlled by British in 18th century. Kanchipuram is located on the Palar River and its well-known by temples and hand-wovensilk sarees. There are a number of big temples, like Kamakshi Amman Temple, Varadharaja Perumal Temple, Kailasanathar Temple, Karchapeshwarar Temple, Ekambaranatha Temple that is one of the five forms of abodes of Lord Siva, (it is the earth abode here, other abodes include Chidambaram (Sky), Sri Kalahasti (air), Thiruvanaikoil (water) and Tiruvannamalai (fire)).

1.3 HERITAGE AND CITY OF TEMPLE: KANCHIPURAM CITY

The city is the capital of Pallava Dynasty (4th to 9th centuries CE). Kanchipuram fell to King Pulakesin II (r. 610-642 CE) in the 7th century CE when this powerful Early Western Chalukya ruler defeated Harsa of Kanauj. Falling again into Pallava hands it was defeated by the Chalukya ruler Vikramaditya II (r. 733-746 CE) and an existing inscription at the place records this victory. Kanchi was the home of the famous poet Bharavi (6th century CE) who wrote the Kiratarjuniya and the famous Hindu philosopher Ramanuja (11th to 12th century CE). Still important religious centre, the site has over 120 temples and is also noted for its production of fine silk saris.

The Kailasanatha is one of the largest and most ornate ancient temples in the whole of India.

Famous temples:

- Ashtabujakaram Temple
- Chitragupta Swamy Temple
- Ekambareswarar Temple
- Kailasanathar Temple
- Kamatchi Amman Temple
- Sathyanatheswarar Temple
- Trilokyanatha Temple
- Ulagalantha Perumal Temple
- Vaikunthnathar Temple
- Varadaraja Perumal Temple

1.4 SOME EVIDENCES SPEAKS THE VOLUME OF THE HISTORICAL PLACE:

“A nation’s customs reside in the hearts and in the spirit of its people.”

- Kanchipuram is one of the ancient cities of India, has a constant history of more than 2000 years & it is the administrative head office of Kanchipuram Dist.
- Kanchimatha, was founded by the Hindu saint Adi Sankaracharya, and popular as one of the four dhams of Hinduism. The city is also known by its culture and civilization. Kanchipuram was known for not only the temple but also by its flourishing handloom and weaving industry.
- It was locally referred to as Kanchi or Kachipedu. It is Located on the Vegavathy River, Kanchipuram has been ruled by the different rulers are the Pallavas, the Medieval Cholas, the Later Cholas, the Later Pandyas, the Vijayanagar Empire, the Carnatic kingdom, and the British.
- Kanchipuram city is situated in the south India and is the administrative head office of the district of Kanchipuram in state of Tamil Nadu.

- Kanchipuram is a spectacular temple city, known as 'city of thousand temples. It is one of the seven holy cities (as per Hindu mythology) to reach final attainment.
- The city is famous for its renowned crafted world-famous silk sarees and the main occupation of the people is weaving silk sarees. As a result, Kancheepuram is called as City of silk. The silk weavers of Kanchi settled more than 400 years ago and have given it an desirable status as the producer of the best silk sarees in the country
- The city was also a spiritual centre of advanced education for Jainism and Buddhism. The city's built tradition are the Kailasanathar Temple, Vaikunta Perumal Temple, Varadharaja Perumal Temple, Ekambareswarar Temple (having one of the tallest temple towers in India), Kamatchi Amman Temple, Kumarakottam Temple et al.

1.5 HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE OF KANCHIPURAM

“Old place has soul”-Sarah Anderson

- a) This district is much familiar when we go through past history of the town who has ruled by:
 - Pallavas
 - Cholas
 - Vijayanagar rulers
 - Muhammadan Kings
 - British people
- b) An ancient division of Tamil country named as Tondaimandalam, it comprising present districts of Kancheepuram, Chennai, Tiruvallur, Vellore and Tiruvannamalai. The Capital of Tondaimandalam was Kancheepuram.
- c) The English name of the ancient Kancheepuram is 'Conjeevaram'. Kancheepuram is located on the Vegavati River and the capital of the Early Cholas as far back as the 2nd century BC and a Pallava capital between the 6th and 8th centuries.
- d) It is surrounded by the famous places like Mamallapuram, Tiruvannamalai, Vellore, Sholingar, Thiruthani and Thirupathi. The sculptures in Mamallapuram town are famous for Pallava's architectures. The successive dynasties from Pallavas to Vijayanagar kings have consciously added to the architectural and religious splendor and value through 1500 years.
- e) Kalidasa has described Kanchipuram to be the best among the cities (Nagaresu Kanchi)
- f) The king of Kanchi, Mahendravarman-I was a great researcher and musician, a man of great intelligence and also a great playwright.
- g) Yuan Chwang is the great Chinese traveler. He visited the city in the 7th century and he said that this city was 6 miles in circumference and its people were well known for bravery and holiness as well as for their love of justice and veneration for learning.
- h) Buddha had visited the place. As regards learning, Kanchi stood second in glory only to Banaras. The history of Kanchi can be gone back to several centuries before the arrival of the Christian era.
- i) The place Patanjali's Mahabhashya written in the second century B.C. by the famous Tamil classic writer Manimekalai and Perumpanattu Padai, a great Tamil poetical work, vibrantly portray the city as it was at the beginning of the Christian era. Pathupattu is one of the sangam literatures reads that the king Thondaiman Ilandirayan ruled this city around since 2500 years.
- j) Pallavas ruled the Kanchi from the 3rd to the 9th century A.D. They ruled over the region extending from the river Krishna in the north to the river Kaveri in the south.

- k) The Pallavasequipped the city with walls, moats, etc., with broad and well laid out roads and big temples.
- l) They were a great marineinfluence with contacts with other countries China, Siam, Fiji, etc., through their chief Port Mamallapuram. The Cholas ruled this town from 10th century to 13th century and Kings of Vijayanagara dynasty ruled from 14th century to 17th century. The KanchiEkamabaranadhar temple tower, 192 feet height and Varadaraja Perumal temple 100-pillar mandabam (building) are famous architectural techniques of Vijayanagara Dynasty.
- m) The British Viceroy Robert cleave, responsible of British ruling India has exclaimed the architectural techniques of Varadharajaperumal temple and presented a wonderfulornaments to this temple.
- n) Kanchi was a major place of Tamil learning as well aspilgrimage for Buddhists, Jains and Hindus. Once the place of wisdom and religious fervour started its climb down from the mughal invasions and followed by three centuries of colonial rule under the British.

Thus, one must encourage the heritage and preserve the saga saint of historical places. We must encourage people to go on board on heritage travel. We also prepared a list of all of our reasons why conserving heritage is important. My heritage has been my grounding, and it has brought me calm. A concerted effort to preserve our heritage is an essential link to our cultural, learning, aesthetic, motivating and financial legacies – all of the things that quite exactly make us who we are.

1.6 CLOSING REMARKS

That the historic environment contributes towards an exclusive sense of place and a sense of continuity, which can support a greater sense of people's self-esteem and place attachment. Bandarin et al. probing of the significance of cultural heritage for modern society of in a postmodern environment and suggests it is tied to visions for a sustainable potential and adaptive reuse. 17 Radoine support the emergence of a vision for sustainable development, which 'combines heritage, contemporary design and environmental awareness'. In this vein, the put into practice of urban protection of built heritage in itself can offer the following benefits:

- Bring as one a range of public and private stakeholders
- New approaches and ideas to attain urban and environmental sustainability
- Unlock home knowledge, innovation and security (support the knowledge economy)

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