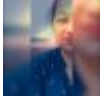


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ATHMANATHAR SWAMY KSHETRAM, TIRUPERUNTHURAI(TN)

Here Shiva is formless (Atmanatar). There is no Sivalingam, only a pedestal/Avudayar in the sanctum, so the name Avudayar Koil.

It is so built that setting sun strikes the sanctum even though it is cloistered in 3 pradakshina paths



In 9th c AD, Manikkavacakar, the chieftain of Arimarthana Pandian II, was sent to buy horses for the kingdom. On his way, he saw a guru chanting Shiva's name. Manikkavacakar desired to be his student. He fell into a deep meditation. When he awakened, the guru was gone.



He realised that he was guided by Shiva himself and used the money meant for horses to build the Mandir. Here, he composed the sacred Shaiva siddhanta "The Tiruvacakam" whose verses make up 8 volumes out of total 12 volumes in Shaivite literature.

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Inside the sanctum is an upturned bowl or kuvalai, which represents the body and soul.

Ma Ambika is Yoga Nayika here. She too is formless and symbolised by Yoga 'Peetham' or pedestal on which her footprint is carved out. Rice cakes are kept under the bowl as an offering to her.



As Shiva was himself the Guru of Sri Manickavasagar, worshippers visit here to pray for their education and progress.

It is believed that treating Sri Manickavasagar different from Shiva is an unforgivable sin.

The Chariot in the Mandir is one of the biggest in Tamil Nadu.

