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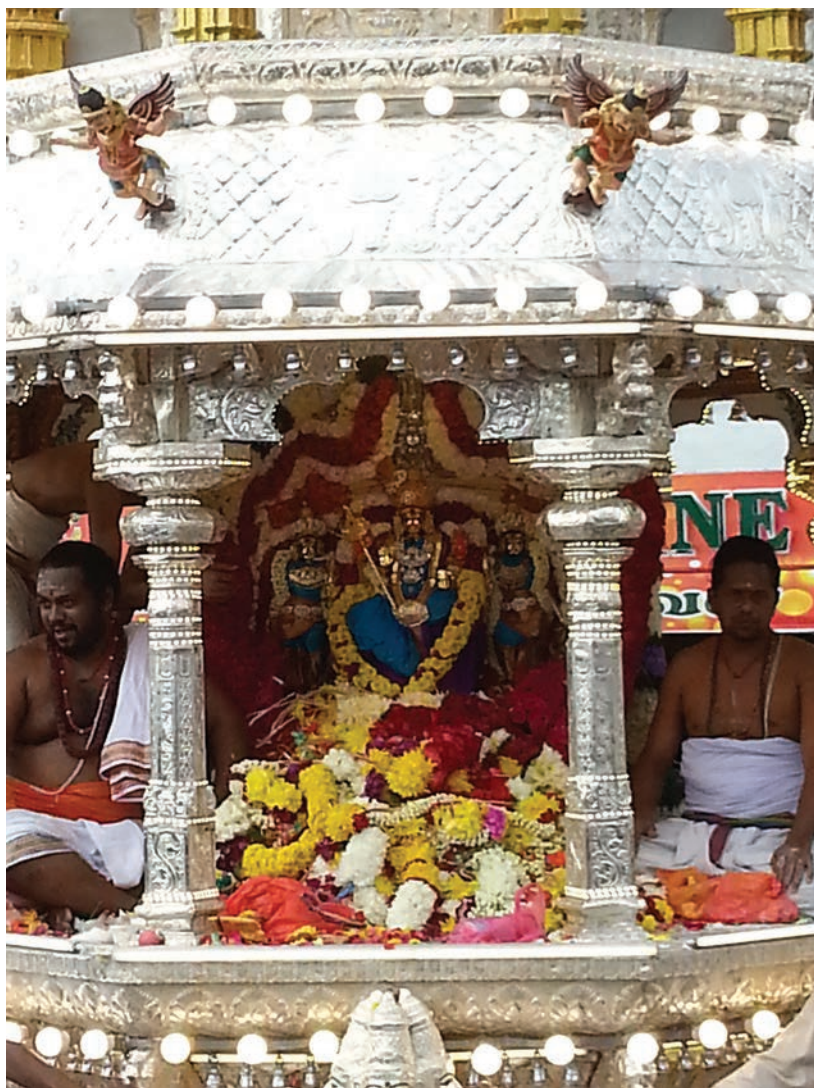
The statue of Lord Murugan at the foot of Batu Caves steps. Note the crowd on the steps. This continues throughout the entire period of the Thaipusam festival.
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Preparing for Thaipusam: Batu Caves on a night leading up to the festival.
© Kahan Singh Gill. Reproduced with permission.



Thaipusam at Night: A series of *mayil* (peacock) kavadis are being borne towards the Batu Caves steps. © Krisztian Gal. Reproduced with permission.



Altar within the chariot and the priests. © Jayaganesan Kangris.
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Chariot at night. © Jayaganesan Kangris. Reproduced with permission.



Preparing the kavadi altar – each kavadi has its own altar.
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Altar setup. © Eric Lafforge. Reproduced with permission.



A devotee preparing for trance. The surrounding crowd demonstrates the public scrutiny each devotee must endure and the pressures to attain trance.
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Devotees preparing to enter trance. © Kahan Singh Gill. Reproduced with permission.



A devotee at the onset of the state of trance (*arul*).
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An entranced devotee undergoing the insertion of a *vel*. This one is being pushed through the cheeks. © Krisztian Gal. Reproduced with permission.



Devotees at Batu Caves. © Kahan Singh Gill. Reproduced with permission.



A Chinese devotee with a *ter* kavadi. The assistant holds the rope taut while the bearer makes his way to the shrine in the caves. © Krisztian Gal. Reproduced with permission.



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Author with kavadi. © Eric Lafforge. Reproduced with permission.



Batu Caves statue of Murugan. © Kahan Singh Gill. Reproduced with permission.



A crowd scene taken from the top of Batu Caves steps. Over a million people attend Thaipusam at Batu Caves each year. © Krisztian Gal. Reproduced with permission.



Sri Vivekananda Ashram, Brickfields, Kuala Lumpur: A landmark in Malaysian Hinduism.



Statuary depicting Murugan and his consorts. From left: Valli, Murugan and Devayanai. (Taken at the newly opened Om Sri Maha Nageswari Temple, Puchong, south of Kuala Lumpur.)



An image of Murugan with the sage Agastya. (Taken at the newly opened Om Sri Maha Nageswari Temple, Puchong, south of Kuala Lumpur.)



Chettiars with the Silver Chariot, Penang. Postcard circa 1910.



Thaipusam in Penang. Postcard circa 1940.