



## ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE OF SRI KALYANA VARATHARAJA PERUMAL TEMPLE AT KOLUMAM OF TRIPUR DISTRICT

**K. Parijatham**

Ph.D., Research Scholar, Department Of History,  
Mother Teresa Women's University, Kodaikanal, Tamil Nadu.



### ABSTRACT :

**T**he Architecture and sculpture of ancient, originating as it did in religious tendencies and destined to serve religious purposes, could only follow its own immediate purpose in sacred representations, otherwise it was, and remained simply decorative and always connected with architecture. In accordance with the Indian character, the sacred representations themselves were not so much the out set of the development as its end. According to the view of life prevailing among the Hindus, purely artistic execution never found scope in the existence of such, but only in sporadic instances. The sacred figures themselves even came to be employed again decoratively. The aim of the research paper is to carry out the architectural importance of Kolumam Sri Kalyana Varatharaja Perumal Temple at Udumalpet of Tripur District, Tamil Nadu. It is located far from fifteen kilometres southeast of Udumalpet.

**KEYWORDS :** Vaishnava tradition, Upana, Adhistana, Kumuda. Pada, Devakostha, Tala, Prasthara, Grieva, Sikhara, Sthupi, Mahanasikudu and Toranas etc.,

### INTRODUCTION:

The 'Vimana' of Sri Kalyana Varatharaja Perumal Temple claims to have the six aspects of South Indian temple architecture regularly. The 'Atithala' which is called the 'Athistana' possesses the Padapanda state with the regular organs about it. The 'Manasara' gives a clear and detailed account of the variety of the 'Athistanas,' among them one belongs to the Padapanda type. The organ 'Jagadi' is next to with the thripattai 'Kumuda' which is due to the impact of the Pallavas, the Cholas and the Pandyas. This was followed by the Kongus. Such type of 'Kumuda' parts can be found in the temples of Balasamudram and Periakottai that are near Palani or the region of the south kongu.

### METHODOLOGY

Preparation of the manuscript both descriptive and analytical methods have been used. The 'Adhistana' has the following aspects like the 'Kanda', the 'Pattihai' and again the 'Kanda' and the 'Vethihai'. The decoration of the 'Padmas' are carved on the 'Vethihai' parts. The 'Jagadi' along with the three-pattai Kumuda is at a height of a feet. On the whole the height of the 'Adhistana' is five feet tall. Another aspect of the Pada namely is carved following the artistic features of the Kongu Cholas. There are other names for this like the Pada and the 'Pitti'. In this portion the half-pillars and the figures like the 'Devakoshtas' have been dexterously engraved. One can see the measurements of the wall-portions of the sanctum and the pada portions of the 'Artha Mandapa' being carved the same. Moreover the 'Devakoshtas' have also been well chiseled. The half-pillars belong to the

'Brahmakanda' type. The organs that are found here are the 'Sikhara' portion the 'Malasthana', the 'Kalasa', the 'Thadi', the 'Kuda', the 'Padma', the 'Palahai', the 'Veerakanda' and the 'Pothihai'.

### VIMANA ARCHITECTURE

The 'Pothihai' has been followed from the imperial Cholas. About this type of 'Pada' portions the works on architecture give explanations with many norms. Generally the organs with the significant features like the half-pillars, the 'Devakoshtas', the 'Koshta', the 'Panjaras', the 'Kumba Panjaras' and the 'Kamba Panjaras'. On the other hand there are only the half-pillars and the 'devakoshtas'. A significant nature is the carving of the relief structures in the 'Devakoshta' archways instead of the 'Devakoshta' sculptures in the 'Pada' parts.

The 'Prasthara' has been carved very ordinarily. Figures like the 'Kaboda' and the 'Yazhies' have been carved on this portion without the 'Kudus'. On the above and below of the 'Prasthara' there are either the rows of the yazhies or the 'bhudaganas'. On the 'Eluthaham' that is found at the lower part of the 'Prasthara', the 'Padma Ethazhl' have been carved. In certain temples such type of decorative craftsmanship cannot be found on the 'Eluthagam'. During the days of the Vijayanagar and the Nayaks these have attained many improvements.

Even in the scooped temples of the Pallavas on the 'Eluthaham' rows of the 'Poodakanas' can be found. Here, near to this in the Choleswarar Temple and on its 'vimana' the rows of the 'bhudaganas' can be found. On the corners of the 'Prasthara' simple 'Kodikarukku' art can be found. From the 'Upana' to the 'Prasthara' crafts on the black-stones can be seen in this temple. Other portions are all relief craft. On the first 'Thala' the relief sculptures, structures in the shape of half pillars and 'Karnakudus' are seen. In the 'Prasthara' of the first 'Thala' the 'Kudus' and the 'Sala' have been engraved. The 'bhudaganas' act as the support of the 'Vimana'. The first 'Thala' which is seven feet in height is rich in relief craftsmanship. The important organ of the 'Grieva Koshta' is rich in decorative design. Here the relief-structures and the sculptures of the yazhies and the 'garudavahana' are found.

The 'Vimana' has a circular-shaped 'Sikhara'. This is the chief organ on the 'Grieva'. This kind of 'Sikhara' bears names like the 'Nagara', the 'Vesara' and 'Dravida'. If the 'Sikhara' is circular in shape it is called the 'Vesara' 'Vimana'. At the same if it is square-shaped it is called the 'Nagara Vimana'. If it is beam shaped it is called the 'Dravidian Vimana Sikhara'. These statements are stated by the researchers. In Tamilaham these three types are generally found. This temple which has the circular shaped 'Sikhara' has on its four directions the 'Mahanasi Kudus' and in the inbetween parts small 'Kudus' are found.

The sixth part on this 'Sikhara' is the 'Kalasa'. It is of stone-relief and metal. In the beginning days the 'Kalasa' was found on the Mammallapuram Pancha Pandavar rathas. This temple possesses either the 'Kalasa' of metal or the 'Sthupi'.

On the other portions of the 'Vimana' the 'Adhistana' with the organs are found regularly. On all the directions of the 'Pada' part the structures of the 'Devakoshta' are found. The model sculptures that have been installed here are found on the archways of the 'Devakoshtas'. On the south and west sides of the 'Vimana' the artistic features mentioned before are found. In the archway sculptures many alterations can be seen. The 'Artha Mandapa' and sanctum from the 'Upana' to the 'Prasthara' possess the architectural-designs of black stones.

### The Architecture of the Maha Mandapa:

The 'Karpagruha' and the 'Maha Mandapa' equal to that of the 'Artha Mandapa' have architectural features. The 'Maha Mandapa' 'Upana' is in par with the 'Karpagruha Arthamandapa Athistana'. The organs of the Upa-'Peeda' are the 'Jagadi', the three-pattai 'Kumuda', the 'Kanda', the 'Pathihai', the 'Kala' and the 'Vethihai'. The Upa-'Peeda' which is nearly five feet tall supports the other sides of the 'Mandapa' special mention is to made the upa-'Peeda' bears the wall-side which is nearly twelve-feet in height. On this side inscriptions that remind of the Kongu Cholas can be found here and there. The 'Mandapa Prasthara' with no 'Kudus' has been carved at a height of nearly a feet. On it there are no 'Kodikarukku' crafts or other decorative-designs. The 'garpagruha' the 'Artha Mandapa' and the 'Maha Mandapa' have been constructed at the same time.

### The Architecture of Thayar Sannathi:

To the right side of Devi Natchiyar ammai the 'Karpagruha' and the Muha-'Mandapa' have been excited for Kalyana Varatharaja Perumal. The architectural designs of the sanctum can be praised in various ways. Though the 'Athistana' is simple the artistic features have been correctly followed. There is a wall which is nearly nine feet tall. The 'Prasthara' is simple and the organs of the 'Vimana' have been well carved. The Thayar 'Sannathi' belongs to the 'Ehathala' state. The 'Grieva' and the circular-shaped 'Sikhara' and the 'Sthubi' possess the artistic trends of nowadays. This 'Sannathi' has a beautiful MuhaMandapa'. It is nearly twelve feet in height with a breadth of seven feet rich in artifacts of today. Many inscriptions are found at the foot of the 'Mandapa'. There is only one sub-'Sannathi' at the 'Prahara' of the temple. It has completely the 'garpagrauha' the Muha-'Mandapa', the 'Athistana', the 'Pada' and the 'Prasthara'. The 'Vimana' of Thayar 'sannathi' and the chief 'Sanctum' when compared with each other resemble the same in the structure of the 'Sikhara'. It belongs to the 'Ehathala' type. The main 'Vimana' belongs to the 'dvithala' variety.

These have been constructed at the same time has been understood Arulmigu Kalyana Varatharaja Perumal Temple is square in shape. The 'Artha Mandapa' has been carved in par with the temple. Near to this the 'Antharala' at the entrance of the 'Artha Mandapa' is fully decorative in artistic designs. The 'Antharala' is in between the 'Artha Mandapa' and the 'Maha Mandapa'.

This 'Sannathi' with the beautiful 'Maha Mandapa' possesses elegant artistic pillars. The craftsmanship belongs to the days of the Kongu Cholas with a slightly change of the later days. The foot portion of the pillars is of 'Brahmakanda' kind. Simple relief sculptures many in number can be found here. This 'Brahmakanda' pillar is nearly three feet in height. Next to this a structure with eight-sided pillar. Near this is another pillar with twelve sides which is nearly four feet in height. The pillar structures that belong to the 'Ruthrakanda' type is also found in the Choleeswarar Temple 'Mandapas' nearby. The 'Pothihai' portion of the pillars have been carved in the 'Pushpapothihai' type.

They are based on the structures of the later Pandyas and the early Vijayanagar types. Pillars four in number of this type are installed in the 'Maha Mandapa'. Though they possess the same on measurements and artistic-trends many relief sculptures are found here. In this 'Mandapa' the divine figures of Aazhwars have also been set-up. The 'Vahana Mandapa' is in between the 'Maha Mandapa' and the 'Gopura'.

### The Architecture of both Vahana Gopura

The 'Vahana Mandapa' which is carved in the relief artistic trends of the modern times has the 'Vahana' of Maha Vishnu or Kalyana Varatharaja Perumal. The pillars and walls are also rich in relief artistic features. Near to the 'Vahana' has been erected facing the Moolavar. The sub-'Sannathi' has the 'Vahana' is in excellent architectural nature. The other important organs are the simple 'Upana', the 'Athistana', the 'Pada' and the 'Prasthara'. The 'Grieva Sikhara' and the 'Sthubi' have not been chiselled. To the right side of this temple are the 'Vahana' room and the 'Sthala' tree. In the 'Prahara's there are neither the Hanuman 'Sannathi' nor any sub-'Sannathies'.

This temple has an ancient 'Gopura' structure. Two pillars with the architectural features have been erected inside the 'Gopura'. They are four and eight-sided with the parts, the 'Pothihai' and the 'Uthira' made of craftsmanship in stone. Very simple 'Gopura' designs in relief have been carved, nowadays. The outside parts and the others parts have been propped by the ancient two pillars. The Choleeswarar Temple that has been constructed at the same time claims a beautiful 'Athistana', 'Pada' and the 'Prasthra' has to be examined.

### The Kodimara, the Pali Peeda and the Dweepasthamba:

Sri Kalyana Varatharaja Perumal Temple has the 'Dweepasthamba' with also rich architectural designs. The under part belongs to the 'Bramakanda' type. This part is nearly four feet in height and the 'Kampu' part next to this twelve-sided. In between this which are carved the four-sided and twelve-sided, are also the eight sides and the 'Nagapanda' being carved. The 'Kambu' portion of the nearly twenty feet tall Dweepasthampa and next to this the eight-sided 'Kalasa', the 'Thadi', the 'Kudam' and the 'Padma Ethazhi' are found. The artisans who have engraved the wonderful 'Deepasthamba' of later days have also carved the four-pillared 'Mandapa' for it.

The 'Athistana' portion of this 'Mandapa' has been carved in a very simple manner. On the other hand on the wall the elegant and artistic four pillars are commendable creations. The four pillars consists of the four-sided, the eight-sided and twelve-sided pretty 'Pothihais'. From the research it has been understood that the 'Prasthara' portion with no decoration is with the 'Kudus'. The four pillars have the same artistry hence it reveals the architectural regularity that has been followed. Next to this the 'Pali Peeda' and the 'Kodimara' have been carved.

Arulmigu Kalyana Varatharaja Perumal Temple has the south 'Prahara' which is nearly twenty-five feet in breadth and hundred feet in length. In this part to the south-eastern side is the 'Vahana mandapa' and the 'Sthala' vruksha while to the south-western side is the Thayar Sannathi. The west 'Prahara' is nearly fifty feet in length and twenty feet in breadth with no sub-sannathies. The north 'Prahara' is nearly fifteen feet in breadth and hundred feet in length with no sub-'Sannathies'. The east-'Prahara' is feet in length and twenty-five feet in breadth with the 'Kodimara', the 'Palipeeda', the 'Vahana' and the 'Gopura'.

## CONCLUSION

The concluding remarks of Architecture of the above temple is as follows; This temple which faces to the east has the aspects of architecture and the 'Mandapas' in a regular manner. The 'Vimana' adheres to the south Indian artistic tradition with six types of aspects. The 'Padapanta Athistana' is the most important aspect. The 'Upana' has been concealed inside the earth. The 'athistana' is structured in the same manner from the sanctum, the 'Artha Mandapa' and the 'Maha Mandapa'. The 'Pada' portion has been carved in a simple fashion with no ornamentation about it. The architectural measurements have been well and correctly followed. The 'Devakoshtas' appear as niche. The archways are highly decorative with elegant sculptures. The 'Prasthara' is without any 'Kudus' and the 'Kodikarukku' is without any decoration. The first 'Thala' with the relief sculptures has been structured in accordance to the 'Agama' regulations.

The 'Grieva' is with different type of the 'Avatars' of Maha Vishnu. It is structured in accordance with the basics of the 'Agamas'. The beautiful circular-shaped 'Sikhara' has been structured decoratively. The general aspects are the 'Mahanasi Kudu' the 'Ethazhi' and 'Sthubi'. The temple with the Thayar 'Sannathi' is an usual one. This sub-'Sannathi' which belongs to the 'Ehathala' type possesses all the architectural patterns. Though the 'Artha Mandapa' and the 'Maha Mandapa' are very simple, very artistically designed four pillars in the 'Maha Mandapa' is indeed is a rare work of excellence. The 'Vahana Mandapa' is of the latest relief craftsmanship of the art. For 'Garuda' a beautiful sub-'Sannathi' has been constructed belongs to the early days. From the 'Upana' to the 'Prasthara', the 'Gopura' is rich in craftsmanship of stones. The 'Grieva', the 'Sikhara' and the 'Sthubi' have not been carved. The four pillars in the 'Gopura' remind the Kongu Chola days. At the entrance, there is the high decoration of the archways and the 'Kodikarukku'. Such type of artistic minuteness can be found at the entrance of the 'Maha Mandapa'. The preservation of such type of arts are inevitable in the present Society.

## REFERENCES:

1. Arunachalam .M., Festivals of Tamilnadu, Thanjavur, 1980.
2. Arunachalam. M., An Introduction to Dravidian Philology, Asian Educational Services, New Delhi, 1929.
3. Balasubramaniam.S.R., Middle Chola Temple Arts, Chennai, 1978.
4. Basham A.L.,(ed) Cultural History of India, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1975
5. Champakalakshmi.R. Vaishnava Iconography in the Tamil country, New Delhi, 1981.
6. Dharendra Singh., Indian Heritage and Culture, A.P. H. Publishing Co., New Delhi, 1998.
7. Edith Thomory, History of Fine Arts in India and the west, New Delhi, 1989.
8. Gilert Slater, The Dravidian element in Indian Culture, New Delhi, 1987.
9. Gopinatha Rao. T.A., Elements of Hindu Iconography, Vol.I,II, Part I,II, Delhi, 1985.
10. Harshananda ., All about Hindu Temple, Ramakrishna Math, Chennai, 2001.
11. Henry White Heal, The Village gods of South India. Asian Educational Services, New Delhi, 1983.
12. Herbert.R., The Meaning of Art, Faber & Faber Ltd., London, 1951.
13. Kandaswamy ., History of Dindigul District, Kodaikanal, 1996.

14. Krishnamurthi, S.R., A study on the Cultural Developments in the Chola Period, Annamalai University, Annamalainagar, 1966.
15. Krishnamurthy., Palani sthalavaralaru, Palani, 1986.
16. Kulanthai Pulavar., Kongu Nadu, Erode, 1968.
17. Manivannan.K., Temples of Kongu Nadu, Palani. 2006
18. Manonmani.T., Aivarmalai Kolumam, Komaralingam, Chennai, 1998.
19. Manickam. V., Kongu Nadu, Chennai, 1992.
20. Meister, M.W., Encyclopedias of Indian Temple Architecture, Oxford University, Chennai, 1982.
21. Murthy & Biradar., Indian Culture and Civilization, S.Chand & Company, Delhi, 1980.
22. Nachimuthu.K., Cholan Purvappattayam Kurum Kongu Ural, Nagar Koil, 1970.
23. Oddie.G.A., Religion in South Asia, Manohar Book Services, New Delhi, 1977.
24. Percy Brown., Indian Architecture, Bombay, 1983.
25. Rajkumar Pruthi & Rameshwari Devi., History of Indian Culture, Pointer Jaipur, 2000.
26. Ramachandra Rao, S.K., The Icons and Images in Indian Temple, Bangalore. 1983
27. Ramaswamy.T., Thirumullaivayil Masilamaniswarar Temple, Mathi Publications, Chennai, 2000.
28. Rishabanandar., Hinduism, Chennai, 1999.
29. Ray Faulkner & Others, Art Today, Newyork, 1941.
30. Sathianathaiar., History of the Nayaks of Madurai, Manivasahar Pathippagam., Chennai. 1980
31. Somasundram., Palani. The Hill Temple, Palani. 1956
32. Subramanim.N., Early Cholas., Raman & Raman Private Ltd, Kumbakonam, 1980
33. Shyman.D.D., Tamil Temple Myths, Princeton University press, Princeton, 1980.
34. Sivanantha, All about Hinduism, Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Chennai, 1977.
35. Srivatsava.A.L., Medieval Indian Subramanian N., Social and Cultural History of Tamilnadu, (AD1336) Ennes Publications, Udumalai, 1973.
36. Subramaniam & Veerasami (ed), Cultural Heritage of the Tamils, International Institute of Tamil studies, Chennai, 1988.
37. Swami., Facets of Brahman or the Hindu Gods, Ramakrishna Tapovanam Tirupparaiturai, 1971.
38. Swaminathan.A., Social and Cultural History of Tamilnadu, Deepa Pathipagam, Chennai, 1984.



**K. Parijatham**

Ph.D., Research Scholar, Department Of History, Mother Teresa Women's University, Kodaikanal, Tamil Nadu.