



PALANI SRI KANNADI PERUMAL TEMPLE ARTS-A STUDY



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ABSTRACT :

Sri Kannadi Perumal Temple is situated to the west of the Varathamanathi water reservoir which is nearly 7 km to the south of Palani town, Palani taluk, Dindigul district in Tamilnadu. This temple is an example to show, that here, the Kaumara worship is significant but the Vaishnavism has witnessed many developments. There are many temples for the vaishnavites around the town Palani. Among them the important temples are Sri Ahobila Varatharaja Perumal Temple at Balasamudram, Sri Lakshmi Narayana Perumal Temple at Palani, Sri Kathir Narasinga Perumal Temple at Periyakottai, Sri Ahobileswara Perumal Temple at old Ayakudi and Sri Venkatesa Perumal Temple at Keeranur. Similarly there are Siva temples have been constructed and worshipped. Sri Kannadi Perumal Temple is located at the centre of the hill with all its greatness about it. It is exclusive for its rich architecture and there are worships and 'Poojas' being observed daily. On the basis of the art of the temple it can be understood that it ranks along with the traditional architecture of the Dravidians.

KEYWORDS : Dravidian style, Vaishnavism, Athishtana, Upana, Kapotha, Arthamandapa, Sanctum, Grieva, Prasthara, Saumyakantha, Rudrakantha, Visnukantha ...,

INTRODUCTION

From the field research it can be known that the south Indian traditional art has been followed. In the architecture of the temple, ordinary style have been incorporated. The growth of the religious worship of vaishnavism is explicit in the selection of a beautiful hillock to construct this temple. In the architecture the "Athishtana" has been regularized and the 'Upana' has been carved below the 'Athishtana'.¹ The pada part of the sanctum are of ordinary pilasters. There are no ornamental workmanship or decorative works on it, yet there is a system followed in the architecture.¹ There are proportionate measurements, specially in the 'athishtana' there is the accurate foot breadth 'Kabotha' with 'Kanda' of the same measurement and also jagathi being carved. The same part have also been engraved in a simple manner and they follow up to the "Artha Mandapa".²

METHODOLOGY

Both analytical and descriptive methods are used here. However socio- cultural approaches are also used. The 'Athishtana' and the Pada have been correctly used in the sanctorum and the 'Artha mandapa' there are the beautiful circular- shaped peak in relief panels.³ Among them there are many yali with the faces of elephants and inbetween also works of relief sculpture. 'Grieva' has been carved in a simple fashion. In the 'grieva' there are no statues like the grieva kosta sculpture. The sthubi is the present work of Vimana architecture of Arulmigu Kannadi Perumal Temple.⁴

The Architecture of the Maha Mandapa

The structure of the Maha Mandapa is similar to that of Maha mandapa in the temples of developed towns. This Mandapa has itself 16 individual pillars, with four pillars in each row, the structure is square shaped and has along with it the beautiful relief panel. It has no traditional artistic traits of the Pandyas and the Cholas but is of the Vijayanagar and Nayaks. As regards the structure of the pillars they have been set up to the south and the west. Besides each pillar has different architectural styles. The greatness of art in architecture can very well be mentioned.⁵ The pillars have also been fully completed and erected. Moreover it has also been clarified. Next the shape in the brahmakantha has been brought out. On it there are twelve faced parts and to separate it and the eight – sided structures have also been carved. Next to this the eight sides have also been shown. Again the 'Ruthrakanda' and 'Vishnukanda' figures are found here. In certain places according to the structure of the pillar the souwmyakantha have been carved.⁶ Still in some places in one pillar there are various sculpture. According to the pillars have been installed can also be understood. For example in the first row two pillars have three parts. There is a link between the third and fourth pillar that have been installed can also be known. With the pillars that have many parts installed can also be identified. According to the structure of the pillars which have been carved and installed which shows the development of architecture of different stages.⁷

Though the structure of all the pillars some to be the same. There are certain pillars that differ in the ornamental decorations. On the two rows of pillars found in the centre of the Maha mandapa facing each others are seen the beautiful relief statues.⁸ On certain pillars there are artistic craftsmanship naturally the Brahmakantha portion is nearly 2 feet in measurement, while the 'Vishnukanda' and the Ruthrakanda portions are a foot. The nagabandha portion, which is in the centre of the pillar is nearly a foot in measurement. Its western part has been carved in accordance with the Vishnukanda and the Ruthrakanda structures in its measurements as well as all the pillars are in the ordinary form.⁹

On it's other parts of structures they are seen. Since all the pillars are shown facing the south west direction, the parts of the pothikai are also put up in the same direction.¹⁰ This kind of structure can be seen in Ahobila Varatharaja Perumal temple of Balasamudram.⁹ The gap between the structure of the pillar and another pillar has been measured very precisely.¹⁰ Though the pillars are put up with a gap of nearly 5 feet its height has been increased.¹¹ The gaps between the pillars in the first row are of varied measurements. Next to the Vidhana ie., upper roof or the mandapa vithana has been constructed in the south western direction.¹²

The pillars that are erected in the mandapa and on the edge of the mandapa varies in measurement to the pillars, that are installed in the centre. Its gap differs according to the place where they are erected. There are differences between the pillars found in the temples that are completed in their architectural designs and the pillars that are constructed in their temple.¹³ The art and architecture that is employed in the Maha mandapa is a sure, proof of the tremendous growth of south Indian architecture. The modern inscriptions on the stone reveals that this 'Mandapa' was built by Karuppannan, the son of Sivanandi of New Ayakudi in the year 1947. Since it is the front mandapa the features of Architecture are not to be seen. There are installed four relief pillars, which bears on its edges a number of stone pillars. It can be just named as front Mandapa, but there are no information about links the Maha Mandapa, the Kodimaram and the Pali Peeda.¹⁴

Kodimaram

There is the Dweepa being put up to the east of the front Mandapa, which bears the growth of the art. This pillar which is nearly 25 feet in height is erected in the centre of a beautiful small mandapa. This mandapa which has 4 pillars bear many features of architecture. The traditions and features pertaining to the architecture of south India are found here. The 'Athistana' has been very precisely carved.¹⁵ In the 'Mahapadma' also various decorative craftsmanship are shown. On order to raise the four –pillared Mandapa, the impact and style have been also lifted can be understood.¹⁶ In the parts of the brahmakanda there are some imaginary form the face of the elephant, that are an example of the traditional style of the development of architecture. Though the foot of the pillars reaching the 'Athistana' its top portion is of the structure in par with the prasthara. Next to this parts relief panels are encraved.¹⁷ The floral design embellishes the pillars. Excluding the four pillars the Pada and upper parts and the other parts are 4 and 8 sided. In the part of the prasthara beautiful kudu have been

engraved. In the ratio of four in each side there are totally 16 kudus. As regards this 'Mandapa' from the 'Upana' to the prasthara it is made up of black stone. This kind of developed architecture cannot be found in any of the temples.¹⁸

The 'kodimara' and dweebastamba' also bears different artistic and skilled workmanship. In the foot of it there are many sculptures in the shape of the Garuda and sanga, chakkara. The other parts with 16 sided reach up to the top of the pillars.¹⁹ Pothikai on the top are the floral and decoration bearing the features of architecture of the day of Nayaks. Besides this the sacrificial 'Peeda' has not been wrought in the front mandapa or in the 'Mandapa'. Instead of the pillars there are the relief sculptures.²⁰ The four pillared Mandapa, is significantly important and ranks the first in bearing the various artistic traits of architecture in the mahamandapa. To the south of this mandapa there are many sculptures pertaining to the worships of the village people.²¹

The sub-shrines in the 'Prahara' and the structure of the temple have been built in accordance with the Dravidian style can be very well felt. Besides the sanctorum, the Artha mandapa the Mahamandapa and the muha mandapa there are the Vahana and the sacrificial 'Peeda' can also be noticed.²² As regards the sub shrines, to the south western corner, on an granary 'Peeda' in a separate sanctorum, there is the image of Vinayaga in the sitting posture. Though in this temple there is the Subramania sannathi the bad chamber and the Muhamandapa of entrance these got shuttered in the later ages.²³

CONCLUSION

Manuscript presents the following suggestions and concluding remarks. This temple which faces towards the south has been wrought in line with the Vasthu sastra, Agama and the conversions of sculpturing. The old sanctum which was in the South Western corner of the Vinayaga was ruined. Hence a new sanctum has been structured. The mahamandapa and the 'Prahara's' is the chief characteristic features of this temple. The sanctum and the 'Artha Mandapa' have been also engraved in a very simple style. The sanctum and the 'Arthamandapa' possess the same craftsmanship and from the 'Upana' to the sthubi and the workmanship has been wrought in black stones. The mandapa pillars and the art of relief sculptures belonging to the present craftsmanship. The rows of pillars are put up in south western direction. The Paramapadavasa has been installed in the west southern direction to the foot of the pillars. The relief sculptures of the donors and its richness are seen. The row of pillars belong to the age of the Nayaks. The pillars being erected to the South Western direction and the temple is a new custom. Like the beams go in line with the opposite direction of the above features. The front 'Mandapa' is in the ordinary structure.

The dweepasthamba and its four Pillared 'mandapa' emphasize the different phases of the growth of architecture. The swargavasa is seen in the north. There are sculptures that appear to be like lotuses in the pothikai part. The rows of pillars and the gap between them have been well regularized. The 'maha mandapa' is one wherein, pillars nearly 7 feet tall have been erected on the five feet tall 'Peeda'. The parts of the pillars are exactly one foot. There is a connection between the structures of the mandapa vidhana and the pillars. The two rows of pillars in the centre of 'mandapa' and other two rows of pillars to its edges are differently made. The worship among the village people has been engraved. Hence this temple has been structured in accordance with the architecture of Dravidian's form can be understood.

FOOT NOTES:

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