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பன்னாட்டுத் தமிழாய்வு மின்கனிதழ்

(Peer Reviewed - Journal Multidisiplinary)

ISSN: 2582-399X

காலாண்டு இதழ்  
(ஜனவரி, ஏப்ரல், ஜூலை, அக்டோபர்)  
ஆகிய மாதங்களில் வெளிவரும்

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**The Architecture of Thirunallūr Kalyānasundharēswarar Attic  
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വേശാന്യ

## The Architecture of Thirunallūr Kalyānasundharēswarar Attic (Māda) Temple in Thiruvarur District, Tamil Nadu

**P.PRAVEENKUMAR,**

Reg.No.36356/Ph.D.-K3/History/FT/ Confirm/April 2016/Dt: 06.03.2019

Ph.D. Research Scholar (Full Time),

Post Graduate and Research Department of History,

Thiru.Vi.Ka. Govt. Arts College, Thiruvarur-03.

(Affiliated to Bharathidasan University, Trichirappalli-24)

**Dr. V.VIVEKANANDAM,**

Associate Professor & Research Adviser,

Post Graduate and Research Department of History,

Thiru.Vi.Ka. Govt. Arts College, Thiruvarur-03.

(Affiliated to Bharathidasan University, Trichirappalli-24)

### Abstract

Kōchengatcōlan, the Cōla king who ruled Cōlanādu after the Sangam era, constructed seventy Māda temples. These temples were distinct from other temples. Māda temples were built with the natural environment in mind and are located in the districts of Thanjavur, Tiruvarur, and Nagapattinam, the prime terrain of Cōla Nadu. Thirunallūr Kalyānasundharēswarar Māda temple is located in the Thiruvarur district, 2 kilometres from Valangaiman on the Kumbakonam Thanjavur Road. The Māda temple is the 20<sup>th</sup> Saivite temple dedicated to Dēvaram on the south bank of the Kavēri. This temple's architecture and sculpture are unique in the region. As a result, the goal of this article is to highlight the architecture and sculpture features of this Māda temple.

Keywords: Hindu temple, Thirunallūr, Māda temple, Architecture, Sculpture.

### Introduction

Tamil Nadu's temples fostered both religious and societal development. Divine consciousness and artistic consciousness were thus combined, yielding magnificent divine art. Temples served as educational, religious propaganda, financial, and storage facilities on various levels, and they played an important role in society. As a result, temples have played an important role in the advancement of civilization. Thirunallūr Kalyānasundharēswarar Māda temple is one of Kōchengatcōlan's seventy Māda temples. The temple is associated with Amarnīthi Nāyanmar, one of the 63 Nāyanmars where Appar and Sambandar performed Bhatikam. According to the temple's history, the seven Thiyakesa sculptures given by Indra to Emperor Musukunda were worshipped here. The colour of the Mōlavar Lingam in this temple changes five times per day. So Panchavarnēswarar is another name. Dēvārapathigam tells the story of the Lord placing his feet on Thirunāvukarasar's head at his request. So, like the Perumāl temple, the practice of offering the Satadhari to the daily devotees continues to this day. Thus, the Māda temple construction and sculptures of this legendary temple distinguish it from other temples in the area.

### Objectives of the study

- Discover how Thirunallūr Kalyānasundharēswar Māda temple differs from other temples.
- Discover Thirunallūr Kalyānasundharēswar Māda temple architecture and sculpture.
- This article aims to reveals that the features of Thirunallūr Kalyānasundharēswar Māda temple to people.

### Methodology

Data is gathered from inscriptions and ancient symbols as primary sources, literary evidence, books, journals, and periodicals as secondary sources, and extensive exploratory observation. An in-depth luminescence study was completed at the preliminary level, with facts obtained from primary and secondary sources.

### Kōchengetcōzhan

Between AD 300 and AD 600, Tamil Nadu experienced rapid growth in a variety of fields (Venidevi and Kalaikōvan 2011) and Kōchengatcōlan (Rasamanikkanar 2005), a descendant of Karikāl Cōla, ruled Cōla from Uarayūr. Literature, inscriptions, Dēvāpathigams (Nilakantasastri 1984), and other sources are very useful in learning about this king, who ruled a large territory. Kōchengatcōlan, revered as a Saiva Nayanmār, reconciled religious differences and built seventy temples for both Shiva and Tirumāl, thereby glorifying religion. According to Periyapurāna, King worshipped Shiva in his previous life as a spider due to the construction of the Māda temple. At the same time, Kōchengatcōlan, a great conqueror (Pillai 2009), is lauded by many epithets, including Tirunāraiṅkōl, Pāsuram of Tirumangaiyālvār, Theivaval Valamkonda Cōlan, Vadabulakkon Cōlan of Thēndamizhan, Kudakonkan Cōlan of the world, Theralan, and Kōhocōlan (Nagaswamy 1979). Because Cōla Nadu had naturally wide forests and wide streams, the Lord built a high platform and placed a Vimana on it to protect the temple where the Lord resided from natural hazards such as rainfall and floods. Before the Pallavas in Tamil, Kōchengatcōlan made a revolution by constructing seventy Māda temples (Venkadasamy 1956) using new architectural thinking. AD Kōcōlan was a distinguished person who fought battles in places like Alundur and Venni, according to Tirumaṅgai Ālvār of the 8<sup>th</sup> century Nandivarma Pallava II era (Balasubramanian 1976).

### Gōpuram

The first Gōpuram's five-storey structure consists of a high base, a Patha Pantha Thangu Thalam Vēdhigai part, four-sided half-pillars supporting the wall, cut-out roof beams, and the lower floor of the tower made of rock stone (Jouveau-Dubrevil 1987). The other parts and upper floors are made of brick. The Gōpuram's entrance door is made of wood, and the carvings depict Lord Shiva, Amarnīthi Nāyanār Puraṅgā, and animal and bird carvings. A sculpture of Mahasadasivamurthy can be found on top of the Gōpuram. The second Gōpuram is built with a Kapōtha Pantha Thangu Thalam, a Vēdhigai block, eight-faced half-pillars, and a roof supported by bud Podhigai.

### Māda temple

Temples are typically constructed on land, rocks, or hills. Māda temples are Vimanas (Acharya 1946) built on elevated platforms that are quite different from these. A high floor is built underground in the construction of a Māda temple, and the Vimana of the Māda temple is built on that floor by receiving the corresponding floors and elements (Venidevi and Kalaikkovan 2011). The name Māda Temple is given to this structure because the shrine of the main lord is on the top floor rather than the bottom. Inscriptions refer to these temples as 'Perundrukoils' (Balasubrahmanyam 1966) because of their size.

Bearing the Māda temple the entire 4.57-metre-tall Vetru Thalam (High floor) is constructed of rock stones. Upanam, Jagati, Urul Kumutham, Prativari, Kadam, Kapotam, and Kapotha Bandha Thangu Thalam Vedikai block make up its structure. Its wall is surrounded by four faceted half-pillars that contain all of the elements. Above the Uttaram Vajanam with a carved Tharanga Pothiga is a Valabi roof design with lotus petals. The south side of the Vetru Thalam has 25 steps, and the wall has Six Kōṭṭam to the west, Nine Kōṭṭam to the south, and Eight Kōṭṭam to the north. The southern section contains two Alamar Annals and a Uchitta Ganapati sculpture, while the northern section contains a Korravai sculpture.

### Vimanas of Māda Temple

This Māda temple is notable for its Vimanas of Lord Kalyānasundarēshwar, Devi Krisundari, and Someskandhar.

- The Maṇḍapa, Mughamaṇḍapam, and Vimana temple complex faces east. The roof is supported by three square pillars on the east side of the hall. There are two windows in each of the three directions of the inner circle, around the south, west, and north Muha Maṇḍapa and Vimanam. It is a two-story Dravidian Vimana that is 5 metres square and has a four-faced half-pillar roof its Podhiga is angular. Valabi is empty the round and Vimana walls are connected in all three directions. The 9.15 m<sup>2</sup> wall basement only is of rock stone with four-sided semi-pillars and a wall roof of part brick construction off the Vimana's second floor. The elements of the Vimana's first floor are separated from those of the Vimana's second floor. As a result, there is a chance to get around the second floor. In the sanctum sanctorum, a slender lingam with holes is displayed on a square pedestal. The south wall on the north wall, Brahma Vishnu is shown backstage with Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati in Sukhasana.
- Asana Amman Vimana is a two-stage Dravidian Vimana located at the top of the temple, facing South. Its structure is made up of a Patha Pantha-bearing platform, Vēdhigai block, four-faced half-pillars that affix to the wall, and cut Pothigai that supports the roof.
- The two-story Dravidian Vimana of Sōmāskandar, with the Mukha Maṇḍapa, is located to the south-west. The three directional Kōṭṭam in the Vimana's lower part are empty, and the Āra elements, Kirivam, crest, and apex, are brick constructions. Patha Pantha Thangu Thalam, Vedhigai block, four-sided half-pillars, and roof elements supporting shear Pothigai are used in its construction. Sōmāskandar makes an appearance in its sanctum.
- Three square pillars with flower-bud Pothigai support the round hall's roof on the Kapothabandha basement to the south, west, and north of the round. Sculptures of Amarnīthi Nāyanār, Appar, Sambandar, Sundarar, and Saptamatha can be found on the south side of the hall. Ganapati is located in

the southwest corner, Lord Murugan is in the west, and Gajalakshmi is located in the northwest. As a result, the temple's construction consists of two campus circuits.

### Sculpture

It is customary to place sculptures of gods within the Agamas of temples. Saiva tradition sculptures have been erected in the Tirunallūr Kalyānasundarēswarar Māda temple in this manner. The sculptures of Vināyaka, Subramanyar, Gajalakshmi, Sandēswarar, Sōriyan, and Santhiran deities found in the Māda temple circles are highlighted. This section mentions Krisundari, Mahāsadasiva Murthy, Cōla period Uchitta Ganapati and Korravai, Alamar Annal, Amarnīthi Nāyanār, and Natarāja's Orthuva Dandava sculpture.

- Because Shakthi deities have been worshipped under many names since the Sangam period, it is possible to learn about the deity's heroic deeds, character, nature, colour, location of clothes and weapons, and so on. As a goddess who shares this temple with Shiva Krisundari in the sanctum wears a Karanda Makudam on her head, a flower bud in her back hands and a Muthra of protection and mercy on her front hands. He is standing in a position and looking south.
- Mahā Sathasivamurthy has 25 faces and 50 arms, and holding various weapons. In Sukhāsana (Gopinathan Rao 1916), he is seated on a lotus flower. This clay sculpture is located on the west side of the first Gōpuram.
- On the Veṭṭruthalam, there are two Alamar Annal sculptures. Alamar Annal is in Vīrasana (Swaminathan Sastri 2015), facing south, with his right leg on Muiyalagan's back and his left leg folded. On his head, he wears Jata-Bhara, followed by Utarabandham, Muppuri-Nul, Cāvadi, shoulder, and arm bands. Two sages sit on each side of the lower part of the seat where the Lord is sitting.
- According to some scriptures, the Gupta and later Gupta periods followed the Vamasagara Tantra Margam method of worshipping Lord Ganapati with Shakti Devi (Banerjee 1956), with an emphasis on lust. Uchitta Ganapati sits in Ilalidasana wearing Utarabandham Ciṭṭrāḍai and a Karanda Makudam. In his right hand, he holds Mōthakam, while the other hand embraces the goddess, and in his back hand, Ankusam holds a trunk between the goddess seated on his thigh. Karanda Makudam wears the goddess's head seated on his thigh, with his left hand holding a flower bud and his right hand holding Ganapati's genitalia.
- The Cōla period is represented by the Korravai Sculpture on the south-facing Veṭṭruthalam (Harle 1963). She is adorned with a Karanda Makudam on his head, Makara Kuṇḍalams on his ears, Savadi, Sarapalli, a shoulder strap, Shwarnavaikaksham, Paṭṭātai, a layered annulus on his feet, and a conch and wheel in his back hands. The front left-hand Kadiyavalambitham is also part of the front right-hand protective Muthra.
- The Amarnīthi Nayanār sculpture in the Māda temple complex's northern Maṇḍapa depicts at all Amarnīthiyar with a turban, moustache, and beard bowing with his wife and child.
- AD Natarāja is seated with his right leg resting on the head of a Muiyalagan and his left leg raised, smiling with eight arms in this copper sculpture from the ninth or tenth century Cōla period. A Thalaikkōl is in the right rear hand, and a fire flame, a bell, and a three-headed snake are in the left. The protective Muthra

on the right front hand and the Vēla Muthra on the left front hand this sculpture's innovative dance form has been placed in Tirunallūr Māda temple as an amazing piece of art (Kalaikkovan 2004) that cannot be found anywhere else in Tamilnadu temples.

### Inscriptions

This temple complex yielded twenty-three inscriptions. Inscriptions from the reigns of Uṭṭamacōḷa, Rājarāja I, Rājathirāja II, Kulōthuṅga III, Rājarāja III, Rājēndran III, and Vīrārāmanātha have been discovered (ARIE 1911). Twelve Rājarāja III inscriptions have been discovered among them.

- The names of four Valanādugal are mentioned in the Tirunallūr inscriptions: Nītavīnōdha Valanādu, Mudikoṅḍa Cōḷa Valanādu, and Uyyakondār Valanādu. It also mentions two countries, Nallūr Nadu and Tunda Nadu. Thirty-one town names have been discovered. There are seven towns with the suffix Mangalam, three with the suffix Nallūr, thirteen with the suffix Ōr, and eight with multiple suffixes.
- Agriculture-related inscriptions are also found here, mentioning two types of Tharam Tharamili lands. The wastelands are referred to as Mayakkal. Irrigation was assisted by the Pañjavan Mādhevi, Mummudicōlan, and Kōthandaramaṅ canals, as well as the Mādhevaṅ, Panchavanmadēvi, Valavaṅ, and Thirunārāyaṅ Vathi.
- The majority of the inscriptions state that the temple was given land for the worship of Lord Kalyānasundarēshwar and for food. The Lord has been given lands to cover the costs of garlanding the Sengalunīr and Māsi festivals. Paddy from Bandaram is measured for the Lord's adornment, food, and lamp oil. In the temple complex, Narayanan Kaviran constructed a Mandapam.
- As an opportunity to light the Nanda lamps in the Lord's temple, Vanagōvariyaṅ presented 240 coins and two tiers of lamps Sivachārya, a temple priest, donated 200 rupees to light two Nandha lamps. Veṭṭanaran, an Uṭṭamacōlapuram merchant, offered 90 goats and lit the lamp (Venidevi and Kalaikkovan 2011).
- On the plinth of the temple's second Gōpura, an inscription from Rājathirāja II's 12<sup>th</sup> regnal year was discovered. The Perunguri Mahasabha was in charge of the Tirunallūr administration. This inscription states that Dēvaradiyāl Nerrikan Naṅgai of this temple was given a land of two ma Mukkani in exchange for performing Gōvana Nātakam during the Tirunallūr festival by Nalini (2009).

### Conclusions

From ancient times to the present, temples have been regarded as the abode of arts and alms-houses for teaching spirituality. The Tirunallūr Kalyānasundarēswarar Māda temple in the village encapsulates the locality's historical events and spreads spirituality. Because the Māda temple construction has been made by rock stones, enthusiasts and explorers can easily understand the Māda temple architectural techniques. Each sculpture is one-of-a-kind, and the inscriptions preserve the region's history for future generations. The festivals held here also bring the locals together.

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# அரண்

பன்னாட்டுத் தமிழாய்வு மின்னிதழ்

## அறிவிப்பு / Announcement

அன்பான தமிழ்ச் சொந்தங்களே

வணக்கம்.

வரும் 2025, ஜூலை மாதம் வெளிவரும் அரண் பன்னாட்டுத் தமிழாய்வு மின்னிதழ்க்கான ஆய்வுக் கட்டுரைகள் ஆய்வாளர்களிடமிருந்து வரவேற்கப்படுகின்றன.

கட்டுரை வந்து சேர வேண்டிய கடைசி நாள்- ஜூலை 10. அதற்கு பின் வரும் கட்டுரைகள் ஜூலை இதழில் இடம்பெறாது என்பதை தெரிவித்துக் கொள்கிறோம்.

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