



Available online at: <http://www.advancedscientificjournal.com>

<http://www.krishmapublication.com>

IJMASRI, Vol. 2, issue 1, pp. 265- 272, Oct. -2023

<https://doi.org/10.53633/ijmasri>

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF MULTIDISCIPLINARY ADVANCED SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND INNOVATION (IJMASRI)

ISSN: 2582-9130

IBI IMPACT FACTOR 1.5

DOI: 10.53633/IJMASRI

RESEARCH ARTICLE

ART AND ARCHITECTURE OF THIRUCOURTALANATHER TEMPLE

Santhiya M¹ and Dr P Tharumar²

¹Full -Time Ph.D. Research Scholar, V.O.Chidambaram College, Thoothukudi

²Associate professor, Department of History, V.O.Chidambaram College, Thoothukudi

Abstract

Art in India has been an aesthetic expression as a matter of delight and enjoyment leading to nothing beyond that this has to be taken as a mere statement of fact and neither as complimentary nor derogatory to the culture. With very rare exceptions, because of the inevitable professional instincts of artists most of the art in India seeks and attains its appropriate place in the religious arrangement be it sculpture, architecture, iconography or poetry, music and paintings. South India art is known as Dravidian style as there are Garbhagriha the sanctum of main deity, with a vimana over it with an additional corresponding one in many cases for the Goddess. The mandapas or pillared halls are in front of the sanctum within the inner compound wall are the flagmast, Nandhi, the Prakara walls with entrance towers. Tirtha, subsidiary shrines to the main Gods. Thirukkutralanathar temple has massive structure with lofty mandapas. Its present form was constructed by the early Pandyas, Cholas, Later Pandyas, Tenkasi Pandyas, chieftains of Vadakarai. So this temple has the architectural impact of Later Pandyas and Tenkasi Pandya. The correct data and year of construction of this temple is not known. But on various times by various rulers this temple was constructed. Generally the temple is constructed facing the east according to Hindu Agamas. Thirukkutralanathar temple was also constructed facing the east. This temple was exclusively constructed by stones.

Keywords: India, South India art, culture, religious, Dravidian style, Garbhagriha, deity, vimana, mandapas, Thirukkutralanathar temple, Pandyas, Cholas, Tenkasi Pandya,

Introduction

Art of Construction

The layout is the beginning stage for art of construction of temple. This is the first stage in

accordance with the principles laid down by the siva Agamas. This temple situates an area of three acres and fifty cents. The compound wall is of 407 feet in length and 376 feet in width. The entrance Gopura is of thirty feet. This temple has four prakaras namely. Garbhagriha Prakara, Thalavarisai prakara,

Sangaveethi Pirakara and out prakara. In it sanctum inner courtyard, Thalavarisai Pirakara, Sangaveethi, Nandhi, Natarajar Abisheka mandapa, Flag mast Namaskaramandapa, Navagriha, store Room, Parasakthi Amman shrine. Kulalvaimozhi Amman shrine, Kailasanathar, Durgai Amman shrine, Palliyarai, Puthempirakathunather shrine. Arupathamoovars shrine, Papavinasar Ulagamman shrine, Nellaiyappar Gandhimathi Amman shrine, Manakulanather, Narambunathershrine, Sankaralinganather shrine, Palvannanathar oppanai Amman shrine, Chokkalingam Meenakshi Shrine, Ayyanar Madhiya Natheswarar, Aramvalartha Nayaghi, Agasthiyar Vasuki, Panchailngam, Sastha Shrine,

Sivalayamuniver, Bairavar Yagasalai, Sivalayawaradappar, Arumuganeyinar shrine, Thiruvathiraimandapa, Vasantha mandapa, Trikoodamandapa, Eastern Entrance and Shenbagavinayagar shrine and Rajagopura. In outer wall Piraklara, Karuppasamy, Chenbagavinnagar and Karuppasamy and Chinna Thambi shrine. The Gopura entrance leads to the inner Pirakara, Trikoodamandapa, Dwajasthampa, Altered Nandhi which are placed in axial line.

Sanctum Sanctorum

The main part of the temple is the sanctum sanctorum, Arthamandapa and Mahamandapam with two entrances on the east south. The walls of the sanctum contain the half pilaster with flower design, big plasters are also decorated by the Flora designs. Devaghostas are situated in the Adhistanapart. The entire parts are enclosed by an inner enclosure wall which has the main entrance on the eastern side. Sanctum Sanctorum houses the stone image of linga. The sanctum sanctorum of the main shrine is in square shape, Padaprasthara, Griva, sikhara and stupa have been built on the Adhithana in accordance with Hindu Agamas. Vimana to the main city is higher than other Vimana. The Adhithana has some Principal features. They are Upana, Plain Palaka, Tripittakumudakantha with flowers and pattika. The Characteristic pyramidel tower of the gopura rest on single or two storeyed along base. Sanctum Sanctorum of lord is known as Garbhagraha or Karuvarai which is

enclosed with walls on three sides except at front fitted with double halves doors to open. Thus the primary deity (Mulavar) kept under protection around it prakaras are provided and on top of the sanctum Vimana is constructed courtalanather Vimana is of thirty feet height and sanctum is in square shape. Kabothapantha uppapidam is situated under the base of Garbhagraha. Kabothapantha upapida includes Upandam, Padmajagothi, Pattikai, Small yalirow, Kapotha, Kandan. The central shrine or sanctum faces the east. The length of Garbhagraha of Lord courtalanather is of twenty feet length and twenty feet width on height eleven feet and on this terrace. Vimana situates.

Stone image of the temple

The stone images of the temple are noteworthy for their artistic significance. They reveal the artistic skill genius of the sculptures of the contemporary period. In the entrance of the RajaGopura two elephants are situated to pull like the car. In the courtalanather temple, Dakshinamoorthi, Thirumal and Bhirama decorated on the ghostas found on the Adhithana of sanctum sanctorum. One and half feet Dakshinamoorthi enshrined in the southern side Devaghosta. He wore Maharakundala in the left ear and Patharakundala in the right ear, chains are found in the neck. Utharapatharakundala Muppiri decorated on the shoulder. He has four hands upper right-hand hold Akkamalai lower lefthand appear with chinmutraupper left hand hold flower, lower, lefthand kept on the Thiah, left led is in folding stage, Muyalagan appeared under the right leg of sitting pose Dakshinamoorthi. Two shiva hermits standing in front of him. This stone statue is belonged to the 15th and 16th Century.

In western ghosta of sanctum Vishnu statue is appeared sitting posture Tirumal wore krida type crown on his head. He wore two Magaragundalas on his ears. He wore neck ornaments, Purinool and shoulder ring. He has four hands upper left hand hold conch lower left hand is in varadamutra. Upper right hand hold chakra lower right hand is in Varadamutra, Upper right hand hold chakra lower right hand is in Abyamutra. He folded his left leg and lifted his right leg.

In the northern ghost of sanctum Lord Bhirama is in sitting posture with four faces. He wore to arms in his neck and wore the dress from lines to leg. Upper right-hand hold Akkamalai upper left-hand hold Kendi. Another two hands are in Thiyanamutra, two legs are folded is in Sugasana pose. Sandikeswarar shrine is situated in the northern outside of courtalanather temple. Sandikeswarar is considered as the officer of Lord Siva. Sitting Posture sandikeswara wore Jadapara right hand hold Malu left hand on left leg right leg is in lifting position.

Sun statue is in standing posture kept near southern door of courtalanather temple front mandapa. This statue is of three feet, light circle appears behind his head. He wore Kerantamakuda on his head. Upper two hands hold lotus flower upper right hand is in Abayahastha lower left hand hold Varadahastha posture. He wore dress from lines to leg. He wore Aram in his leg and wore bangles in his hands and shoulder ring. Copper icon of Lord Muruga belongs to the eighth century kept in the north side of Kannimula Vinayagar. He wore Pathrakundala on his ears. Sannavira wore on his chest press appeared from lines to leg. Upper right hand hold Akkamalai, lower right hand hold Akuyavaradanmutra, upper left hand hold sakthi lower left hand hold Kadivalambimamutra. Two and half feet height lord Saneswara statue kept in the northern side of the Thalavarisai Prakara. He wore Karandamakuda, Vaguring, ornaments. Right hand is in Abyamutra left hand is in lifting position. Two big teeth in his mouth. This belongs to the 15th to sixteenth century.

In the north eastern corner of the Thalavarisai Prakara of courtalanather temple. Lord Muruga sitting on the peacock mount. Valli statue is in left side, Thivanai statue is in his right side. Left hand of Valli hold flower right hand hold lalahastha, left side Right hand Thivanai hold flower right hand hold Lalahastha. They wore rings. Saphthamatha statues are kept in the Southern side of the Thalavarisai Prakara of Courtalanather temple. Bhirami has three faces and four hands. Mount swan, her hands hold Akkamalai, Kendi and flag. Maheswari held Malu and deer and wore Jadamakuda and Risabhamound. Kowmari wore Karandamakuda. She

has four hands. They hold Vajram Akkamalai and Flag, Peacock mound.

Vaishnavi wore Kridam, two hands holding conch and Sakra and Flag. Eagle mound, Varagi pig face, Hands hold plough, martel and Flag Lion mound. Indirani - hands hold Ankusam, Vajram and Flag, Elephant mound. Samundi hold Kapala on her head hands hold Trisula Kapala ears hold PiramaGundala mount - owl. Two Dwarapalakas kept in front of the Door entry of Courtalanather temple. Dwarapalakas wore Karantamakuda on their heads. Pathrakundalas decorated on their ears. They wore Puri thread, shoulder ring, Braslets, brave tooth, Gopra decorated on their right shoulder. Left hand hold on Katha, left leg hold on floor right leg hold behind the Katha.

Human Figures found in the Pillars of Flagmast Mandapa. Samarathari figures found on the pillars of leftternside pillars. Samarathari statue kept her left leg in the earth. Right leg turn left side and fingers are holding the floor. Right hand hold Samaran left hand finger touches Thiagh. Muthera kept on her big breasts. Hair kept the Pullagam, light eye brows, Forehead, Pattai, Thayyagam, ear ornaments nose ring. Dress on lower hip, finger rings, shoulder ring, silampu on her leg, Parrot on her shoulder. YalNangai sculpture found under the Rightern side or southern side Two feet height YalNankai Put her leg on floor. Left hand fold on right side the fingers are kept on the floor. She wore Pullagam and Thayyagam on her hair, wore Pathirakundalas on her ears. Mutharasavadi and Karai more on her neck. Shoulder ring, Vagu bangles are worn on her neck. Right hand hold the lower part of the musical instrument. Upper part of the musical instrument held on left hand, long pearl chair decorated her left shoulder to right it hip, folding dress wore on her hip upto bottom of the leg. She wore Silampu and Pedestal on her leg.

Nalina Mahal sculpture appeared in the Western side of left Samarathari pillar. She wore big chain and folding some on her lions to feet. Pathakkai ornament decorated on her neck and chest. She wore Kathakali head dress and ear Pathirakundalas. Same female statue is found on the third pillar of Namaskaramandapa. She is in noted position, her left hand holds the improper dress. She holds her little

finger on her nose, bangles, finger rings, pearl chain appeared in this statue.

Mirror hold lady

Dancing posture lady kept the mirror on her left hand, right hand, Left behind the head, and put the Kumkum on her front head with middle finger. This statue looks like the pillar near left side Samarthari Pillar. Dancing hermit statue appeared southern side of the right side Samatharipillar bent the body hold the left hand and catch the left hand with right hand. Hairs of hermit spread the shoulder noted position with lines thread. This sculpture appeared in many places in this temple.

During the time of renovation of Kulalvaimozhi Amman five- or six-foot statues are found. These statues wore various ornaments made of pearls and others. Among the statues Kurava and Kurathi sculptures are very important. Three feet height Kuravans statue wore head cloth, ear rings and other ornaments. Kurathis sculpture kept the Kuduvaiars on her left shoulder left hand close the Kuduvai right hand holding the hairs. Four rows hair dressers ear Pathrakundava wore the dress lions to feet big chest over the ornament.

KodaiRathi statue has Kathakali dance hair dressing and hair ornament loosely dressed dancing less. Right hand is damager. Lighting lips left leg hold Right leg, lift and fingers are hold. Dancing girl wore four rows of KarandaMahuda left nose has nose ring, Pathirakundala on ears, soft dress, Big Chest on it Mutharam loosed dress from lines to feet, left hand held on hip right hand murk the one. Silampu on legs Kumkum on forehead.

The art and architecture of courtallanather temple reflects the different forms of Sakthi in various aspects. In the Courtallanather temple complex one can see a number of small shrines in the outer prakara or Sangaveethi of the temple. In these small shrines, saivaites gods with goddesses are seen. Goddess Ulagamman with Lord Papavinasar. Goddess Nageswari Amman with Swaminath Goddess Gandhimathi Amman with Nellaiapper, Goddess Gomathi with Snakaralingar. Goddess OppanaiAmman with Lord Palvannanather, Goddess

Meenakshi with Lord Chokkalinga. Goddess Aramvalartha Nayakhi with Lord Madhondeswarar, Goddess visalakshi with lord Kasi Viswanather, Vasuki, Lord, Kulasekharanather with his consort and soon. In the Mannakkalanather shrine one can see Sakthi images of Parvathi and Lakshmi.

Wooden carvings

Wooden Mandapa is situated to enter the Flag staff mandapa. Doors of Chitra sabha, Northern entrance doors. Temple cars have various wooden carvings. In the entrance Mandapa, stone pillars are covered with wooden doors. Frontside nine pillars backside five pillars decorated with floral designs, horse soldier elephant soldier one monkey, put the fruit on his mouth. Another monkey brought down with banana, pigeons, floral designs, sacred wooding scene. Amman sit one Rishaba mound. Kaliurthandavar, Mahisasurasamhara, Lord Siva and Parvathi sought on the Bull around are important Wood carvings.

Small wooden carvings found on the small thirty two designs. Ayyanar sat on the mountain. Right hand is in Abayamutra, left hand put on left leg, five Bhuthaganas lift two pidas of Urchavamoorthi. Amman sat one the Rishabamount with his son on her lap. Swamy and Ammai sit on the Rishabhamound. Murugan Valli Theivanai devotee worship pose. Put the hand on Moyalakan, Vinayaka sat on the lap of his mother. Manakolanather scene, Lord Vishnu suppresses the elephant, King worships Lord Courtallanather, Lord Siva appears before the devotees.

Loosed dress Rishi wife, Rishikals stand in Round Gangalamoorthi, Ammaiappan standing near Tirumal, Lord Kanna playing flute. Lord Vishnu handed over Parvathi to Lord Siva, Lakshmana worshiped Raman, Lord Nataraja, kept the right leg in the floor and lifted the right leg, lord suppressed one woman. Pallikondaperumal, Urchavamoorthi, dance scene, one sculpture holding the bow and arrow. The devotees worship Lord Vishnu pitchadanar, Raniyasamharam, Narasingamoorthi, Bhirama, King worship Kurumbala Esar

Wooden carvings on Chitrasabha doors

Small sculptures found on the twenty four designs. Fruits and monkey kept on the Jack fruit tree, Kurumpala Esar. Goddess sit on Rishabha, Lord Siva and Parvathi sit on Rishabha mound. Courtallanather sat on Kurumpala tree. Kannan Rukmani, Satiya Bama, Lord Kanna is in dancing posture Alamarselvan. Alamarselvan sat on the rock lingam, king worshiped Lord, Soldier kept the sword. Gangalamoorthi, BhuthaGana kept the plate on his head. Standing Women, Jumping Deer, Virapadilar, Sulam, Ammai Appa Urchavamoorthi. Blow conch Bhuthas bear the pides, roaring tiger, lift the front leg. Hunter keep the bow and arrow, Rishi sculpture, Murugan, Vali, Theivanna and Peacock. Vinayaka sat on the rat mound, Goddess it on the lap of lord Vinayagar. Rishi, Buthanather, AmmaiAppa under Kurumpala, King worship Lord Siva. Agasthiyar convened Vishnu as Siva giant blew the conch. Goddess Parvathi worship Lord Sivalinga under the tree. Ammai Appan, Mahavishnu with his consorts, Kannappa Nayenar and Pillaiyar.

Five cars in Courtallanather donated by Third Patterm. KalathiAppa Third Pattam Kalathi AppaThevar donated Courtallanather car, Thevar. Kulalvaimozhi Amman car, Vinayagar car, Subramaniya car. He spent 4200 gold to construct these cars. Thirty feet height big car Courtallam Wooden carvings.

Chitra Sabha

One of the five dancing halls of Lord Siva is situated on the northern side of the Courtallanather temple. It was built by Parakiramapandya the builder of the famous Tenkasi temple." The construction of Chitrasabha might have been started by Parakiramapandya (1422 1463) and completed by Udayamarthandavarma." Parakiramapandya built the entire super structure out of wood and had them all painted in luxuriant colours with lacquer paintings. The Poligar of Vadakarai ChinnarchaThevar covered the roof with copper plates. Copper Plates were fixed on the Chitrasabha with 1008 Copper nails. PranavamantaramOm was engraved at the top of the nail. The paintings done into a number of panels on the walls of Chitrasabha include the various forms of

Sakthi, Siva, Vishnu, Murugaganapathi and Subramaniyer. The Astha Bhairavas on the northern wall and the Astha Durgas on the Southern wall, the malign aspects of Hindu Gods and Goddesses are beautifully drawn here. As the Durgas Mahishasurasamharam, Durga, JalaDurga, BrahmaDurga, Vishnu Durga, RudraDurga, Samhari Durga and Sulini Durga are beautifully painted. Another important painting is Lord Padmanabher with his two consorts Sri Devi and Bhudevi. The paintings of Sita is also remarkable. The entrance gate of Chitrasabha is provided with a pair of wooden doors each one carrying a dozen panels distributed in six rows. Sakthi is depicted in the form of Goddess Sivagami Amman in one of the panels. In another panel Goddess Parvathi is seated on the back of divine bull with breast feeding. Lord Subramanya was flanked by Goddess Valli and Devayani in one of the panels in the door.

In the main hall of the Chitrasabha, Lord Nataraja is in Thiripurathandavam posture." Adhisakthi is also beautifully painted. Another painting depicting Goddess Sivagami Amman beautifully decorated with Jewels and Silk Garments enjoying the dance of the cosmic dancer is worth mentioning."

In the right side of Lord Nataraja, Sri Chakra is painted in light blue and red color. It is like a full blown white lotus and was drawn by sage Agasthya. At the bottom of the Srichakra four Sakthi figures are painted. Sakthi is in the form of Saktapitha in Chitra sabha. She is worshiped by the people. In this way the symbolic representation of mythological stories in paintings and sculptures in temples served as visual aids to the uneducated.

Goddess Meenakshi occupied a remarkable place in the paintings of Chitra sabha. The imported paintings of Goddess Meenakshi Amman are her Thiruvilaiyadal (sacred play) in the southern wall of Chitrasabha. The victory of Goddess MeenakshiAmman over Lord Agni, Lord Indra, Kings of fifty six nations, Yamadharman and Kubera are beautifully painted.

In the inner periphery of Chitra Sabha, the paintings depicting Goddess Lakshmi, Saraswathi, Meenakshi Amman sacred marriage dance of Bhadrakali are remarkably painted. Bhadrakali is worshiped by most of the people in Tirunelveli District. Her temples are found in villages and small towns in the above district.

The Ivory Palanquin of this temple is a master piece of art. The god and goddesses on separate replicas of the bulls, Goddess Kali. Lord Nataraja and the figures of Dwarapalakas are rare pieces of art made in ivory. They are engraved in the wooden chassis of the palanquin. The Colourful painted figures of Kulalvaimozhi Amman with the KuruThe Ivory Palanquin of this temple is a master piece of art. The god and goddesses on separate replicas of the bulls, Goddess Kali. Lord Nataraja and the figures of Dwarapalakas are rare pieces of art made in ivory. They are engraved in the wooden chassis of the palanquin. The Colorful painted figures of Kulalvaimozhi Amman with the Kurumpalanather are beautifully engraved in ivory. Inside the Palanquin figures of Lord Nataraja and Goddess Sivagami Amman on one side and the figures of dancing Kali, Bhairava, Virabhadrar on the opposite side are engraved in ivory.

Pillar sculptures

The ancient pillar in this temple is found in front of the entrance of Mahamandapa. These pillars found in the eastern part Southern side two pillars, Northern side two pillars. Floral designs and swine cock sculptures are beautifully designed. Big size half pilasters are designed in the Muppattai model and small pilasters are chiseled in the cylindered design with floral designs. In Mahamandapa of Courtallanather one big pillar and one small pillar. Jointly designed eight pillars are supported this mandapa. Muruga sculpture is depicted in the left side second pillar.

Pillars of Namaskramandapa

In the leftside first pillars of northern side a sculpture is chiseled with curvy mustache Right hand hold Katha, Left hand kept on the leg joint. In the eastern side of the pillar sculpture of Sivanadiyar is depicted. He wore Rudrachachain and wore half piece

cloth. In the middle on the left side pillar Krishna is dancing on the Kalinga Narthana. In the right side Samathari pillar, Lord Rama holding the bow and arrow one hermit appeared like Visvamamithiramunivar. In the eastern side Yal Nankai, Tirumalai Nayakar sculpture found on one pillar. In this pillar eastern side a soldier kept a knife. Western side worshipping pose women. Southern side women worshipping in small size. In the middle of the pillar one man lifts the Katha in the eastern side. Small size Natarajer in western side, southern side Ayyanar. In the righterside fourth pillar falling sculpture are depicted. Easternside Pitchadanar, deer eat the leaves, Demon lift the plate westernside, worshipping pose Sivanadiyar wore Head dress. In the Southern side Sivalinga is kept under the five headed Copra. In the righterside fifth pillar is decorated by the sculpture worshipping devotees. One deal kept his legs on her other Deer and Floral designs.

In the left side second pillar small elephant sculpture depicted on the western part. Eastern side cow bore the milk on linga western side worshipping hermit. Playing Mahada sculpture. Laternside Third Pillar northern side hermit appears like Visvamithiran westernside hermit with on beard keep under the five headed Gopra. Lefterside fourth pillar. Anjanayar is in sitting pose in eastern side. A Sculpture is dancing holding the knife in his hand. Westernside Manmatha holds sugarcane with krida makuda and mustache A girl appeared like Rathi. One sculpture kept the knife in his lines and worshipping position. Easternside worshipping women Namaskara mandapa situated in the easternside of Flagmast. This mandapa is situated to bear the five headed Gopra, Boothaganas and Elephants feats of tortoise appeared in the four sides.

Treasury Room

In Treasury room small size pillars are created in the appearance of Music Pillars. Women kept the flag in their hands. A Women keep the Kumkum with the help of mirror sculpture are depicted. In the second pillar Vinayagar face and Tiger appearance sculpture kept the knife in his hand and Simha sculpture. Pandiyer period Yali rows appeared on the walls of Treasury.

Sculptures of Mahamandapa Pillars of Courtallanather

Flower cripplers sacred divine marriage sitting posture Amman. Lord Siva and Parvathi sitting on the Bull mound. Ravana shook the Kailaya Mountain. Raniyasamhara, Adavallandevi, Nataraja keep the left leg on floor lift the right leg with dancing posture. Chandrasekharamoorthy. Hanuma stood before Rama with obedience. Muruga hold Vel with Valli, Vinayagar and Ayyanar sculpture are depicted on the pillars.

Trikoodamandapa Pillars

Worshiping Posture Sivanadiyars sculptures partly chiseled and partly unchiselled. Creepers, Yoga pose hermits, Kurumpalanather sitting pose. Hanuman dancing girl, Gopra catch the pig, Hanuman lift the stone above his head. Hanuman keeps one hand on his Thigh another hand is lifted. Hermit done Thava with his one leg dancing soldier. Agasthiyer converted Vishnu as Siva. In the north eastern side two pillars bear the sculpture of worshiping posture kings. In near it a soldier keeps sword with shield. A women keeps Kumkum on her forehead with the help of seeing mirror. Lord Siva sitting under Jack fruit tree sculptures are chiseled the pillar. Front Pillars in front of the Kulavaimozhi Amman chiseled in sixteen pattai type. In the upper part lotus has appeared.

Technique of metal casting

Casting of images in bronzes was attained a high degree of skill and accomplishment during the chola period continuing upto the 20th, century A.D. The technique of casting used in India was invariably the cire perdu or lost wax process described as Madhucheshta Vidhana in the ancient Silpa text. There are various references to the process of ciraper due in some of the ancient religious manuscripts like Manasaru. In the South at least ideal and most highly cherished alloy was the Panchaloka or five irons consisting of gold, silver, copper, brass and white lead.

The Bronze images of the Temple

Moolavigrahas are enshrined in the temples. The lavishly sculpted images depict the appearance of Gods. They are held to be the silent voices of theology reaching the power of Gods.⁴⁵ Courtallanather temple has a good collection of thirty nine beautiful bronze images of Lord Siva, Lord Vishnu and Shakti. The important bronzes of saivaite God with consorts are Sabhapathi and Sivagami Amman, Sri BaliNayakar and Manonmani, Subramaniyar, Valli and Devayanai, Somaskendar Sivan and Parvathi.

Conclusion

Courtalanather temple has had a continuous history from seventh century A.D. The earliest part of this temple complex seems to be a simple stone shrine facing west. At present it is called the Somalinga shrine. The earliest inscription belongs to the period of Maransadiyan (765 - 815). Eighty nine inscriptions were copied from this temple belonging to the Period of early Pandyas, Cholas, Later Pandyas, Tirunelveli Tenkasi Pandyas, Chieftains of Vadakarai. Among the eight nine inscriptions Fourteen inscriptions belong to the period of Cholas remaining eight five inscriptions belong to the period of Pandyas. Ten inscriptions of Parantakachola dated 907 - 955 A.D. Two inscriptions of RajaRaja I recorded his donations of lands for daily Pujas and cows for burning perpetual lamp to this temple and revenue to undertake repair work at the central shrine of Courtalanather temple. The Poligars of Vadakarai Chinnancha Thevar and RajaGopala Thevar were the important donors of this temple. They built Kolumandapa, Thirukulamandapa. Temple Tank and sheds for temple cars. Both these donors are seen standing in anjalihashta in the Muhamandapa of Courtalanather temple, Chitrasabha of Courtalanather temple is one among the eight sabha dance performed by Lord Siva.

References

1. Anananuru (Anthology), Ancient Commentary (anon) RajaGopalalyangar, edn., 1933, Commentary by N. M. Venkataswamy Nattar and R. Venkatachalampillai, South Indian Saiva Siddhantha work, Publishing House, (1943).
2. Devaram (Sundarar) Seventh Thirumurai, Tharumapura Athinam (pub), 1954.

3. Devaram (ThiruNavukarasar) Thiru Angamalai Poem 10, with Vth, Thirumurai, Thiruvaduthurai, Atheenam pub., 1957.
4. Devaram (ThiruGanasambandar), Thirumurai - 1, Pathigam - 99, Poem-I, Thirumurai II, 171 Pothigai, Tharumapuri Athenam, 1953.
5. Malaipadukadam(Perunkunrur Perunkausikanar) Nachchinarkiniyars Commentary, Dr. U.V. Saminatha Iyers, edn., (V. edn., 1956), Sivaperuman Thiruvanthathi (Kabilar)
1. Kasthuri Nagarajan, Thiru Courtalla Thalavaralaru, Thiruvadu Thurai, 1996.
2. Raman, K.V. (1978). Pandiyarvaralaru, Chennai, 1978.
3. Maraimalai Adikalar, SaivaSiddhantha Gnanabootham, Chennai, 2005.
4. Subramaniyapillai, E.M.S., Nellai Mavatta Koil Varalaru, Tirunelveli, 1975.
5. SubramaniyaKavirayar, C., ThiruCourtallanathaswamy Varalarum Panpadum.
6. Sridaran, S., Tirukkoil Thiruppaniyil Santror, Madras, 1989.

Secondary Sources
