

## **The episodes on Saiva sidhanta illustrated in the sculptures of Tiruppattur Kailasanathar Pallava temple.**

**Abstract:** This research paper will offer an insight in to the authentic images of Saiva sidhanta of Tiruppattur Kailasanathar temple. This study will throw light on the two bottom corner portraits of Gigantic Yoga Dakshinamoorthy panel and also will provide the relentless accomplishments of the Imperial Pallavas to the spiritual ambit in Saivism particular.

**1 Introduction:** In India Saivism is spread widely so many centuries before. The Brahman or Paramatman is explained in large volumes in Vedas, Agamas and Puranas. In Tamil country the spiritual saints Samaya Kuravarkal, Santhana Kuravargal, Adisankara, Ramana Maharishi, Swami Vivekananda and many more saints had made abundant contributions to the world of Philosophy and Saiva cult.

**1.1 literatures:** In Saivism Lord Dakshinamoorthy is being worshiped as preceptor, the Adi Guru. Guru is the personification of the supreme soul<sup>1</sup>. Skanda puranam the ancient text vividly speaking on Guru Dakshinamoorthy in Guru Gita verses. Saint Sankara wrote an elaborate stotram on Dakshinamoorthy. Vadamula Dakshinamoorthy Samsmaranam describes that Dakshinamoorthy is the young mentor and he teaches the Parabrahma tatwa<sup>2</sup>.

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1. *Skanda puranam* (Sanskrit) III:3:214.

2. *Sri Vadamula Dakshinamoorthy Samsmaranam*, (Sanskrit), Line 24-27

Dakshinamoorthy Stotra, Samata, Books, Madras, 1978.

The saivaite texts like Kamikamam, Ajiagamam, Rowravagamam, and Silpa shastras are speaking about Dakshinamoorthy. Thirumanthiram speaks in its 3000 verses about transcendental yoga and practices.

**2 Images:** In South India the image of Dakshinamoorthy is prominently occupying in the mid southern portion of Garbhagruha outer wall<sup>3</sup>. The Guptas have carved an icon of Dakshinamoorthy in Deogarh<sup>4</sup>. Dharmaraja ratha Dakshinamoorthy is exhibited in Mamallapuram by Narasimha pallava (AD 630-668). Rajasimha pallava has made (AD 700-725) a Dakshinamoorthy panel in Kanchi Kailas temple. The Cholas are also carved many Dakshinamoorthy sculptures and worshipping Dakshinamoorthy is popular even today.

**2.1 Picturesque Yoga Dakshinamoorthy:** In Shiva temples the pallavas have introduced huge panel of Yoga Dakshinamoorthy carrying with many allied sculptures. The three pallava temples namely Kanchi Kailasanathar, Iravateswarar and Tiruppattur kailasanathar are containing huge panels of Yoga Dakshinamoorthy with Illustrative sculptures of Saiva Sidhanta at its two bottom corners. This paper will analyse about the Saiva sidhanta sculptures of Tiruppattur kailasanathar Temple.

**2.2 Pallavas:** Though pallavas contributions are interdisciplinary, they have served saivisam relentlessly and their saivaite Temples are speaking their

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3. *Mayamatam*(Sanskrit), 19:39:1.

4. Sivaramamoorthy, *Art of India*, India book house, Bombay, 1977, p179

magnanimity. Pallava Mahendravarman I (AD 600-630), in his Trichirapalli inscriptions states himself as the devotee of Shiva<sup>5</sup>. Narashimha varman (AD 630-668) excavated Dharmaraja ratha dedicated to Shiva<sup>6</sup>. Parameshwara I (AD 670-695), in his Ganesh ratha inscriptions explaining his adoration on lord Shiva<sup>7</sup>. His bold and cursing inscriptions of Adivaraha and Ramanuja caves of Mamallapuram showing his vigorous devotion on Shiva<sup>8</sup>. His son Rajasimha pallava (AD 695-722) followed his father's inscriptions as driving force for constructing many huge abodes to lord Shiva. Rajasimha stated in Kanchipuram inscriptions that he was the follower of Saiva Sidhanta<sup>9</sup>. His titles also explain very well that he was the great Saiva devotee. Sivachoodamani, Sri Agama pramana, Sri Agamanusari, Sri Gnanangusa, Sri Sankara bhakta, Sri Tatva vedhi, Sri Eswara bhaktha are his famous titles<sup>10</sup>. Mahendra varman III built a Shiva Temple in front of Kailasanathar Temple of Kanchi. Veerattaneshwar Temple of Thiruvadigai is built by Parameshwaran II (AD 722-730). Nandhivarman II (AD 730-800) has constructed Mukteswara temple at Kanchipuram. From Danthivarman to Aparajita (AD 795-880) also have made many devathanas and other gifts to Siva temples.

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5. *S.I.I.*, Vol. I, No. 34.

6. AH. Longhurst, *Pallava Architecture*, Part 2, Archaeological survey of India, New Delhi, 1998, p25.

7. *S.I.I.*, Vol. I, No. 18.

8. *S.I.I.*, Vol. XII, No. 117.

9. *S.I.I.*, Vol. I, No. 24.

10. *S.I.I.*, Vol. I, No. 25.

Nandhikalambagam is mentioning Nandivarman III as 'Sivanai muzhuthum maravaatha chinthaiyan'. Aparajta has built Virataneshwar temple at Tiruttani.

**2.3 Tirupattur Brahmapurishwar temple:** Tiruppattur is a small village 28.5 kms from Trichy and 5 kms from Siruganur on the left of Trichy-Chennai highway no45(coordinates 11°2'17.18N",78° 46' 21.72"E). The pallavas' Kailasanathar Temple is on the extreme northern side of the middle Chola Brahmapurishwar temple complex. Brahmapurishwarar temple's presiding deity is Shiva and Lord Brahma is an important parivara temple among Siva parivaras in the 1<sup>st</sup> prakara. Brahma had worshiped the 12 Sivalingas of this temple is a myth. Samadhi of Patanjali saint is placed in the 1<sup>st</sup> prakara.

**2.4 Kailasanathar Temple:** The 8<sup>th</sup> Century Pallavas built Kailasanathar temple belong to the late Danthivarman or Nandivarman reign<sup>11</sup>. As per the Architectural and sculptural features the date is fixed as no inscription record is available yet. The temple is made out of sandstone blocks and found in very dilapidated condition. According to structural engineering no granite slabs are being used for Adhistana for the uniform load distribution is the reason for its dilapidation. The Granite tie stones having been used in Adistanam of earlier sandstone temples are standing stable. This temple bears a rich Architectural and sculptural treatment. The square Garbhagruha in plan with Ardhamandapa, raised with three tiers. The Brahmasthana has the granite

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11. S.R.Balasubrahmanyam, *Middle Chola temples*, Thomson press India Ltd, Haryana, 1975, p259.

Shiva Linga with 16 sides is an intricate craft. The whole structure stands on a massive upapeetam. All features of 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> talas are elegantly configured like Kanchi Kailasa temple. The later stone Mandapa is attached with the main shrine causes injuries to the main structure, and spoiling the appearance of the original sanctum sanctorum. There is a colossal Nandi in granite is also to mention here which proclaims the fame of pallavas emblem and Bhakti movement

**3 The episode sculptures for Illustration:** There are two sets of dual sculptures carved in the left and right bottom to Dakshinamoorthy panel is the foetus of this paper. One set is at the bottom right to the central deity hereafter called as 'panel part A' and the bottom left sculptures are called hereafter as 'panel part B' for illustration purpose(Fig.1).The contemporary plaster finishes over the statues are fallen luckily in few places helped very much to see the originality of sculptures, though few portions are hidden in plastering.

**3.1 Iconography and configuration:** 'Panel part A' comprising of 2 sculptures namely Lord Dakshinamoorthy and a saint. Lord Dakshinamoorthy is in sitting posture behind the saint, straight head, touching his chin with left hand in observation gesture and right hand folded with his chest. The yogi's head is inclined towards right and straight body with meditation pose. Yogi's right hand is with chanting mudra and left hand is not visible due to its damage. The yogi is with bearded. The configuration depicts that lord Dakshinamoorthy is as examining the yogi's meditation, whether it is true transcendental meditation.

'Panel part B' is consisting of two figures namely lord Dakshinamoorthy and a devotee. Here Dakshinamoorthy with 2 hands sitting straight with Swastikasana<sup>12</sup>. His left hand is holding (pustak?) and with right hand teaching mudra. The devotee is at Dakshinamoorthy's back in sitting posture seeing the lord surprisingly. His facial expression is clearly visible. Devotee's right hand is on his chin with exclamatory gesture and left hand is folded right towards chest. This panel part is the continuity of the serial previously explained. Here these two figures depict that if one does real meditation on Shiva he can change as Shiva.

**4 Conclusion:** The dual sculptures of Tiruppattur Dakshinamoorthy panel is a comprehensive illustration of Saiva sidhanda. The two episodes explain about the divine path to attain Brahmatvam. The divine path is pure meditation towards Shiva. The Pure Bhakti will change you as Shiva, the eternal bliss as said Maha vakya 'Tat twam asi' (That is you).

The philosophical teachings of Lord Dakshinamoorthy in Skandapurana is going parallel to these sculptures : '**Gurordhyaanenaiva nityaam dehi brahmamayo bhavet I - Sthitaascha yatra kutraani muktosow naatra samsayaha II** (Skanda Purana, utara khanda - Guru Gita-214). **Meaning** : By Constant meditation on the Guru, the individual soul becomes Brahman.He is free where ever he is. There is no doubt in it.

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12. V.Ganapati Sthapati, *Sirpa chennool*, Directorate of Technical

Education, Chennai, 1978, p61

The following Thirumanthiram Tamil verses also teaching in line with the sculptures studied : **'Chittham yaavaiyum sinthithu irunthidum -Aththam unarththuva thaagum arulaalei -Chiththam yaavaiyum thinsivam aanakkaal-Aththanum avvidaththei amarntaane'**.(Thirumanthiram-1582)**Meaning:** 'Let all your thoughts be thoughts of Shiva-And the Lord by His grace shall reveal all-If your thoughts be Shiva saturated- then In you He will abide'.

The Philosophy elucidated in Vendantas and other literatures are perceivable only by learned people by means of indepth study, which takes many years indeed. If the philosophy is taught through sculptures would be understandable even to a layman. A sculptural illustration can address beyond the Geographical and language barriers. Hence, the Great Pallavas extended the teachings of spiritual science through visual sculptures to all sects of people, through which any one can attain Mukti.

Rajasimha Pallava (AD 695-722) was well versed in Saiva sidhantha. Sivachoodamani, Tatwavedhi, Agamanusari, Gnanangusa, and Sankhara Bhakta preferred to portrait Lord Dakshinamoorthy in a wide angular picturesque frame containing of many ancillary relief representations in most of his temples. The impact of Rajasimha's inspirations has reflected in Tiruppattur Dakshinamoorthy panel as well which was built after Rajasimha reign.

# TIRUPPATUR KAILASANATHAR TEMPLE



SOUTH SIDE VIEW



FRONT VIEW



AATHI TALA SOUTH SIDE



LORD DAKSHINAMOORTHY PANEL



PANEL PART A



PANEL PART B



OVER LAY DRAWING



OVER LAY DRAWING

FIGURE 1