

Historic Perspective Of The Art And Architecture Under The Nayaks

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Abstract

In the history of the art and architecture of Tamilnadu, Pallavas, the Cholas, Pandya, Vijayanagara, and the Nayaks played a vital role. The whole Tamil region was divided into three districts Nayakship during the rule of Krishnadevaraya. They were Madurai, Tanjore, and Senji. The Nayaka temples of the Thanjavur region form a unique category. The Tanjore Nayaks constructed more the building than the Senji Nayaks. Many temples and mandapas were constructed during the Tanjore Nayak period. The temple architecture had a gradual pace of growth and faced constant changes in their conversion to a new form of convert an emerged. The nature of the new forms was based on the techniques and the religious structure followed during that particular period. The style of architecture of the Nayaks had to elaborately discuss based on their art form. Whether they created new forms or adopted the old style of architecture without any individuality of their own. It is very evident while discussing their style that they openly followed the convention of Vijayanagar architecture. In Tamil Nadu, several temples were built by the Pallavas, Cholas, and Pandiyas. This custom prevailed even during the reign of the Vijayanagar Empire with some alternations. The Chola temples which were extended by the Nayaks had the pathways and 1st interior compound walls. A considerable amount of new stylistic features are introduced by the Tanjore Nayak artists. Fundamentally the Madurai, Tanjore, and Senji Nayaks strictly followed the grammar and norms as prescribed in the silpa and agamic texts. They constructed the temples and also tended to imitate the earlier structures and forms in various temples and repetition was a common feature. However decorative elements played a major role in their temples and they were exaggerated in

Tanjore Nayak temples. The Tanjore Nayaks gave special importance to the bigger size of every segment of the structures and sculptures.

Key Words: Art - Architecture – Pallavas – Cholas – Pandya - Vijayanagara – Nayaks – Krishnadevaraya - Agamic texts – Mandapas – Sanctum – Santorum – Vimana – Athittanam - Padmam

Introduction:

In the history of the art and architecture of Tamilnadu, Pallavas, the Cholas, Pandya, Vijayanagara, and the Nayaks played a vital role. They built many temples, carved beautiful sculptures, and drew wonderful paintings which depicted the multi-faceted aspects of culture in Tamil Nadu, which will be a useful academic exercise. The Nayaks built many temples; hence the temple architecture attained rapid growth during this period in Tamil Nadu. The examination of painterly and unpainterly in the tectonic arts is especially interesting in that the concept, here for the first time liberated from confusion, with the demands of limitation, can be appreciated as a pure concept of decoration. Of course, for painting and architecture, the position is not quite the same.

Temple Architecture:

The temple architecture had a gradual pace of growth and faced constant changes in their conversion to a new form of convert an emerged. The nature of the new forms was based on the techniques and the religious structure followed during that particular period. Architecture of its very nature cannot become an art semblance to the same degree as painting, yet the difference is only one of degree and the essential elements of the definition of the painterly can be applied as they stand. All architecture and decoration reckon with certain suggestions of movement; the column in Nayak art rises with new elements added, in the wall, in the mandapas, living forces are at work, the dome swells upwards, and the humblest curve in the decoration has its share of movement, now more languid, now more lively. But despite that movement, the picture in classic art is constant, while post-classic art is constant, while post – classic art makes it look as though it must change under our eyes. Nayak pillars show the addition of various new elements to rise the structures, the athittanas show various mouldings, the wall shows various elements and fluctuations, the

entablature or kodungai show double flexure, and the innumerable superstructural elements in curved and concave forms and sculptures in it exhibit some upward movement. Inner mandapa structures also show huge multi-layered composite pillar varieties at the function of corridor or corners of mandapa show movements. The yali pillars of the yali mandapas show vigorous movement. Likewise, horse rider pillars also exhibit tremendous movement. Various thoranas at the arches in Tanjore Nayak mandapa surfaces produce the impression that it is in constant change. Buildings do not run away and a wall remains a wall, but there subsists a very palpable difference between the finished look of classic architecture and the never-quite-assailable picture of later Nayak art.

Nayak Style of Architecture:

The style of architecture of the Nayaks had to elaborately discuss based on their art form. Whether they created new forms or adopted the old style of architecture without any individuality of their own. It is very evident while discussing their style that they openly followed the convention of Vijayanagar architecture. If it is so, most importantly we have to know about the architecture of the Vijayanagar first. The artists of the Vijayanagar empire had interlinked all the art forms of their region and created a new art form with new techniques. The imperialist policy of the Vijayanagar emperors paved the way to incorporate all the art conventions into one. So, they took the techniques and talents needed from the Hoysalas, Chalukyas, Cholas, Pandiya, and Sahethyas and introduced a new form of art. So the Nayaks who were under their administration also followed the same style. The convention of the Nayaks though influenced by the Vijayanagar it is yet under study whether they had any new sources as a replica of the Vijayanagar Empire. The convention of the art of Vijayanagar was very much influenced by Sarasenian art techniques. So, Nayak's art form also had a resemblance to the Sarasenian art form. It is also under discussion. Further, the Tanjore Nayaks also followed the art form of the Cholas, which was a pinnacle of art in their region. So, it is very difficult to discuss the uniqueness of Nayak's style. The uniqueness of the Nayak art is visible when it is compared with the architecture of Tanjore Nayak's majority resembled the architecture of the Vijayanagar empire. We could not feed any new techniques or new conventions. It was an extension of the Vijayanagar convention. At the same time, the architecture of the Tanjore

Nayaks is very simple. The Madurai Nayaks had built more temples when compared to the Nayaks of Chenji and Tanjore. They have followed the style of Pandiyas in their architecture. The architecture of the Nayaks cannot be called better than that of the Vijayanagar. The ingenious growth of the art form of the Cholas, Pandiyas, and Pallavas was the basic reason for their low esteem. Architecture is the difficult task of creating a sculpture from concept to completion. Architecture is the art of combining art and science and other factors like age and beauty. The architecture of the Tanjore Nayaks was discussed based on their beauty.

Tanjore Nayaks:

The Tanjore Nayak's reign started in the middle of the 16th century and existed till the end of the 17th century. Sevappa Nayak was the processor of the Nayak reign (1532 – 1580), Sevappa Nayak built several temples. He innovated the Sivagangai pond and provided a water supply. Later it was called Sevappaneri. He also renovated the Sivagangai fort. The 11-storeyed Raja Gopuram of Arunacahaleswara temple in Thiruvannamalai was built by Sevappa Nayak in 1572. It is believed that they also built the huge compound wall of the Virudhagirison temple in Viruthachala. The maha mandapa of the Swamimalai temple was built by Sevappa Nayak adhering to the order of King Krishna Deva Raya. It is also known that he also renovated the Kanchi Egambaranather temple. He renovated the Vaishnava temple on either bank of the river Kaveri. The mandapa at the frontier side of the Amman shrine is called by his wife's name "Moorthi Maubha Madapa". The mandapa before the Muruga temple is called Mallappa Nayak Mandapa in Athittanam the shrine of Goddess Amman. Mallappa Nayak is considered the relative of Sevappa Nayak. During his last stages, Sevappa Nayak appointed Govindha Theechithar as an able finance administrator and political councilor. Achuthappa Nayak who was the son of Sevappa Nayak attained the throne in 1580 A.D. He helped to build the maha mandapa in the temples of the Vijayanagar empire. (Mayavaram Taluks). Achuthappa Nayak highly patronaged the Srirangam temple. He built the Golden Vimana of the sanctum Sanctorum of the Srirangam temple. Further, the West and Northern Gopuras and the 8th exterior compound wall were built by him. He also built many new mandapas and new steps for the river banks of Cauveri and its branches in Mayuram, Thiruvidadamarudhur, Kumbakonam, and Thiruvaiyaru.

The structure of the temples, Vimanas, Mandapas, Gopuras, Compound walls, and Paths were wholly built by the Tanjore Nayaks. Generally, the emperors of the Vijayanagar empire rigidly followed their ancient customs and heritage, and caste distinctions. The Brahmins were respected with high regard; The higher caste ethics like the Agama Purana Sirpa Sastra were followed. So, they initiated everything of their ancestor without question. They spend lavishly on the rituals and festivities of the temple. So, many new mandapas and temples were built. The poets were solely dependent on temples for their livelihood. The temple was the center of the social activities. The fall of the Gramiya Sabha and the growth of consumer products created a space between the villagers.

Temple Structure of the Nayaks:

The cave temples of the Pallavas are a pinnacle of art in the history of Art. The temples in Kanchipuram and Mahabalipuram still standing depicting the eminence of the Nayak Art. They were very unique in their structure and style. The style of Chalukyas and Pallavas resembled each other. The structure of the temple changed with time. New emerged and change became a constant process. A new form of art came into being from the Cholas, Pandiyas, Vijayanagar Empire, and the Nayaks. The Hoysala and Chalukyas art form created a great impact on many other art forms. The temple structure of the Cholas was quite different from that of the Pallavas. Vijayanagar temples were very unique in their way. The Vijayanagar artisans though followed the art form of the Cholas and Hoysalas made some changes and created their style.

Structure of Sanctum Santorum:

The structure sanctorum was built in a square shape. A small Vishnu temple of the Vijayanagar Empire had a square-shaped Sanctum Santorum. The sanctum Santorum alone was built in a square shape and later the temple was built. The square-shaped structure of Sanctum Santorum existed even in the period of Pallava, Chola, and Pandya. In the Vijayanagar Empire, they included other parts like. In the earlier period, these structures were formulated based on the art form of Hoysalas and Chalukyas. The structure of Sukanasi and Navarengam was found. Some types of structures also exist in the Krishna temples of the Vijayanagar Empire. The method of creating a pathway around the Sanctum Santorum formerly existed in the Buddha temples. The style of creating pathways in the Vimana was found in the temple of Pallava Vaikunda

Perumal and Chalukiyas Durga temple. In this temple, the pathway is found along with the Sanctum Santorum. For example, in the Vijayanagar Krishna temple, the pathway exists to the north and south of Sukanasi. The style of creating pathways around the sanctum was found even in the style of Pallavas for example in the Kanchi Kailasanathar temple and also in the Pallava Kailasanathar near Trichy. This art form was not found in the Hoysala temples. The Chalukya and Pallava temple has such types of structures. The pathways occurred below the Sukanasi of the sanctum Santorum. The Cholas have created such pathways in the Brahadeeswara temple of Thanjavur. It was also called santhora vimana. The pathway was created separately from the Vimana in the Vijayanagar period. An open space was created between the vimana and the exterior pathway. The same structure was also found in the Pallava Vaikunda Perumal temple. The entrance of this structure may not start from the Sukanasi or else it may start from the Navrenga mandapa or Artha mandapa and ends in the same mandapa. Many of the later period temples of Cholas, Vijayanagar empire pathways of the 1st interior compound wall, and sacred pathways existed in the above-said method. The Shanthara Vimana was not found in the Vijayanagar temples. The floor patterns of the temples of the Tanjore Nayaks were based on the patterns of Vijayanagar and Chola temples. In the Nayak temples in the 1st exterior pathways, beautiful Vidhanas were created above it. This type of structure exists in temples by Nayaks such as the Tanjore Raja Gopala Swamy and Kaliyuga Venkatesa Perumal temple, Ramaswamy and Chakrabani temple of Kumbakonam, Nacchiyar temple and Uppiliyappan temple.

The Chola temples which were extended by the Nayaks had the pathways and 1st interior compound walls. The Mannargudi Rajagopalaswamy temple and Pateeswaram Thenupureeswara temple also have the same structure mentioned above. In the temples built by the Nayaks, some small shrines are located on the 1st interior compound walls. In the Chakrabani temple of Kumbakonam, the shrines of Thumbikai Alwar and Pancha Muga Hanuman are built annexed to the compound walls. The Vimana and Athittanam are present below the level of the pathways. The controversy is that the Upa peeda and Athittanam of the Nacchiyar temple are situated above the pathway. Exemplary paintings depicting the scenes of Ramayana, Vishnu avatars, and many other paintings are painted in the interior compound walls of the temples like Ramaswamy temple of Kumbakonam,

Uppiliyappan temple, Nacchiyar temple, etc. In the Kanchi Vaikunda Perumal temple, beautiful pudaippu sculptures exist in the first interior compound walls depicting the history of the Pallavas in the later period the compound walls had paintings. The structure of interior compound walls does not exist in the Raja Gopala Swamy temple and Kaliyuga Venkatesa Perumal temple in Thanjavur. In this temple, the sacred pathways and compound walls were built on the exterior side. In this pathway Kodimaram, Palippeeda, and Karudan were present. In the Kaliyuga Venkatesa Perumal temple, new shrines are built near the compound walls. The Tanjore Nayaks built many sacred pathways, compound walls, and mandapas. New shrines and mandapas were built in Saiva and Vaishnava temples catering to the needs of the time, Utsav, and religious purposes.

The Structure of the Vimana:

The structure of the vimana of the Vijayanagar and Nayaks from the upapeeda till the sthubi resembles the temple structure of the Chola temples vimanas to a great extent usually these types of vimana are organized upon a upapeeda or an elevation. These types of vimanas existed in the architecture of the Nayaks. This type of art form existed even in the Chola architecture as kabotha pathra, vedhipathra upapeedas. The Vijayanagar artisans created upana above the upapeeda. These upanum were made during the Chola period. The structure of creating the upapeeda was a method adopted by the Pandiyas. The Vijayanagar artisans made the innovation of carving sculptures on the upanum. During the Chola period, it was customary to carve the sculptures of warriors on horses on the upanum. In Vijayanagar kadakallu Ganesha temple the upanum is very plain and very small in size. In Vidhulaswamy temple the upana is with the carvings of the scroll of veins. In Indian art, lotus has acquired a special place in carvings. These forms of art exist even from the 2nd century A.D. The South Indian artisans carved the symbol of the lotus on the upana above the Athittanum. This is called Padmum in Tamil. The Padmabandha Athittanum is one of the nineteen varieties of Athittanams that are discussed in manacharam. Sirppa sastra is widespread all over South India. This art form is also found in North India. The art of carving the lotus was inherited from the Pandiyan artisans by the Vijayanagar artist. The convention of carving the lotus existed only in the Jumbukeswara temple in Vijayanagar and it did not exist in any other convention before the Vijayanagar period. Because of this, we can understand that the Vijayanagar artisans were much updated and they

never let their ancient traditions also. In the Vijayanagar architecture, the lotus was carved very closely and their petals were slightly protruding. But, in the later years this convention vanished.

Athittanam:

Athittanam is a Padma bandha Athittanam. It has parts like Padmam, Jagathi, Kamala, Vireetha, Kumudham, Kandan, Pattigai and Vedhigai. In the Vedhigai also, all the above-said structures are present on the walls in the Pathra part, Sala Koshtum is located with Karnam on either side. The Karnam part has Rudhra kandha half pillars with 16 patties. The Pathra part is slightly projected from the wall than the Karnams on either side. Below this, the Padmam in the Athittanam is bigger than Padmam in other places. The Upana is slightly higher with pleated structures. On either side of the Pathra part, Kumbha Pancharams are present. At the edge of the Karnams, Rudhra Kandha half pillars are situated. Walls are built up to the Anthalam and parts like that. Salakoshtams, Kumbha Pancharams, and Rudhra kandha pillars are engraved. Bathra Koshtam is plain without sculptures. The walls in between the half pillars have pudaippu sculptures. The Vimana Prastharam lies on the Bothigai on the half pillars. The idol faces are not created on the Prasthra Kabhotham.

Vimana:

Vimana is a three-storeyed structure the last structure the Sigaram is present in a circular shape. Karnakoodu, Sathvarga sala Karnakoodu. This type of structure is situated in each story and on all sides. The Koshtams present in the above-said structures have beautiful Sudhai sculptures. Sculptures are present in Girivakoshtam. Nasikoshtams are present in between the Girivakoshtam. In the Sigaram four large Nasies and four small Nasies are present. At the corner of the Girivam a Karuda (eagle) sculpture is situated. This Vimana is very simple yet very elegant. The Tanjore Nayaks used bricks as their important material to build temples. The Tanjore Nayaks constructed more the building than the Senji Nayaks. Many temples and mandapas were constructed during the Tanjore Nayak period. There was a distinct style called 'Tanjore Style' that originated during the Tanjore Nayak period. A considerable amount of new stylistic features are introduced by the Tanjore Nayak artists. Not only in Temple arts but other forms of art must be subjected to such scrutiny, in the future, to bring out the aesthetic norms of the Nayak period.

Conclusion:

The whole Tamil region was divided into three districts Nayakship during the rule of Krishnadevaraya. They were Madurai, Tanjore, and Senji. The Nayaka temples of the Thanjavur region form a unique category. The Tanjore Nayaks constructed more the building than the Senji Nayaks. Many temples and mandapas were constructed during the Tanjore Nayak period. There was a distinct style called 'Tanjore Style' that originated during the Tanjore Nayak period. A considerable amount of new stylistic features are introduced by the Tanjore Nayak artists. Fundamentally the Madurai, Tanjore, and Senji Nayaks strictly followed the grammar and norms as prescribed in the silpa and agamic texts. They constructed the temples and also tended to imitate the earlier structures and forms in various temples and repetition was a common feature. However decorative elements played a major role in their temples and they were exaggerated in Tanjore Nayak temples. The Tanjore Nayaks gave special importance to the bigger size of every segment of the structures and sculptures. Innovations were completely neglected by Tanjore Nayaks adopted the features of early Vijayanagara art as well as the local Chola paradigms.

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