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SCULPTURES OF VYAGHRAPADESVARAR TEMPLE AT SIDDHALINGAMADAM

M. Dhanasekaran

Ph.D., Research Scholar, Department of History, Annamalai University, Annamalai Nagar.

Abstract: Vyaghrapadesvarar temple at Siddhalingamadam is a small village in Tirukkivilur Taluk of Villupuram District in Tamil Nadu, had been the urban center during the Later Chola Period. The history of Sculpture is as old as the history of mankind. This temple Sculpture is one of the great antiquity. There are, on the walls of this temple, 65 inscriptions is available. The earliest inscriptions of Parantaka I and Two inscription of Rashtrakuta King Krishna III. These Temple had been so compact and corporate from the early times.

Keywords: **Abhanga** – Slight flexion (in the standing pose of a figure); **Dvarapala** – door keeper; **Gana** – dwarf attendant of Siva; **Koshtha** – a cell or niche; **Jadamahuda** – head dress.

INTRODUCTION

Sculpture is the branch of the visual arts that operates in three dimensions. It is one originally used carving (the removal of Material) and Modeling (the addition of Material, as clay), in stone, Metal ceramic, wood and other Materials but, since Modernism, shifts in sculptural process led to an almost complete freedom of Materials and process. A wide variety of Materials may be worked by removal such as carving, assembled by welding or modeling, or molded, or cast.

The history of Sculpture is as old as the history of mankind. It has appeared in almost every culture of the world. Indian Sculpture is not only valued as an object of worship but also as a work of art. Merely building the temple, carving the images, Molding and shaping the idols cannot be done according to our own wishes or desires for which rules are laid down strictly in the *agamas* and *silpasastras* and they should accordingly be followed. Certain Silpa texts and agamas specifically point out the iconographic details and lay down the data for the Measurements and Molding of the Sculptures.

LOCATION

Siddhalingamadam is a small village in Tirukkivilur Taluk of Villupuram District in Tamil Nadu. Siddhalingamadam Siringur of the inscription lies at a distance 8 k.m southeast of Tirukkivilur the Taluk headquarters. On the southern bank of river Pennai. It is surrounded by natural cavernous archaic hillocks.

DAKSHINAMURTI

Dakshinamurti is one among the lilmurtis according to Saivasiddhanta. He, the lord of wisdom, is depicted always in sitting posture. The Dakshinamurti theme was popular in iconographical presentation since at least the beginning of the eighth century A.D. of which specimens are found in the Pandya monolithic at Kalugumalai and Pallava monuments at Mamallapuram and other place. He is known as cosmic guru, the treasure house of all knowledge. Since Siva was seated facing south (Dakshina) when he taught the sages in a secluded spot on the Himalayas he is called Dakshinamurti. The image of the great teacher sitting under pipal tree surrounded by four sages and by the animals of the forest clearly is derived from that of Buddha preaching his first sermon in the deer park of Saranath.

In the later Chola temples, the standard pattern as it had been developed by the Pallavas, with Dakshinamurti in the southern Vimana *devakostha* seems to have been followed without exemption. In the large temples, the *Devakostha* images are often repeated on the upper tier or *tiers*.

In the devakostha of the south wall of shine, a Dakshinamurti image showing the gentle and compassionate characteristics of the lord is depicted sitting in Virasana. He is flanked on the either side of the lateral wall by four disciples.

The right leg of the lord is placed on the *apasmara* (Muyalaka) indicating the suppression of illusion and ignorance. His head dress is *Jadamahuda*. The smiling countenance of the face suggests the movements of the lips which pronounce mantra to the disciples. He wears an exuberant hara, a *vastra Yajnopavita* and a pleasing *Udharabanda*. The *Keyura* and the wristlets are beautifully carved. The upper hand of the lord holds a serpent while the left upper hand carries *akshamala* (rosary). The right lower hand shows the *gnamudra* (chin) while the lower left hand holds a book, the symbol of philosophical contemplation.

LINGODBHAVA

Lingodbhava is an aspect of siva as an endless pillar of light resembling a linga and representing the axis of manifestation developing from the point limit (bindu), the centre of the Universe. The worshippers of the Hindu trio (siva, Vishnu and Brahma) and the emergence of siva cult as a superior one. According to saivasiddhanta, this aspects is one of the twenty five *Lilamurties* and *Siva*. Shine have Lingodbhavamurti specimens in the central niches of their west walls. The linga is tall, massive and cylindrical. Siva here wears *Jatamakuta*, *patra* and *makarakundalas*, (broad pearl decorated) *hara*, *Yajnopavita* with triple bend. *Udharabanda* and *girdle*. The chandrasekara emerging from the linga and Brahma and Vishnu in their zoomorphic form on the top and bottom of the Linga respectively.

BRAHMA

Brahma is one among the Hindu trio. He is also known by various names such as caturmukha (the four faced), pitamaha (the great father), prajapati (lord of animate beings) and so on¹³. He is always shown in ageless or youthful representation. Tamilnadu Brahma is depicted, in the devakostha of the northern wall of the garbha grha and in the sala niches of the same wall, Brahma is standing in samapatha in the badhra niche of the northern wall. Brahma in standing posture *holding rosary* and *Kamandala* and gesturing *abhaya* and *katikasta*. He wears *jata makuta*, *yajnopavita* and *udharabanda*. His square face and gentle flowing tassels of the garment on either side indicate the typical chola style. Instead of Umbrella, which feature the Chola style, there is a lotus medallion over the image.

DURGA

Goddesses of Durga, in the art of Tamilnadu, this specimen resembling contemporary chola images in all respects has four arms holding disc and conch in the upper hands and gesturing *varada* and *katihasta* in the lower hands. Durga is standing on the head of a buffalo. She carries disc, sword, *Simhakarna mudra*, *gnanamudra*, *conch*, *shield*, *katakamudra* and *Simhakarnamudra*. She wears a *kritamakuta* and a *beautiful attire*.

CHANDESVARAR

Chandesvarar is an important gnana of Siva. It is the age old practice in Siva Temples, that all transactions have been made in the name of chandesvarar. This is evident from the Number of Inscriptions. Chandesvarar was adopted as a son of siva, that is why he is called pilliyar. He is called Tondar Nayakar because he has been made the chief of Saiva devotees (Sivanadiyars).

The iconographic form of Chandesvaras is found separately in a different shrine, which is unattached to any temple as one of the parivara devatas of a siva temple. Sometime, he is accompanied by this wife Dharmanati. *Chandesvarar* is rare in the pallava Temple, but he is very common in the chola period.

Chandesvarar image is found on a separate shrine in the first prakara of the kampaharesvara temple. This shrine is usually facing the south.

The image is installed in the centre. This two- armed figure is seated in a sukasana pose over a bhadrapitha placed in turn on an oblong pitha. His right leg is hanging down and rests on a special step adjoining the pitha his left leg is bent at the knee and kept horizontally on the seat. His right hand holds the axe in *kataka hasta* and his left hand is held in *varada hasta*. He wears kesabandha on his head. In the lower seat a small devotee is depicted worshipping god in the right corner. This image expresses the Ideas and Teachingues adopted by the cholas of those days.

LAKSHMIGANAPATI

Ganapati, the god of obstacles and supreme godhead among Hindu believers today, is chief among the siva

ganas having different names such as Vignesvara, Ganesa, Vinayaka and Pillaiyar. In puranic accounts he is treated as the son of Siva and Parvati and his iconographical form are seen in seated, *Standing* and *Dancing postures*. His worship traces its origin back to a very early period. the beginings of the form of Ganapati should be traced back to the dwars yaksha with elephantine face from an early railcoping at Amaravati. It is said that during the 3rd century B.C., Asoka's daughter had built a temple of Ganesa in Nepal. His cult became popular in the Tamil country during the seventh century A.D. Ganapati images of the pallava, chola and slightly later periods are distinguished mostly by the length of the trunk running down vertically on the paunch and finally curving to touch the sweets in the left palm. Popular iconographical forms of Ganapati found in the temple complex of Lakshmi Ganapathi. On the eastern gateway to the second prakara of this temple complex a round stone image of lakshmi Ganapati (holding the goddess or sakti on his lap) is found. The god is seated on a pedestal lifting his right leg conveniently enough to place the right foot on the pedestal. The goddess is seated on his left thigh. She holds a lotus in one hand while the position of the other hand is not clearly visible. She wears a *Krita Makuta*. Ganapati, who has ten arms, holds in the upper most right hand a disc and the upper most left at *lotus flower*. The lower most right and left hands hold a fruit and the goddess respectively. His proboscis is turned towards the left holding a fruit. Another image of Lakshmi Ganapati is seen in the western side of the third prakara.

Dvarapala (12th Century A.D.)

The dvarapalas (door-keepers) always in pairs are seen at the entrance of the sanctum in a temple. The earlier pallava dvarapalas appear very natural, and usually have a single pair of arms. These are replaced in chola structures with dvarapalas of fierce mien, with four arms. The sculptures at Thajavur and Gangaikonda Cholapuram are typical examples.

In the temple of Vyaghrapathesvarar Temple, the two dvarapalas stand guard at the door-way of the ardhha Mandapa. Both the dvarapalas are indicatical in style and posture. They are almost facing front but slightly turned towards the shrine shown in tribhanga posture with one leg on the ground and another is bent at the knee joint. They are standing over the support of their club where palm of one hand is above the handle of the club, which is almost in side. The sculpture carry a trisula (trident) on their crown, have tusks protruding from their mouths and evoke terror with their knit eye-brows, rolling eyes and hands in the taryani (threatening) and vismaya wonder attitudes.

The armpit another hand is stretched along the side of the club. Top of the club, at joint of the handle and the heavy base, is snake entwining over that part. Both are shown wearing yajnopavita, Valayas Keyuras, Patra-Kundalas and Necklace. Above the head is Jata-Makuta, with Jata-bhara behind their head. Dvarapalas on the front central shrine entrance.

CONCLUSION

The foregoing study portrays that the Vyaghrapadesvarar Temple at Siddhalingamadam is completely rebuilt during the later Chola Period and so carries modern structure. However, its antiquity is revealed is revealed from the presence of one Vinayaka Sculpture belonging to 7th Century C.E., There are some sculptural representations with less beauty. This study reveals that the temples need to be taken care of at least to protect the existing artistic embellishments.

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M. Dhanasekaran

Ph.D., Research Scholar, Department of History, Annamalai University, Annamalai Nagar.

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