

Periyapuram Sculpture In Thirukkadaiyur

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ABSTRACT

Periyapuram is a great Tamil literary work deals with the life of sixty three saivite saints is Tamil land. These saints hail from all communities high and low and have brought in to prominence the cosmopolitan aspects of saivism. Following the tire of Nambiandar Nambi, Sekkilar, the high officer of the Kulottunga II A.D 1113-1150 composed the Periyapuram which treats the lives of the Saiva saints in detail. Among the saints two of the nayanars are closely related to Thirukkadaiyur. They are Kungiliyakkalaiyar Nayanar and Kari Nayanar. Sculpture is one of the visual arts. It forms the aesthetic expression in which designs are created in space. It can be fashioned form durable materials such was wax and ivory, stone clay, wood metal, bone and the like sculpture elucidate progress of art and architecture. The statues of the Nayanmar are considered to be ideal for portraits. The sixty three Nayanar were Siva “bhaktas who deli gently followed the tenets of saivism during their life and also devoted their life to Siva. All of them belong to South India. Kungilikkalaiyar Nayanar, and Kari Nayanar rendered yeomen service to saivism by saving it form the onslaughts of rival faith. That is why they are affectionately and reverentially called nayanars. Under the later Cholas, statues of nayanars were carved and installed in temples. These sculptures reveals the cultural contributions as the Cholas.

PERIYAPURANAM SCULPTURE IN THIRUKKADAIYUR

The temple of South India particularly Tamil Nadu have retained their significance and popularity through the ages. Worshipping Gods in temple infuses in to mind a feeling of spirituality, purifies the heart and virtuous. Gods and saints are making the temple holy. The Periyapuram sculpture draws the attention of the Siva temple at Thirukkadaiyur.

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Sculpture is one of the visual arts. It forms the aesthetic expression in which designs are created in space. It can be fashioned form durable materials such was wax and ivory, stone clay, wood metal, bone and the like sculpture elucidate progress of art and architecture³. The statues of the Nayanmar are considered to be ideal for portraits. The sixty three Nayanar were Siva “bhaktas who deli gently followed the tenets of saivism during their life and also devoted their life to Siva. All of them belong to South India. Kungilikkalaiyar Nayanar, and Kari Nayanar rendered yeomen service to saivism by saving it form the onslaughts of rival faith. That is why they are affectionately and reverentially called nayanars. Under the later Cholas, statues of nayanars were carved and installed in temples⁴.

According to Periyapuram, Kalaiyar alis kungiliyam used to worship lord of Thirukkadaiyur with deep called kungiliyam (*kungiliyam in Tamil Means Benzoin*)⁵. Nayanar was fond of rendering the service to the lord Amirtaghatesvara Temple at Thirukkadaiyur in Chola nadu. This was rather an expensive affair of a devotee. But was not very affluent. In due course he was suffered by poverty. But he continue his service to

the lord only with difficulty.⁶ It was an expensive aromatic powder, he lost all his wealth in spending on it. One day his wife gave her golden *mangalyam* (*Tamil Tali*) to him to sold for rice. But on the way to the market, the saint saw bags of kungiliyam for seving. He got the kungiliyam for the golden *tali* and used the same for service of the Thirukkadaiyur.⁷ That night, after his wife and other members of the family awaiting to eat. When they are asleep, lord appeared in the wife's dream and told her that enough of food grains and riches in the house. She was struck with the lords grace. Kalaiyar also was told by the lord to go hame and eat sumptuously. When he went home, he was also struck with the great consideration and kindness shown by the lord. There after he began to feed the devotees of lord Siva.⁸ The inscription of the Kulottunga I are found on the 25th regional year which mentions an endowment of 2 ¼ veli land was made by the sabha for the maintenance of some Sivayogis of kungilikkalaiyar madam in the temple⁹.

Once kungiliyakkalaiyar Nayanar was in Tirupanandal temple worshipping lord Siva. A lady once wanted to offer a garland to the Linga at Triuppanandal, when she did it, pallav of her saree slipped; she had to hold its ends and also put the garland around the Linga. Seeing her miserable plight the Lord bent a little forward and facilitated garlanding. The lady (known as Thatakai) was happy. Form then on the Lingam in that temple appeared in an inclined posture only. The king of the land wanted to renovate and consecrated this temple. He was, however, upset over the posture of the Lingam. When Kungiliyakkalaiyar Nayanar reached the temple he saw the Lingam and he wanted to correct its shape and posture. He tied his neck along with the Lingam using a strong rope, studded with flowers, and started pulling it hoping to correct the angularity in position. Unfortunately, the rope acted like a noose and it tightened around Nayanar's neck. He was about to breathe his last. The merciful Lord once again blessed Nayanar and the Lingam become erect. (it was not to be considered a material rope, it was a rope of bhakti, which pulled the Lord to position.¹⁰ In the Amirtaghatesvara temple at Thirukkadaiyur the sculptures of kungilikkalaiyar Nayanar found in the fourth prakara North side of Thirumaligaipathi mandapa. Sculptors have done a masterly job in carving the statues to suit the individual history be hind each one of them.¹¹

Kari Nayanar saint and a great Tamil poet was born at Thirukkadaiyur.¹² He is said to have composed a poetic work called Karikkovai. The former name noted in the Tiruttontarpuaranam. He used to visit the court of the Chera, Chola and Pandya kings of his time. They held him in high esteem. They rewarded him amply with gold. Precious stones and grains.¹³ He spent money for constructing Siva and offereing services to the servants of Siva. Honored by the lord he finally reached the lord's feet at the Kailasa, the of Lord Siva.¹⁴

In the Amirtaghatesvara temple at Thirukkadaiyur, the sculpture of kungiliyakkalaiyar Nayanar and Kari Nayanar are found in the fourth Prakara northern side of the thirumaligaipathi mandapa. The sculptures have done a masterly job in carving the statues to suit the individual history behind each one of them.¹⁵ The Thirukkadaiyur temple Amirtaghatesvara has a number of granite sculpture and bronze stone, icons dating back to the 11th century A.D. The expose the aesthetic sense and dexterity of the artisans. The temple of kungiliyakkalaiyar Nayanar, and kari Nayanar are striking for their elegance and refine med.¹⁶ The fourth prakara thirumaligaipathi mandapa has beautiful sculpture in the inner south side¹⁷. On the north side of the thirumaligai pathi mandapa, the stone image of sixty three nayanmars are found. All the sixty three Nayanmars are represented in a standing posture¹⁸ Kari Nayanar was found to anjali pose. Artha mandapa of the temple also has a number of Bronze and two panchaloha sculpture with pleasing kari nayanar, and kunkulikalaiyar Nayanar with is consort. In the North west direction of sangu mandapa found in a dancing posture and stating posture of Kari Nayanar and kungiliyakkalaiyar Nayanar.¹⁹

Hindu temple are the embodiment of rituals, pujas and festivals of primary importance are observed with the two fold definite objectives which are physical and spiritual.²⁰ Temples are considered to be hallowed by Gods, Goddess and saints. They are centre's from which divine grace emanates. Each place of habitation whether a hamlet or a city had to maintain its Owen temple for the prosperity of the people. Hinduism is more a way of life than a form of thought. In Hinduism the habit of worshipping different Gods as a manifestation of the same God.²¹ Bhakthi or devotion towards of supreme symbolized by idols enshrine in

temples plays an important part in our lives. Pujas means worship of a deity accompanied by certain formalities and offering. It refers to the form of rituals, a services of actions and the Dravidian form of worship.²² In the Tamil month Avani corresponding to the English month August-September to obtain Knowledge of things and success in all under-taking. It is celebrated to overcome all difficulties and failures. Avani- moolam (Scorpionis), is another importance of this month. It is held as very celebrated as Guru poja day Kungiliyakkalaiyar Nayanar a special abishegam, special offering and pujas to commemorate Kungiliyakkalaiyar Nayanar.

Like that, during Tamil month Masi , Corresponding to the month of February- March on a day when the asterism Masi puradam purvashada,star special Guru pojais was offered to²³ Kari Nayanar. Then Kungiliyakkalaiyar Nayanar returned to his place. Some time later he played host to Thirugnaanasambandar and Thirunavukkarasau nayanar when they visited the place. Induce course he attained Siva Lord.

This study reveals the contributions of Nayanmars to the growth of saivism in Tamil Nadu and the recognition of rulers to saiva saints. It also reveals the contributions of Cholas kings to the development of religion, Art and Sculpture and made the temples not only a worshipping place but also a historical monument.

END NOTES

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