

A study on Arkeswara Temple art and architecture in Chikkamaluru of Ramanagara district

Dr.S.K.Devegowda* and S.Shashikumara**

Chikkamaluru is a historical village located in Channapatna town on the left side of Mysore region. It is situated on the west bank of ancient river Kanva. Also experienced political upheavals from 8th Century, Ganga period till the time of Vijayanagara empire. Along with this the monuments like temple, forts and mantapa's are still stand as the replica of cultural development of this region during this period. Temples found were patronized by ruling dynasties, adapting to the changes in architectural style from time to time this study is an attempt to throw light on heritage and cultural glory of the region so that our modern generation understand the importance glorious past.

Though this temple was built by the gangas later during the time of the cholas and the vijayanagara empire underwent renovations. This arkeswara temple has main doors at east and south there are two garbhagrhas or sanctam.

The main sanctum which is facing towards east consists shivalinga as main diety, constructed during the time of gangas, south facing side consists akhilandeshwari devi sanctum, totally there are two sanctums, sukanasi or vestibule, navaranga, and two dwara mantapa or porch.

Garbhagruha or Sanctum: Shivalinga which is installed at eastern sanctum sanctorium is the main diety of this temple. Square shaped sanctum measures 6 and 6 square platform has a circular peetha or pedestal on which two feet height shivalinga is placed. Recently they have decorated the granite marble. Vithana or ceiling of sanctum is no decorations. Even dwarabhandha or jambs of the door is completely covered with marble.

Sukanasi or vestibule : vestibule in front of sanctum is very simple. There is sthambha shakha (vertical divisions of decorative designs at both the sides of dwara or doorjamb. Earlier it was a open mantapa or large open pavilion later navaranga there is a stone wall adjoin to this 1.5 feet spaces has been left, then added the navaranga to this. It suggests most probably from navranga to wall constructed by Gangas Later during vijayanagara period constructed a mukhmantapa or porch and with navaranga adjoining to another sanctum.

Dwara banda's or Jambs of the door of sukanasi are decorated with lotus petals called padmadala and No carvings are found on lalata. Both the dwara parshwa's consist stamba shaka or door pillars jamb above this we come across a prasthara or entablature with nasi or decorative motif decoration.

Navranga or Center hall : navranga consists chitrkhanda Or types of pillars six ft high, we come across chaturasa or square, astasra eight directions and adhara potika or beveled and tenon corbel here. There are stone stoles on these sthambhas. Above these we come across stone slab roofing in the entrance part of sthambha . We come see sculpture of ganapathi, padmadala peacock etc, we come across dwitala vithana or two steps lantern roof type of ceiling in center of navaranga and arkeswara temple.

Nandi or bull of navaranga belongs to recent period on the right side of navaranga there is phalaka of saptamatrikas on the wall, all these deities have four shoulder sitting in a relaxed or sukasana posture, with weapons in their hands below this phalaka carvings of deities vehicles or vahanas are found we can see one feet height nagara sculpture we can see the image of chaturbhujadhari shiva (shiva with four shoulders) sitting in a sukasana posture. We also see the sculpture of subramanya who has three heads and six hands sitting on his vehicle peacock in a relaxed posture. We also come across a ganapathi statue which belong to recent time.

Statue of deity akhilandeshwari is 2 ft height belongs to recent time in this garbhagriha also at the center of roof there is ekatala nabhichanda vithana. outside the garbhagriha of Akilandeswari Devi at left side 1.2 ft height statue of Vishnu with standing posture is seen. This statue is completely decorated with ornaments observe the features of this statue we can say that it is the statue of varadaraja.

Navaranga has two main dwaras, under east dwarabanda statues of shaivadarapalakar or shaiva gate keeper's shringi and brungi are found. Above these vallimandala decorated with creepers is seen.

East porch has four chitrkhanad type of pillars with chaturasa, astashra and adharpotika and a stone slab above this at porch 1.5 ft high and 3 ft long statue of sowmya nandhi or bull has been carved. There is ghantamala on his neck and back. Most probably it was inside the arkeshwara temple which was constructed during ganga period later during renovation of the temple it was shifted outside. Infront of this 3ft high bali peeta or pedestal meant for placing offerings.

Southern gate is very simple, consists porch of 2 pillars, entablature of coor consist kapota or cornice decorated with nasi's we also find a balipeeta platforms outside the temple which are one ft high.

Adhithana or moulded basement : basement is in padabhandha style completely covered till tripatta kumuda or molding three faceted after that we come across gala or recessed portion between two moldings and pattika's or rectilinear filler. On the outer wall we find bramhakanta bittipadas or four sided pilaster and three devakostaka's or niche without statues of deities bitti pilaster are found only in the sanctum sanctorum of arkeswara and

sukanasi of arkeswara temple wall here looks very simple most probably constructed during vijayanagara period. Vestibule here looks little special . Entablature is very simple without decoration utara and vallabhi or molding above then architecture decoration. But we see protruded kapota with nasi decoration then we find simple vajana or covering slab of ceiling here on the both the side of porch. We see sloppy stone slab kapotas.

There is prasada or super structure on the ceilings of two sanctums. on the sanctum of arkeswara temple we see a dravida style shikara built recently, which has high square platform, with a greeva or neck on this statue of nandi with one head and two bodies has carved shikara over this in rudrachanda or cupola with circulator base style four sides it has nasi decoration also we find stupid of kalasa or decorative motif shape, we also see square greeva on the Prasada of sanctum of akhilandeswari temple later part of shikara also is in chaturasa brahma chanda style, in the four side we can see the nasi's of sitting lion and decorated at stupi or finial. There is basava sculpture the four corners of navaranga with one head two bodies. Left side outer wall of temples has damaged, wall has been constructed from protect it from collapsing while renovating the temple used a lot original style and features of temples. So we can conclude by telling this temple has been built during the time of gangas but renovated by vijayanagara rulers.

Reference books:

1. Suryanatha U. Kamath: "**Karnataka Sankshipta Ithihasa**", MCC Printing Press, Jayanagara, Bengaluru, 2010.
2. J.M.Flight (Translation C.P.K.): "**Bharatiya Shasanashastra Parichaya**", Lakshmi Printing and Publishing House, Mysore, 2001.
3. B.L.Rice: Epigraphia Carnatica, Banglore District, Volume-IX.1909.
4. Suryanatha U. Kamath: "**Karnataka State Gazetteer**", **Part-I**, 1982, Government of Karnataka.
5. Suryanatha U. Kamath: "**Karnataka State Gazetteer Part-II**", 1983, Government of Karnataka.
6. Suryanatha U. Kamath: "**Bangalore Rural District Gazetteer**", 1989, Government of Karnataka.
7. **Karnataka Hand book 2011**: Karnataka Gazetteer Department.
8. Kannada Vishwakosha: "**Ithihasa mattu Puratatva**", Kuvempu Institute of Kannada Studies, University of Mysore, 2009.
9. Acharya, P.K., **Indian Architecture according to Manasara Shilpa Shastra**, Madras, 1927.
10. Balasubramanya, S.R., **Early Cholas Temples-A.D. 907-985**, New Delhi, 1971.
11. Balasubramanya, S.R., **Middle Chola Temples-A.D.985-1070**, New Delhi, 1975.
12. Krishna Sastri, H., **South Indian Images of Gods and Goddesses**, Madras, 1916.

13. Krishna Rao, M.V., **The Gangas of Talakad**, Madras, 1936.

14. Rajashekara, S., **Karnataka Architecture**, Dharwar, 1985.

DR.S.K.Devegowda*

Assistant Professor

Maharani Women's Arts College

Mysuru

Shashikumara.S**

Curator

Ancient history and Archaeology

Manasa Gangotri

University of mysore

Mysuru-57006

