

The Recherla Reddy's Temples of Pillalamarri (Suryapet District)

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Abstract: Recherla Reddy's were born in 'Manuma Caste'. They are native of amanagallu. The progenitor of Recherla family is a Brahma Senani. These rulers were famous as Recherla's of Pillalamarri. This village 5 km from Suryapet District. In Pillalamarri there are 3 famous Temples built by Recherla Reddys'. There are seven inscriptions also available about these temples.

1. The Trikuta Temple
2. Nameswara Temple
3. Erakeswara Temple

Keywords: Manuma caste, Pillalamarri Temples, Recherla Reddy's.

1. Introduction

Pillalamarri is a small hamlet that comes under Suryapet district. The hamlet is famous for the many temples. The Trikuta Temple, Nameswara Temple and Erakeswara Temple were built during the early historic and medieval periods which are moderate structures having a Garbhagriha, Antaralaya and Mukhamandapam. The Garbhagriha is features with ekatala vimanas, they became rich due to land grants, village grants, money grants etc. The number of rituals and festivals centered on the main deity and subsidiary deities increased to a large extent. As a result of the increase of rituals and festivals. The temples became magnificent structures from eleventh century A.D. onwards. Many additions such as a separate shrine for goddess, subsidiary shrines, pillared, mandapas etc. were made in these temples. Thus, the temple became a huge complex surrounded by prakaras and huge gopura-gateways.

The Kakatiyas of Warangal were ancient and architectural greatness style of the temple builders. In the epigraphical and literary sources. It is evident that the Kakatiya rulers and their subordinates built temples, forts, tanks and canals in large scale. The Epigraphs refer of construction of tempels, consecration of images and lands villages, goddesses, money and jewels to the gods and goddesses enshrined in the temples. The temples constructed by the Kakatiyas were scattered throughout the length and breadth of their dominion. The Kakatiya Temples are found at Warangal, Ghanpur, Bayyaram, Pillalamarri, Nagulapadu, Somavaram, Amanagallu, Palampet, Sirikonda,

Elakurthi, Godisala, Ainavolu etc., [1]. Recherla Reddys' rulers were famous in Pillalamarri for their great ruling and construction of Temples in their times. In their clan Mucha Senani, Kata senani, Kama Chamupathi, the son of Kata senani was born. Kama Senani has three sons and the elder son was Kata Camupathi, another one was Pillalamarri Beti Reddy and the third sons was Nami Reddy. They were ministers, chiefs of armies and subordinates of the Kakatiyan rulers. Recherla Reddy chiefs appointed as the ulers of Amanagallu and Elakurthi areas by the Kakatiya Emperiors. Elakurthi was ruled by Kama Chamupathi and their family and Amanagallu was under the rule of Betireddy and Nami reddy brothers [2].

2. Pillalamarri Geographical Conditions

Pillalamarri (16025' – 17051' N, 78040' – 80050' E) is a small village situated 5 kilometers North-East of Suryapet district of Telangana state. In Pillalamarri village there are three important temples built by Recherla chiefs'. There are few inscriptions also available confirming the dates of erection of temples.

1. The Trikuta Temple
2. Nameswara Temple
3. Erakeswara Temple [3].

1) The Trikuta Temple

This is the most imposing beautiful and striking of all temples at Pillalamarri. The Trikuta temple which is locally known as "Mukkanti Siva Temple" is situated within the stone walled enclosures to the Sourt of Nameswara Temple. Recharle Namireddy a servant of King Kakatiya Rudradeva. The temple according to an inscription 4 is consecrated in saka 1117, Rakshasa, Vaisakha, su: 13, Sunday (23rd April, A.D.1195). This was Name established with Three Lingas of Siva and gave for their service vritti for the increase of merit to his mother Kacheswara, father Kameswara and Nameswara for himself these three were established in the triple shrine. He gave as gift to these gods lands under museti canal of Pillalamarri, under the Tank, Sabbi Samudram east of that town. The temple faces east and has a cruciform shape. It has a square and common mukhamandapa at the centre with three shrines projecting to the North, West and South and portico projecting towards East.

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Each of three shrines consists of a Garbhagriha – a square chamber of 2.6 m internally and a rectangular antaralaya measuring 2.6 x 1.8 m internally. The Mukhamandapa which is square in shape is 7.35 m and contain sixteen pillars. It is also divided into two square chambers one inside the other. The central square formed by four well executed granite pillars is elevated by about 10 cm. inside this square is a circular elevation. In this mandapa on the east there is a finely carved and polished Nandi of about 1.5 m height and carved out whitish-grey granite. The portico which is to the east of mandapa has a flight of four steps with elephant trunk carved on either side of it. This temple is not provided with adhistana. The walls are plain and devoid of any projections or carvings made of huge rectangular blocks of stone. The superstructure above all the three shrines of the Trikuta is fallen and only few bricks remain standing loosely [5].

2) Nameswara Temple

The Nameswara Temple also known as Parvati Mahadeva Nameswara Temple is a Saivite Temple. It was constructed on the banks of the Musi River. The Nameswara Temple consecrated saka 1124, Dundubhi, Chaitra, su-14, Sanischaravara, saturday (9th March, A.D.1202) Namireddy, who was a Sudra by caste is given in the inscription on the pillar, established the glorious god Nameswara at Pillalamarri. the records says that Recharla Namireddy a gift of two tanks, Sabbi Samudram in Pillalamarri into two parts and granted one part for the merit of Kakatiya Ganapatideva [6]. Nameswara Temple is one among the four prominent and intricately carved and granite stones. It displays magnificently carved pillars and walls where every sculpture is a self-explanatory poem. The walls of the temple are also decorated with stunning paintings. A royal Nandi bull adorns the porch of the temple. A certain style of the craftsmen of the Kakatiya era who have imparted a touch of excellence into the Telangana art and culture is an indication of the meticulous structural design. The temple consists of Garbhagriha, antaralaya and mukhamandapam. The temple faces east and is situated in a big stone walled enclosures, in which a Trikuta temple is also located [7].

The Garbhagriha is a square chamber measuring 5.0 m outside and 2.9 m inside. the antaralaya before and on the east is a rectangular chamber measuring 5.0 m x 3.0 m externally and 2.9 m x 2.3 m internally. The doorways of both Garbhagriha and antaralaya are well executed and resembles their counter parts of Erakeswara Temple. The doorway of the anyaralaya is exquisitely carved. Its bottom or the bhuvangama consists of miniature vimanas. The lintel has a central projection containing the figure of Gajalakshmi. The architecture above it is well executed with a row of miniature turrets, interspersed by vertical rows of circles with female figures in various stances. In the centre there is a beautiful figure of Tandava siva. The tombs on each side of the doorway contain five pilasters each and fret work. The Mukhamandapam which can be reached from east by a flight of steps is placed before the Garbhagriha and antaralaya. It is a square chamber measuring 11.20 m outwardly and 9.0 m inwardly and contains sixteen pillars which are moderately carbed. To the east of it a portico of 5 x 3 m dimension with steps. The central one is elevated and

consists of four beautifully ornamented pillars. these pillars exhibit a variety of sculputre like miniature figures of dancers, musicians, birds, floral motifs and designs. The brackets consist of various figures mostly females holding the fly whisks, garlands and in dancing postures. The sculptural decoration of the pillars consists of kirtimukhas, bead garlands, sworns, lions and other decorative patterns [8]. There may be some painting situated all around the ceiling, but at present only three paintings remained. Two of them represent the puranic scenes, one depicting the episode of churning of the milk ocean by devas and danavas and the other depict the war scenes of Rama and Ravana. The third one which is badly damaged cannot be identified. In addition to the historical and aesthetic value the village imparts, it is also a culturally significant area. This is the birthplace of the famous Telegu poet Pillamarri Pina Virabhadru.

3. The Erakeswara Temple

The deity Erakeswara is named after meaning “lord of Eraka”. The temple was built by Erakasani, wife of Recharla Betireddy in A.D.1208, as stated in the inscription located in the courtyard of the temple. According to the inscription 9 the establishment or consecration of the glorious Erakeswara in Pillalamarri took place on Monday, May 19th 1208 A.D. The ground plan of this temple is cruciform. The temple faces east and consists of Garbhagriha, an anataralaya and mukhamandapam. The Garbhagriha or the sanctum sanctorum is a square chamber measuring 5.60m outside and 3.15 m inside, i. e, allotting the thickness of the wall by 1.25 m. At the centre of the sanctum sanctorum stands the presiding deity Erakeswara in the form of ‘Linga’ placed on a finely carved pedestal. One can observe that today the Shivalinga is slightly tilted towards north, probably due to an attempted destruction. In this connection it is to be mentioned that this temple had undergone rennovations many times. From an inscription¹⁰, is known that the god Erakeswara (linga) was ruined by Sultan Ala-ud-din, and one ‘Erapotu-lenka’ a per servant of Kapaya Nayaka, ruling at Pillalamarri performed the re-establishment on 1st Thursday, June 1357 A.D. afer rennovating the damaged temples and made numerous endowments.

It is a rectangular chamber measuring 3.15 m x 2.65 m internally. There is a sahasra linga to the right of the doorway of Garbhagriha, facing a Nagakal. The door jambs of the Garbhagriha and anataralaya are well executed with exquisite sculptures in low relief like floral patterns, miniature temple forms, geometric designs etc. The doorway of the antaralaya had side screens of exquisite fret work, admitting plenty of light into the otherwise dark anataralaya. Its sakas are admed with floral designs and vibrant human figures in dancing postures. The Mukhamandapam or the hall is a square chamber measuring 8.70 internally. It is provided with porticos and flight of steps on east, north and south. The hall is made up to two squares one side the other, the inner being formed by four excellently carved pillars in black granite.

4. Conclusion

This paper is presented an overview of the Recherla Reddy's Temples of Pillalamarri (Suryapet District).

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