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2020/02/1
NDL/PR

Research Thesis for Master of Philosophy

Faculty of Graduate Studies

University of the Visual & Performing Arts

Colombo

Research Topic:

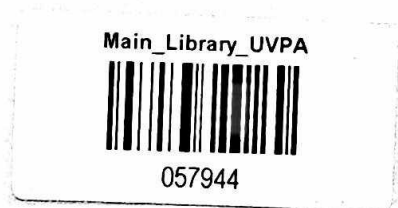
**A RESEARCH ON EXPLICATING VISUAL ARTS
THROUGH SELECTED JAFFNA TRADITIONAL HINDU
TEMPLES**

Medium: English

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GS/M.Phil/VA/15/526

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Abstract

From an oriental view, Visual arts are popularly considered to have originated through Hindu temples and the palaces of the kings who patronized the arts and artisans through the ages. Kings of south India had patronized the art considering it a very important part of their achievements in their ruling time. The Pallavas, the Cholas, the Pāndyas, the Vijayanagara kings and the Nāyakkars had contributed the immensely towards the construction, improvements, developments and growth of Hindu temples and through them, the visual arts (Architecture, Sculptures and Paintings). Sri Lanka also had its impacts from South India, especially from the Tamil Nadu where the Dravidian Hindu visual arts originated and were extended towards this island from the ancient past. The Jaffna peninsula also had received its impacts from Dravidian Hindu visual arts from Tamil Nadu and most of the Hindu temples built here were the replicas of the styles and shapes of Dravidian Hindu visual arts. In our research, we could identify some of the very important Hindu temples within Jaffna peninsula for the investigations of visual forms and the explicates they had to offer. There are five big temples selected and main structures such as Sanctums (Garbhagraha), Domes (Vimāna), Halls (Mandapa), Pillars and Towers (Gopura) had been observed and investigated in view of the evolutionary changes and growth from the ancient dynasties up to the British rule in Sri Lanka. During this time span these temples had been repeatedly renovated, adopting the same Dravidian style. Thus it could be considered that innovations were introduced in the reconstructions of the artistic works of the Hindu temples, due to the changing political horizons of South India and the Northern Sri Lanka in the artistic expressions. The artistic styles found in the Nāyaka period in South India were also found in the temples which were renovated during the British rule in Sri Lanka. Further, the artistic styles of Westerners started influencing the artistic expressions of the visual arts of these temples. Through these Indian artistic styles, Western artistic styles could be identified now in the visual arts expressions of these five temples. These changes took place in the Hindu temples could be observed in the main structures. The figures, colors and styles that have emerged from the building designs, sculptures and paintings. The nature of the integrated characteristics of Hindu āgama traditions, the South Indian sculptural science (*Silpa-Sāstra*) traditions, Dravidian traditions and the Western art

traditions have been examined, evaluated and analyzed through the visual arts forms which are to be found on the main structures of the selected Hindu temples.

Key Words: Hindu Temple, Jaffna, Visual arts, Architecture, Sculpture, Painting, *Garbhagraha*, *Vimāna*, *Mandapa*, *Pillars*, *Gopura*, Dravidian art style, Western art style