

# VISUAL DOCUMENTATION TECHNIQUES OF CHOLA KINGS THROUGH THEIR SCULPTURE

J.KUMAR

Research Scholar, Dept of Visual Communication, Thiru.VI.KA.Govt Arts College,  
Thiruvarur, Tamilnadu, India

Received: June 28 , 2018

Accepted: August 02, 2018

## ABSTRACT

*Sculpture and architecture have this in common; they both exist in three-dimensional space. And, in fact, for thousands of years sculpture was often carved from stones that made up the surfaces of buildings. Sometimes, as we shall see, this sculpture served a definite purpose, at other times, it was little more than applied decoration. Much of the finest sculpture created in connection with buildings has been religious in character. In every age and civilization, Cholas have incorporated sculpture into the design of their temples at 9th century. In most of the Chola temples, for example, the sculptural and architectural elements are so closely linked as to be indistinguishable from each other in the final effects. We know the sculpture generally had a religious purpose. By symbolizing gods, saints, or rituals, and illustrating religious stories, the sculptures served to intensify a building's spiritual power and meaning. Article proves that, The greatest sculptor of Chola's "Golden Age" but that it added to the meaning and significance of the building in Tamilnadu. Sculptors continued to provide works to be in and on buildings; their purpose was more and more to provide visual of mythological aspects and stories for documentation.*

**Keywords:** Documentary, Visuals, Illustration, Narration, Realism and Idealism.

## Introduction

The emphasis that medieval Chola artists used to place on religious themes was one instance of an important role that sculptures plays in every society; it expresses the important ideas and traditions of the society and records significant historical events. At 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> century of Cholas period number of Hindu religious temples were constructed all over Tamlinadu. Exhibits a new segment in the development of the South Indian temple and indicates a changeover from the Pallava to Chola style. Edith Tomory tells "South Indian architecture developed in Dravidadesha, the old name of what is now known as Tamilnad." For thousands of years men have told stories in sculpture, most of these stories have recorded military and political achievements, or shown scenes from the life of a god or a religious leader. For this sort of storytelling, sculptors have favored certain special sculptural techniques. The technique used most often is called relief. Instead of carving or modeling free standing images, the sculptor works on a flat surface a wall, perhaps, or a door panel, or even a tall column. He cuts away part of the surface so that the figures he has conceived stand a little forward from the background. The effect is somewhat like that of a picture, but instead of painting in the shadows and highlights, he creates them by the depth of his carving.

## Objective

The objective of this article is to do research and prove that visual documentation techniques handled by Chola kings with the help of sculptures and evidence gathered from Chola Temple. The given images taken from Brihadeswara temple, Thanjavur in Tamilnadu. This temple was added to the list of great living Chola temple in the year 2004, The great living Chola temple includes the Brihadeswara temple at Thanjavur. Although there are many sculptures in the form story boards of used in this temple, let us take are as evidence.

## Hypotheses of the study

The technique of visual documentation rules followed in the modern days with the help of audio video format. But the ancient Tamil sculptors made use of the visual documentation through the stone sculptures. This reveals the non-moving sculpture. Even though this may come into view similar to a series of shots with in a single or series of related sculptures. There was no way of presentation the scene in motion. It does, however, indicate the artist's intention of depicting narrative sequence. Sculptures are depicted with clearly attempting to convey the story of puranas, Ithikas and Tamil epics .

## Historical Research method

This research on the Chola sculptures serves as historical research and the comparative study of the visual documentation technical methods used today also proves to be consolidated research. Thus, the

approaches provide the bases of the selected topic. This method is concerned with the ancient Chola period and which attempts to draw the past as a means for seeing the present approach.

### DOCUMENTATION OF BHARATHANATIYA KARNAS

Sculptures that project a little farther from the background are called low relief or bas-relief. Some relief sculptures are so deeply carved that features like arms, legs, flowers, spears project in completely three-dimensional form. We say that the sculptor has carved them in high relief. An important element in narrative sculpture- sculptor can imply some Ramayana, Mahabaratha and Tamil literature scenes at the time of Chola period.

The great draftsman of the Birhadeswara temple at Thanjavur the instance of Rajaraja cholan. He visually documented a series of panels depicting Siva himself performing this grammar of Bharatha natiaya Karnas. It may be recalled that the Tamil nadu was a land of culture and art. The Images start from the East side of second floor and proceed clockwise on the inside walls to the south, west and north. There are ten karnas facing east direction, twenty seven for south side, thirty one wests and thirteen north facing. Totally eighty one karnas placed in inner wall of the main (Vimana) tower.



Fig. Panel illustrating the karnas demonstrated by Siva himself, Chola, 10<sup>th</sup> Century A.D., Brihadisvara Temple Thanjavur.

Dancing is a natural means of expression. Through bodily movement, one person can convey his ideas and emotions to another. Even the designing themselves have not been given that finish that would be desired if they had been carved at a relaxed pace by the sculptor. He was probably intending to finish roughly the entire series before he could chisel out the details for all of them. The general proportion and the flavor of the sculpture made in clearly early Chola of the beginning of the 10<sup>th</sup> century.



Fig. Panel illustrating the 108 karnas

The four arms found in the sculptures are often used for symmetry. To show movement an important element in narrative sculpture – sculptors can imply it. An arm drawn back, for example, indicates that a blow is to follow; a leg raised from the ground suggests running or dancing depending on the attitude

the sculptor has given his figures. Another method of suggesting movement is to repeat shapes with a rhythm that produces an almost cinematic effect as the eye moves along them. It is also magnificent way in which the visualization of the movement in had shown through them. The first two arms show the beginning of shot which the other two its course or end of shot.

We can take some more sculptures for this research sample, as give below frames of the images can explicit the movement of dance. An arm drawn back, for example, indicates that a blow is to follow; a leg raised from the ground suggests running or dancing depending on the attitudes the sculptor has given his figures. Another method of suggesting movement is to repeat shapes with a rhythm that produces an almost cinematic effect as the eye moves along them.

### Digital Documentation

The word "Documentary" was first used by a British director, John Grierson, to describe a special type of film pioneered by America's Robert Flaherty(1884-1951). His films have been defined by Grierson as giving a creative treatment of actuality. His films are personal and poetic interpretation of reality. This is a system where the Text and drawings are still done on paper. They are then digitized into the computer and placed in order of files. This system can be used for so - called digital records. This is a process known since 1992 as 'pre- visualization' or 'pre- vis'. Since the 1990s, Computer application software has turn into part of the digital storage tools. In the past, traditional data's and records were sent out be photographed by a cameraman using a down-shooter or rostrum camera, and then the film was developed, edited together and matched to a soundtrack by an editor in edit shoot. This was a lengthy process that took several days at its fastest.

Now, the artists alone have the power to create documentary films on their laptop computers, with multiple audio and video tracks and effects, all with an immediate rendering. A virtual set is constructed in the computer, and the characters placed in them. often just simple graphic symbols and animation works with color. When the various cuts are considered by editor, the camera technician not only has to take into consideration the camera angle, but also the camera lenses to be used and the light sources in the scene.

### Visual storage device of Chola Architecture

The materials from which religious sculptures are made also play a part in creating an emotional impression on the worshiper. Hard stones like granite, comparatively unaffected by weathering, are particularly suitable material from which is carve figures that will suggest ageless durability and bring a feeling of security to the spectator.

From Thanjavur Brihadisvara Temple can identify the puranic and Ithikash stories. Like Hindus traditional myths of Ramayana and Mahabharatha stories and also puranic stories of Tripurandekar, Kannapanayanar, Thiruneelakandar, Murugan valli Tirumanam. Type of low relief sculptures visualizing the main concept of the story and each board for important scenes.

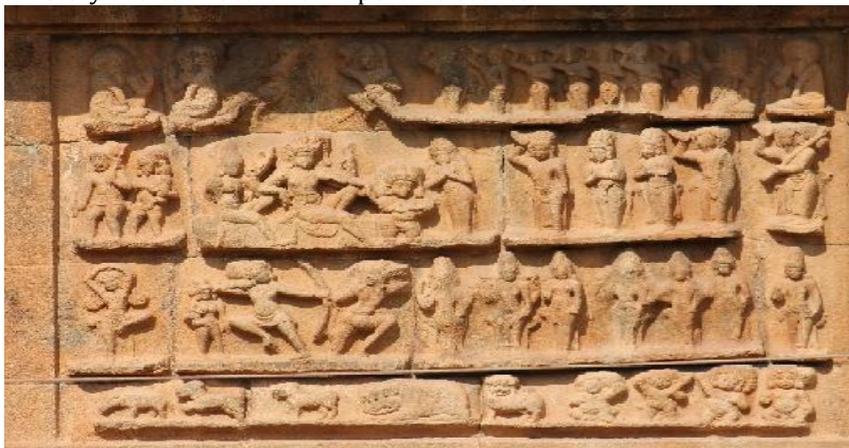


Fig. Panel illustrating the puranic stories of Arjuna, Chola, 9<sup>th</sup> Century A.D., Brihadisvara Temple Thanjavur.

From the above evidence can prove that, sculptors found in the dramatic realism of Chola art a good way of telling a story. The use of free-standing sculpture for narrative purpose was not a brand new idea, we saw how the portray the story of Ramayana. More than any other art, sculpture has been the means of providing effective and satisfying images and symbols for religious worship. Sculptures have often formed

the emotional center of religious buildings. In fact, many temples were specifically designed to house such images.

### **CONCLUSION**

The sculptor's task was not to carve his idea of a particular god, but to maintain the continuity of religious teaching by reproducing traditional forms. Thus, for example, Chola images of the sculptures are similar in almost every detail. The religious sculptor showed his skill and imagination not by inventing new forms, but in perfecting, visual documenting and enriching traditional ones. From the above explanation it is give clear that visual documentation process have been handled by our forefather. The sculptors who chiseled the sculptures have adopted the story telling technique and visualized them in the same method. In the modern world, we have elapsed to preserve the traditional history and ancient treasure of Tamil culture. Visual documentation concept has roots from the latest software in the modern technology. Our forefather already exposed the concept of permanent documentation thousand years before is the proof of study. Our old visual producers have not chiseled their production company name in their sculpture. Therefore it is our responsibility to safeguard the cultural heritage and sculptures. This is the only way to praise the artists who contributes the valued sculpture in our country.

### **REFERENCE**

1. Edith Tomory F.M.M. Ph.D.(1982) A History of Fine Arts in India and the west, Orient blackswan private limited. P 4, 124.
2. Ranjit Kumar (2014), Research Methodology, SAGE Publication India Pvt Ltd. P.247.
3. Kudavayel Balasubramanian, Iaravathisuvarar Temple p.1
4. Harold Whitakar and John Halas updated by Tom Sito. (2009). *Timing for animation*. Elsevier Ltd. ISBN: 978-0-240-52160-2 ( p 120 & 123)
5. Elsevier(2005), The Power of Color in Visual Storytelling, PATTI BELLANTONI focal press is an imprint of Elsevier, Printed in China.
6. Jon Krasner (2008), Motion Graphic Design Applied History and Aesthetics, Published Elsevier Inc, British Library Cataloguing – in-Publication Data ISBN: 978-0-240-80989-2
7. Bindu S. Shankar, (2004) DANCE IMAGERY IN SOUTH INDIAN TEMPLES : STUDY OF THE 108-KARANA SCULPTURES, Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University.