



SPATIAL AND CULTURAL EXPRESSION IN THE DECCAN MONUMENTAL ARTEFACTS OF PHILIP MEADOWS TAYLOR

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ABSTRACT

Meadows Taylor is a political astute. He is usually remembered as the political representative of the British government who administered the Surpur state. We can still see his bungalow (*People still call it is the Taylor Bungalow*) at Surpur today. Observing this architecture we realize; Taylor was a recluse and nature lover.

KEYWORDS: Yants Brothers Company, Taylor Manzil, Sellers & Rama Rao, Garudadri, Perspective

INTRODUCTION

Taylor is originally from England. He was born on 25th September 1808, in Liverpool. His full name is Philip Meadows Taylor. Taylor's parents were not wealthy. He is the eldest of six children, early education in Dublin. Taylor's reading remained incomplete through poverty. He worked as a clerk at *Yants Brothers Company* in Liverpool. His father's friend Mr. Boxer was based in Mumbai for business. At his call, Philip Taylor came to India in 1824 at the age of 15¹. On 1st September 1824, Taylor reached Mumbai and joined the Nizam's army. He served in the Nizam's army for seventeen years and held the rank of captain. In 1832 Mr. Palmer's, who was a leading banker in Hyderabad. Taylor married Palmer's daughter Lucy. In 1841 the British Government sent Taylor as Political Agent to Surpur (*Then Shorapur*). As a political representative of the British government in the Surpur state in the 1840s-50s, he worked hard for the prosperity of the state.

by Taylor in Karnataka prehistory research is very big. In the period from 1851 to 1862, Taylor explored the sites of large rock culture (*Kalgori in local language*) sites in Karnataka for the first time at Hagaratagi, Rajanakolur, Chikkanahalli, Shahapura, Vibhutihalli, Andola and Jewarg in Sagarnad region.

Taylor had little schooling, but he knew a comprehensive history of Karnataka. Taylor, who was passionate about the people, language and culture of this country, was of the opinion that all the Kannada speaking people should be under the same government. Thus, Taylor has examined the Kannada speaking map. Taylor was a famous historian, novelist, geologist, an unparalleled photographer and also a painter, it is known from the pictures he drew.

Taylor's interest in painting: Even before taking charge of the Surpur state Taylor had maintained a routine of drawing and painting. A few changes can be seen in Taylor's paintings as an officer in the Surpur state. The reason for this can also be explained in this way.

Even before Taylor came to Surpur, a family of painters named 'Garudadri' had taken refuge in Surpur, and many paintings were created by them. A close contact of these court artists, Taylor painted monumental drawings and landscapes. In a couple of Taylor's paintings, the figures used in the background with the scenery and the clothes they wear are similar to the mannequins found in Surpur traditional painting. The only dyes used for this type of painting are chemical dyes. The colors used in Surpur traditional or miniature painting are of natural (Though it cannot be denied that in some paintings of the last phase of Surpur, the use of natural and chemical colors was also used). Perhaps it is not wrong to say that

Taylor's role in improving the economic condition of the state was crucial when the state of Surpur was in transition. Raja Nalvadi Venkatappa Nayaka, the last ruler of the Surpur kingdom, installed him on the throne when he was just an 8 year old. Not only that, Venkatappa Nayaka's responsible, imparts education to skilled scholars like *Sellers, Rama Rao*. Once Taylor was appointed *Deputy Collector* of Naladurga and Raichur Districts, on 2nd June 1853, he left Surpur, handing over the administration of the state to Nalvadi Venkatappa Nayaka.

Had Taylor confined himself to military career and administration, his name would have remained today or not. He could have been etched into people's memories as part of Surpur legends. *Dr. G.S. Amur* defines on the role played

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Taylor is the reason for these changes in the painting method.

Taylor's letters while serving in India were published (*The letters of Philip Meadows Taylor to Henry Reeve*) in book form. In this book, a couple of Taylor's drawings were printed. Accordingly, Taylor was more interested in agriculture, as his drawings of agricultural implements show. After Taylor's arrival, some changes can be seen in the works of Surpur court artists. Especially during this period the use of photography is seen in Surpur traditional paintings. The art of photography was introduced to Surpur in the 1850s-60s by Meadows Taylor. During this period, we can still see a lot of photographs in Surpur area where not only the nobles of the Surpur court but also the wealthy class clicked pictures of themselves and their families. Garudadri Banayya of the Surpur court artists, created works using photographs in traditional miniatures. who introduced the technique of using photographs to the art world credited to court artists. We cannot deny Taylor's role behind this success. More than all this, we have to remember here the love of art of Surpur kings. Thus the Surpur kingdom became an important center of fine arts during the time of the court artists *Garudadri* and *Taylor*.

Most of Taylor's paintings are of monuments in the Deccan region. He has tried to show the geographical features of the region through very fine lines of shadow-light contrast. So Taylor's drawings are more appealing. The idea of far and near (*perspective*) is elegantly evoked in these works. The use of white with black lines for the idea of this scene shows Taylor's artistic skill. In the Deccan especially the tomb of Sidi Masood Khan of Adoni, the Madrasa building of Bidar, the Mahadwara of the ancient temple at Kaladagi, the fort at Akola near Birar, another monument at Gawailgarh near Birar, the rock group near Bhimarayanagudi, a stone tomb near Rajanakoulur, monuments like Nandi Mahadwara besides the Golconda fort and tombs near Hyderabad, Charminar monument, monument at Bhuranapur, panoramic view of Nandibetta in his lines. These drawings are drawn in pen and ink, and in some cases distant scenes are shown only in pen or pencil to show the monuments as far and near, while hard lines and ink are used to show the near. While these are illustrations of Taylor's drawings, he used mostly water colors to create paintings.

There can be no doubt that he is a skilled painter if we look at the concept of space and perspective in his drawings and paintings. Because we can find all the grammar that should be in his art works. Given all these factors, Taylor had a special study in painting? the doubt cannot help us. More studies can provide clear information on this.

Some key points

- I was doing Ph.D on Surpur painting. I have occasionally mentioned Taylor and his interest in painting while undertaking research studies. Taylor is usually identified as a historian, novelist, and efficient administrator, but it is not surprising that Taylor is also unique in photography and painting.
- Taylor has created many art works. He used pen, ink (both in black) and white for the drawings. An important point

to note in these drawings is to show the monuments in the picture as distance-nearness; Figures at a distance are shown in only one line, while nearer the lines are sharply drawn. Still sometimes the ink is used thicker when it comes close. All these express Taylor's artistry.

- The material especially used in the drawings are the monuments of the Deccan Province. Although these monuments are properly painted, at times Taylor seems to have tried to evoke the artistic splendor of the time by giving them a touch of decorative design with fine lines.
- Along with the monuments, our Indian folk life and cultural traces have also been drawn. In these works, one can see his special concern for Indian culture. Images related mainly to agricultural implements can be recalled here. As mentioned above, these images are printed in volumes.
- Apart from the above drawings, although many pictures have been drawn using multicolors, it is important to note here that these pictures have been drawn linearly. Among such pictures Madrasa building of Bidar can be named here. In Taylor's drawings the influence of 19th century European artists is clearly recognizable.
- Among Taylor's paintings, a couple of images from the Surpur region attract special attention. The rock formations near Bhimarayanagudi in Shahapur taluk and in the Rajanakoulur environs are reminiscent of contemporary landscapes. Three levels of colorization can be identified in these images. First step coloring with drawing in the beginning, then coloring in shadow part, finally final touching. All three stages can be seen in today's contemporary context of landscape painting. So, this type of coloring method was used by Taylor in the 1850s, so we have to pay special attention today.
- Apart from all these works some more unique drawings are created by Taylor. That is, if all the works described above are depicted in front of each other, in some drawings, different situations are combined together. For example, a painting depicting the New and Old Palace of Surpur, Palace entrance, Taylor Manzil and Sri Venugopalaswamy Temple coming together is printed in the first edition of Taylor's Autobiography. There is also an opportunity here to know that Taylor could have come up with this kind of idea as a contact of Surpur court artists.

REFERENCE

1. THE LETTERS OF PHILIP MEADOWS TAYLOR TO HENRY REEVE: As stated in the scriptures "Taylor thus sailed for India in April 1824 and reached Bombay on 1st September. When he was still a few days short of his Sixteenth birthday" It is known from the lines. On the other side of the same book is said "Taylor left Bombay on 18th November 1824 to begin his Military Service at Aurangabad, where was stationed the regiment to which he has posted, the 6th Infantry of the Nizam's Service".
2. A total of 91 of Taylor's letters have been published in this book. In letter No. 78, a sketch of "Sir Chas Napier" drawn by him is printed along with the summary of the letter.
3. Surpur Chittrakale: 2009: Dr. Mallikarjun C. Bagodi: Sarachandra Prakashana, Kalaburagi.
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5. presented a paper on The historical monuments of the Deccan in Meadows Taylor's View in a National seminar organized by the

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