CHAPTER VI: THE HUMAN FACADE
CHAPTER VI   THE HUMAN FACADE

The monumentality of structures has so overawed us that scholars often forget to discuss the people who worked in various capacities to make the buildings. In our view they are integral to understanding the form particular buildings take and therefore, are essentially reflected in the facade of the building. At several levels the human mind and labour is indispensable for construction work to be launched and successfully completed. Some works dealing with artists and art activity are available for India as a whole examining the role played by various categories of skilled and unskilled labourers and their efforts in the planning and construction of buildings. At the regional level, for Andhradesa in particular, no comprehensive study has been taken up throwing light on the human hand and the creative spirit behind the construction of monumental buildings. It is implicit that without the technical skills of craftsmen and labourers even simple monuments cannot be built. This neglect in existing historiography can partly be explained by the fact that in the Indian context the buildings rarely carry information or names of their builders. Therefore, our present task in this chapter is to cull data from various literary and inscriptive sources, often fragmentary in nature, to reflect on this aspect of building technology as well.

It can be suggested that right from protohistoric times some specialised social groups have been involved in construction work. From the early historic period, texts inform us, that they were known as silpins who played an important role in different kinds of building activity. We have used some inscriptional evidence to substantiate the literary evidence
of the period under study to write about the people behind building construction in early Andhradesa.

In Andhradesa evidence of the earliest stone cutting and carving activity began during the late protohistoric times as reflected in the statue menhirs and anthropomorphic figures of the megalithic period. The statue menhirs were carved representing male and female figures and were erected in front of the dolmens as noticed *prolifically* in the Warangal and Khammam districts of the present day state of Andhra Pradesh. Anthropomorphic figures were with round heads and shoulders carved outward as found in the Chittoor and Ananthapur districts of Andhra Pradesh. These early pieces of evidence prove beyond doubt the activities of sculpting figures, out of hard stone began during the late phase of the protohistoric times in Andhradesa. On the other hand, at an all India level, we have literary references to the term *Silpin* or craftsman mentioned in the *Vedas*, datable to around 1000 B.C. The earliest reference to the word *śilpa* also occurs in the *Saṃhitās* and *Brāhmanās*. The term *śilpa* in these early contexts has a wide connotation and includes various crafts, skills and occupations. There are references in the *Vedas* to *taksaka* for carver, *rathakara* for chariot maker, and *karmāra* for blacksmith. It has been pointed out that when stone came into use the *taksakas* of Vedic times transformed and developed their techniques which helped in the growth of this activity.

The Buddhist texts also enumerate various professions. The *Majjima Nikāya*, the *Dīgha Nikāya*, the *Mahāvastu* and the *Milindapanho* have long lists of occupations which indicate organisation of *craftman's* guilds. The *Arthasastra* on the other hand, elaborates these details and gives
useful information regarding the various types of artisans engaged in building activity during the Mauryan period. Vardhaki to mean a "Chief Architect" is mentioned for the first time in the Arthaśāstra. For Andhradesa the earliest evidence for craftsmen is found in the epigraphs of the Satavahana period which have expressions like Silākarmāṇa or Sailakarma indicating that these terms come to denote the activity commonly known as 'stone work'. Later with specialisation, the sculptors came to be described by such words as rupakara, sailavadhaki, āvesānin and rūpadaksa.

Among the artists and artisans of authority, navakarmikas and āvesānin figure prominently. The Cullavaṇga specifies rules regarding the eligibility of monks in supervising the building work. It is significant that even in a religious order like the saṅgha, acquiring of technical skills for construction work was considered important and relevant. On the basis of skill and proficiency the technicians were selected by a group of elder monks from among the monks located at particular viharas. Most of the monks thus selected had probably been artists or skilled workers before they took to being monks. Repairs of a building or construction of a new vihāra or residential building was called navakamma. The Buddhist saṅgha used to select a monk proficient in building activity to look after the navakamma and he was called a navakarmika. The Milindapanha specifically refers to a 'city architect' who laid out and raised a city. The Mahāvaṃśa refers to an Īṭṭakāvadhaki or a brick mason. The Mahavastu refers to various classes of artists and their fields of specialisation and in this text the sthapathi and sutrakara are mentioned as architects.
In the context of our study though there are no early literary indicators, copious references to siloins are found mentioned in the earliest inscriptions of Xndhradesa. These echo the information discussed above from early literature given the large number of buildings with Buddhist affiliation discussed in the foregoing chapters. These references to skilled workmen are significant as they indicate that a high degree of specialisation was in vogue during the early historic period.

Stone workers were called *silavaddhakis* in the Nagarjunakonda inscriptions. The Jaggayapeta inscription mentions an *āvesanin*, the foreman among the artisans who was associated with the making of five āvaka pillars on the eastern gate of the Maha Chaitva at Velagiri. An inscription from the Godavari district datable to the 6th century A.D., records the grant of the village of Kattacheruvu by Prithvimula to his son Harivarma, who in turn, granted the same to a superintendent of renovations (cf. *Navakarmavyāpāra=adhikrta*) living in the Mahāvihāra built by the king on the top of the hill in Gunapasapura.

A label inscription in 4th-5th century A.D. characters reading *Tuluchuvāṇṛu*, meaning rock carvers, scoopers, engravers or quarrymen has came to light from Keesaragutta near Hyderabad. Certain *silpins* had place names prefixed to their names denoting the proper place they hailed from. One such example is Kuravadi Achārlu whose name we came across in the following inscription. On the pillars, in the verandah of the caves at Bhairavakonda, it is mentioned that the cave temples were excavated by *silpins* called Sri Velugunta Acharlu and Kuravadi Acharlu respectively. On palaeographic grounds these inscriptions have been dated to the 6th-7th
centuries A.D.

It is the Chalukyan architects who, for the first time, experimented with structural temples in Andhradesa. From the seventh century A.D. onwards, we have numerous inscriptional references to the building of temples and to their donors and architects. A record dated to 713 A.D. found engraved on the fort wall built on the left bank of the river Tungabhadra at Alampur during the regnal period of king Vijayaditya, reports the construction of the above enclosure wall, prakara by Isanasivāchārya, probably a silpi. Some inscriptions throw more light on how silpins were socially and economically organised. Architects seem to have had their professional or caste guilds. Inscriptions from the Palnadu area of Guntur district inform us about a famous family of architects who built some temples in the area. They were first mentioned in an inscription from Aingaripalem, written in Telugu-Kannada characters of the 7th century A.D. It states that the temple Jalapesa was built by one Kalgarābharaṇāchārya. In the Madugula village near Aingaripalem another inscription datable to the same period states that the architect was known as the pancharathapriya.

Interestingly, a number of label inscriptions reading Sri Utpattipidugu in Telugu-Kannada characters datable between the 6th to the 10th century A.D. have come to light from various places in early Andhradesa. These labels are found engraved in caves, on architectural members of the structural temples and on the boulders in the vicinity of temples. Thus they have been noticed in the caves of Akkanna Madanna at Vijayawada, in a Siva temple at Satyavolu, on the right door jamb of a
small shrine in the Nageswara temple at Prathakota, on a boulder in the fields near the village Satankota, on the outer wall of the Rama shrine at Mahanandi, on a pillar in the Jogulamba temple at Alampur, on a dwajastambha of the Chennakesava temple at Undrukonda, and very recently, the label was discovered from the caves of Regonda in Warangal district. Of these labels, those from Vijayawada, Satyavolu, Prathakota, Undrukonda and Regonda areas were associated with a line drawing of an instrument [Figure 14]. The tip of the instrument was conical in projection and this was placed on a small disc. The small disc in turn, was soldered to a big disc and the latter was depicted with a battle axe in its bulge. The disc was fixed to a metallic rod, which in turn had a line of sketches in the center and at the end. The rod had a handle fixed for the fist to operate the instrument on rock or stone. This common label literally means Pidugu, i.e., the thunderbolt, for creation or Utpatti caused by Sri, an honorific of the head of the artisans. The purport here could be that this is the creation of the office of the artisans or sculptors. The representation of the object or instrument was similar in most cases and hints at the fact that it was used for scooping the blocks of stones out of the hillock for the excavation of caves at Vijayawada or chiselling pillars, beams and door frames in the case of the temples mentioned above. The inscription from Satankota hints at the probable use of red sand stone out of the rocksheet in the fields for the construction of important religious establishments nearby. The label is also inscribed at Alampur suggesting that the Alampur temples were built out of this rock as the local tradition holds.

In our epigraphical survey we noticed for the first time a term, namely, Saraswati-gana. This probably alludes to another guild or group of
1. Vijayawada, Inscription on the floor of Akkanna-Madanna caves;

2. Sattevolu, Giddalur Taluq, Siva Temple Inscription;

Linear drawing of an instrument found along with the label 'Sri Utpattipidugu'

architects/sculptors and was noticed in an epigraph inscribed on a pillar in the mandapa of the Chalukya Bhimavaram temple in the East Godavari district. In this eulogical inscription, datable to 1097 A.D., it is mentioned that Silpi Viddhachari and his brother Mallachari were bees at the feet of the saraswatīgana (cf. Saraswatīgana pādapañkaja bhramara) along with other titles such as Birudamani darpana, Birudamani Nirghāta and Saraswatīgana manōranjana, i.e., pleaser of the hearts of Saraswatīgana.

This is an unique inscription that mentions the guild of sculptors called Saraswatīgana. Many scholars have researched on the guilds of Andhradesa but their works do not mention this particular guild. A similar reference is however, noticed from the contiguous region of Karnataka. The late Chalukya and Hoyasala records mention the term Saraswatīganadāsa meaning as a guild of the servants of Goddess Saraswati. Settar in this case opines that the Saraswatīganadāsa seems to have confined their activity to the later Chalukyan area. The Bhimavaram inscription tallies with the description of a Posavur inscription which mentions that Padmōja, a Chalukyan artist, speaks of himself as a bee at the lotus feet of the Saraswatīgana (cf. Saraswatīgana pādapañkaja bhramara). Further, the honorific titles of Viddachari and Mallāchāri mentioned above and the suffix achari to their names also leads us to conclude that Bhimavaram had an office of artists of high order particularly experts in temple building activity in medieval Andhradesa.

Later medieval inscriptions of Andhradesa also provide information on the guilds of architects and sculptors often called Pañchānamvāru. This term clearly stands for the artisan groups of braziers, blacksmiths, carpenters, goldsmiths and stone carvers whose origin has been traced to
the legendary Viswakarma. In Karnataka these five artisans were known as Panchala. Inscriptions from Bhimavaram, Panchadharla, Simhachalam, Srikakulam, and Amaravati refer to them variously as Panchahanamvaru or Panchanamvaru, Pañčāḷi, Panchanu and Pañcāḍī. The Amaravati inscription informs us that the sculptors community had its own assembly with Pendota as their head-quarters near Dharanikota. The Bhimavaram inscription mentions one Kase Surachari who belonged to the Panchanamvaru which was probably a guild of artisans of five different groups in which the sculptors and architects were also a part. A record from Nagulapadu dated to 1303 A.D. mentions that the pañcāṇamvāru took part in village administration along with 18 samavas.

An inscription dated to 1261 A.D. from Triparantakam mentions that Visveswara Siva established the temple of Visveśwara, a Sanskrit college, a matha, a choultry, a maternity and general hospital and the persons responsible for the construction of the above structures were called the Sthapatis who were well-versed in the five types of professions, viz., the stone cutters, the carpenters, the braziers, smiths and potters (cf. Suvarna tāmbra pashāna karunapita śilpinah).

The aspects of understanding aesthetics, form, environment and design of both religious and secular buildings was an essential part of training of architects in ancient India. The foregoing study also reveals that the śilpins well versed in the subtleties of the religious philosophy and rendered into the buildings the implications of the cosmic life. The early śilpins were creative and the skillful bearers of a deep religious experience and realization, which enabled them to translate the reality behind the appearance into form. In this sense they had to be...
philosophers, ritual practitioners and artists all put together in one person. Unlike a modern architect who is a mere executant, the ancient sthāpati was not solely a designer, but both designer and executant. The sthāpati was not just an architect, he had to be knowledgeable in other arts and crafts. Often, he was also a painter, metalsmith, an ivory carver, a sculptor, a jeweller or a scribe. In other words, they had to have the sensibility of understanding technical aspects of other crafts. They were also involved in deciding the selection of the site and materials to be used for the buildings constructed by them. In this context their knowledge of the natural sciences and mathematical sciences had to be sound. There was thus a total concept of knowledge that had to be acquired by the trained architects. Ramraz who was the first scholar to research on indigenous traditional Silpa texts writes: "our architecture, sculpture and painting have been for ages confined to a class of people known as śilpīns who were not mere builders of different structures but they were scientists and technologists of exceptional wisdom and talents".

Ancient tradition holds the following mythical genealogy of the śilpīns. In the Mahabharata, Viśvakarma, the son of Prabhāsa, is described as Silpa Prajāpati, meaning the foremost among the artists (cf. Viśvakarma mahābhaṣāga jainē Silpa praṇāpatih). According to the Manasara, their origin was "from the four faces of Brahma, the creator of the universe, originated in sequential order, the heavenly architect Viś'wakarma, Maya, Tvashtr and Manu. Their four sons in turn were called the sthapati, sutra-grahi, vardhaki and takshaka". Viśvakarma is said to be the engineer of the gods, amaravardhaki. It is also said that Viśwakarma wrote a treatise on art and architecture called Viśwakarma prakāśā. He was, over a
period of time, deified and even today is being worshipped by artisan communities in most parts of India. This tradition was well-known in early regarding the origin, the Macherla epigraph dated to 1111 A.D., mentions that Viśwakarma, the son of Brahma, was the progenitor of the architects. The ancient texts on architecture substantially discuss the conceptual background, ethos and values of the architects and how each of them was to try and establish a relationship between the metaphysical aspects and material forms in the different structures to be built by them. According to Ganapati Sthapati architects had to communicate their values through a considered organisation of the various spaces thus making vastu and vastu.

Vāstuvidva, while enumerating the qualification and knowledge of the sthapati, explains that he must be proficient in all sciences. He was to be a mathematician, historian, geologist, geographer and above all, was to possess a sound knowledge in the science of architecture. In order to select suitable wood, he was also to know botany. For testing of building materials and for combination of paints he was required to have an acquaintance with chemistry and allied sciences. Similarly, a knowledge of the climate and weather of the locality where a house, temple or any other structure was to be built was essential. In addition to these, he was to be intuitive and have foresight to calculate and decode everything very quickly. In one instance it is described that Chitnaka, the famous sculptor of Chandella Kingdom, was master of the entire range of śilpa literature (cf. Sakalaśilpa Vidyākuśalas Chitnakas tasyōvam). Ravi, the architect of the early Chola temple at Tiruvothyur, was proficient in the theory and practice of several texts on architecture and art.
We have no clear reference to the wages or salaries paid to the *silpīs* or sthapathis. However, we have a small piece of information regarding the payment of *silpīns* was made in cash (cf. *dravvoparanam* *kinchit* Sarvada *sarvaśilpinam*). Like other services in the medieval society of the times, in a majority of instances they were remunerated in *land* or kind. In fact, there are instances to indicate that the *silpīns* were given maintenance grants like other professional groups, namely the dance masters, singers and others. The payment depended upon the personal resources of the patron and the size of the project undertaken by the *silpīns*. No doubt, the payments excluded the cost of the building material which was supplied by the donors or patrons. We have many references to gifts and grants of lands to the temple builders and sculptors. At times they were given a high position even in the royal service. The sculptors and architects were also honoured by royalty. In the *Ramayana* it is mentioned that the court of Rama was adorned with intellectuals in philosophy, *interpreters* of law, sculptors, architects and painters. Bana describes in the *Harshacharita* that Prabhakara Vardhana honoured the *Sūthradhāris* by offering garlands, apparels and sandal smear before he set them on the beautifying of the royal palaces on the eve of the marriage of Rajyas. Dhanapala in *Tilakamañjari* says that honouring of sculptors and painters was part of the ritual before commencement of their works. *Śilpatna* a late *śilpa* text, reiterates that the honouring of the proficient in the different art like architecture, sculpture, painting, metal and wood work was important. (cf. *tasmand esha sada pūjya sthapatvadicatustavah*).

In the data from Andhradesa we have considerable information on the aspects of their remuneration. An inscription dated to 1104 A.D. records
the gifts of land to the mason, Kase Moju who built the temple of Swayambhudeva at Valiveru with the mason also undertaking to attend to the repairs of the temple from time to time. Another record dated to A.D. from Macherla mentions some gifts of lands at Kambampadu made by several people to the architect entitled śilpikāchārava Tippoju who constructed the Aditya temple at Macherla. The Kopparam inscription dated to 1115 A.D of Kannarachodadeva, the minister of Mara, made gifts to śilpis, Eriyachari, Maracharya, Prōlāchārya and Kondacharya for excavation and construction of the tanks and temples at the said village. An inscription dated to 1144 A.D. from Parada in Nalgonda district, records that some land was gifted to śilpins Betoju and Neriyamoju who constructed the local temples and tanks under the supervision of Mahesvara Surebhatlu.

The Guntur inscription of the 1158 A.D states that a certain Pāṇḍyarāju built the Agasthyesvara temple at Guntur along with a mandapa, parivara shrines, prākāram and gopura under the supervision of a certain śilpikāchārva.

The Malkapuram inscription dated to the 12th century A.D. informs us that śilpi acharyas, Guṇḍōju, akkasala Bayyoju, kase An6ju, Annapōju and Ponnoju were gifted with some lands for construction of the Viśvanātha temple at Malkapuram. In the Ganapavaram inscription dated to the regnal period of Kulothunga Rajendrachola, the villagers granted a piece of land to the temple builder akkasala Kāmōju, son of Kapoju. An inscription from Jalalpuam dated to 1202 A.D. registers a gift of one marturu of land to sutradhari Kāse Mallōju. Sutradhāri Bomalaya is mentioned as one of the permanent staff members of a temple at Mukkamala in Guntur district in an inscription dated to 1208 A.D. The Durgi inscription of Namadeva Panditha, dated to 1251 A.D. records that the śilpi Kāḍōju responsible
for the construction of the Vankesvara temple along with subsidiary shrines, was gifted with some lands at the time of the consecration of the image of Vankesvara at Dugyapaṭṭaṇa. The Yadavalli inscription dated to 1257 A.D. records land gifts to the kāse people, viz., Gangoju and Anamōju for the construction of mukhamandapa of the Swayambhu temple of the village. The Mallavolu inscription dated to 1280 A.D. records that Chamaya Nayaka, the bodyguard of Prataparudradevarāya made gifts to kāse Padoju and Nagoju for constructing the Samiswara temple and carving of stone pillars respectively. We have also information that the artisan community, i.e., the Panchanamvāru had to pay a tax called Pañchāli which was levied by the state authorities.

The above information leads us to conclude that in most cases donors had gifted only lands to the artisans. The donors were wealthy individuals, the community as a whole, nobles, ministers and people of the royal family. The donee artisans belonged to different categories located in hierarchy i.e., kase, ordinary, stone cutters, śilpins, sculptors, sutradharis, supervisors or śilpikachārvyas, the chief architects engaged in various stages of temple building activity. The artisans of distinction and high order were paid more than these in the supervisory category who in turn, paid more when compared to ordinary stone cutters. In case of payment, it appears that the individual donors met the expenditure from their own resources, whereas, there are also instances that funds were collected by soliciting contributors from the entire village for completing certain projects.

Regarding the training of the śilpins, they seem to have received
their education from their family members by oral transmission of the texts or, from the teachers of their community in शिल्पसालास. at their houses or, in places situated elsewhere. Most of the sthapathís of the present generation have also received their training from their parents and elders of their family at their own houses. The son begins to help his father as soon as he can and in the process he learns the art or craft. The knowledge of the father is thus to be transmitted to the son. The son then leaves his father for a few years for apprenticeship under some expert sthapati to learn more.

We have some literary references to the existence of शिल्पसालास. The भ्राम्वाविवर्त पुराण mentions a शिल्पगृह and the commentary of Kulluka on Manu describes a शिल्पगृह. The कामसूत्र has the information that persons of taste who practice शिल्प in their houses, used to have such workshops. शिल्पसाला also finds mention in the मवामाता. Some शिल्पनs appear to have been trained in many branches of this profession. They could for instance, engrave inscriptions, sculpt idols, make jewellery and construct temples and मण्डपas. For example, अक्कसाला. Kamoju son of Kapoju was a jeweller by profession and caste but he had also built a temple at गणापेस्वारम. Regarding the qualifications and expertise of शिल्पनs it is mentioned in a मचेलरा epigraph dated to 1111 A.D., that the आचार्यs of the family of शिल्पिकाचार्य Tippoju were experts in cutting लिंगas, in preparing images, in buildings mansions, in grasping geometry and in using all kinds of implements. The same epigraph further records that Tippoju was a great expert in experimenting in new devices of temple building. Other members of his family, Banachari, Nagachari, Potana were also experts in building four types of प्रसादas. Another set of शूट्रद्हारिस mentioned in this record are Halapoju, Bikkoju, Navoju and
Tippiju who were experts in selecting suitable sites (cf. Vāsthukshetravidah) for construction of temples. A record from Avanasi in Tamilnadu mentions that the architects carried out ten types of duties (cf. daśa-kriya).

The literary texts also describe the all encompassing nature of silpins training. According to the Manasāra, the Sthapathi must be well-versed in all sciences. The Vasthuvidya, a 12th century A.D. šilpa text enumerates that the Sthapathi must know mathematics, history, drawing, painting, geography and should possess deep knowledge in the science of architecture. The texts at the same time also gives us the various specialisations of craftsmen. The sutraqrāhi according to Manasāra should possess general knowledge in all sciences and he must be an expert in measuring accurately. The vardhaki was supposed to have the expert knowledge in practical sciences with specialisation in painting. The takshaka was to be an expert in wood carving. The same text also says that all the artisans should work within the framework of textual tradition pertaining to architecture (cf. Kurvanti sastradesena vastu vastu pravatnatah) and the Sthapathi is said to direct and guide the remaining three categories (Trihvēururitismrtaḥ) of artisans mentioned above.

That these literary traditions were practised is known to us from some epigraphical references. In one of the labels, there is mention of the office of the sculptor. This is reported from the temple Mahanandi in Kurnool district, datable to 7th-8th centuries A.D. The inscription informs us that Prithivibhima was employed in the service of Kamiya who was head of the office of the sculptors Śri Utpattipidugu. The Satanikota
inscription refers to the architect Arjunan, with the title Lokasīlabhima, a follower of Malleswara kalamukha sect who was in the service of the office of Sri Utpattipidugu.

The masons and sthapathis used implements such as scale, string or rod, hammers and chisels. The scale was an instrument used to measure and played a vital role in building technology. The traditional architect had their own system of scales such as talam, vitasti, kishku, hastam, danda and raiju which were all used for specific purposes. These measures were derived from the smaller angula, that is, inch which in turn, had its origin form the paramanu, the atom. The ancient saints are said to have converted this atom which symbolised the subtle form of time and space which was called akāśa.

The raiju, rope or string was first used in making the sulva altars of Vedic origin. Later on, according to Debiprasad Chattopadyaya, the raiju might have been used by the architects for making the ground plans of the early brick structures. This raiju was also called as sutra and was appropriately linked to Brahma sutra by the silpins. A Vardhaki kasta 'i.e., measuring rod or danda is also mentioned in the texts as a tool that was commonly used by the architects [Figure 15].

Besides the above, the sthapathis tools and implements consisted of a large number of chisels and hammers of varied sizes depending on the work. To remove the unwanted stone to make a required block or sculpture, they used five kinds of chisels namely, vettappu thievu, arappāśam, palmunai and vettirimbu. Vettappu was a heavy chisel used only to remove chunks of a stone slab. Thievu chisels were sharp and had pointed working edge and
(a) An Architect with a measuring rod and a set-square depicted on a Palm-leaf Manuscript.


(b) A Scale according to Manangula,

(Reproduced from V. Ganapati Sthapati, *The scale*, Madras, 1993, p.10)
were used for fine chiseling. **Arappasam** was another type of chisel with flat and sharp working edge used for chiseling the uneven surface of stones. **Palumunai** type of chisels had flat bottom with many chisel points used for chiseling even surfaces of the stone. Over a flat rectangular or square working surface, several diagonal grooves were cut, yielding several sharp edges or points, each one corresponding to the sharp, pointed end of the chisel. Depending upon the closeness of the grooves across the working surface of the chisel the **Palamunas** were called by different names such as **Perumuna**, **Serumuna**, **Perum sannam**, **Sannam** and **Ravasannam**. The **Perumuna** was the first and contained only a few grooves used for the first line of dressing. The others contained more grooves than the **perumuna** and were used for smooth furnishing of temple **vargams** and for icons as well. The last one was a heavy chisel with flat sharp edge called **vettrimbu**. which was used in the cutting of the grooves in the **palmuna**. This clearly indicates that the working craftsmen were known by the tools and instruments they used indicating a high level of specialization.

As understood from the inscriptions, some of the **silpis** were prefixed by the term **kase**, meaning the stone cutter who are considered the lowest in the rank of workers. In terms of hierarchy, **Kasacharya** was the head of stone cutters or **quarrymen**. Other groups placed in a hierarchy were **silpi**, the stone cutter or carver, **Silpikachārva** head of the stone carvers and **Sutradhari** the supervisor of building works with a measuring string **sutra** in his hand. The **sthapathi** was the chief supervisor of and master architect. Usually, the names of the craftsmen were prefixed by **silpi** or **sutrardhari** and at times, suffixed by **Oju**. A fragmentary inscription in the 9th century A.D. characters from Sangameswaram mentions the name of a
silpi as Yōgai Kaśvāchārya, the suffix Kaśvāchārya meaning the head of the kāśe community is noteworthy. Kaśe, the stone workers were also mentioned in an inscription issued in the 13th regnal year of 98–99 Vīshnuvardhana Maharaja from Chalukya Bhimavaram. A certain Kaśachari by name 'Mummadi Linga Bathudu' was mentioned to have carved a Vaishnava idol at Ganapésvaram in Krishna district.

From literary texts we get a clearer idea about the hierarchy of artisan groups. Thus, one of early references in the Manusamhita fixes up a hierarchy of artists of the building activity and mentions sthapati, master architect, śutraṇāh, surveyor-designer, taksaka, sculptor, carpenter. The Manasara mentions architects as, Sthapati. Śutraṇāh. Vardhaki and taksaka. The same work accords to the Sthapati a rank of 'the Director General' and 'consulting architect' and Śutraṇāh, a status of 'supervisor' over Vardhaki and Taksaka. The Samarāṅgana Sutradhara of Bhojadeva describes the qualifications of a śilpi, sthapati śutraṇāh, taksaka and vardhaki.

We next turn to discuss the status of these artisans in early Āndhradesa. The word status signifies the regard accorded to artisans in a society as the basis of the importance attributed to the part played and the recognition of the position with reference to the income they enjoyed.

The low status assigned to the artisans by Manu seem to have considerably altered by about the 8th century A. D. Architects, not only needed to sculpt, build temples, but were also responsible to begin the layout of new townships. In the planning of a city or a village the śilpi was to take a comprehensie view of the whole, lay out the streets, the
plots for construction of dwelling places, water reservoirs and defence buildings. He always assigned the first and foremost place to the temple for the temple was considered the centre of the social unit as life is to the body that it contains. The inscription from Tellapur records the laying foundation of the township of Telungānapura together with wells, and mango groves by the architects namely, Pochoju, Mallōju and others. The inscription from Tellapur records the laying foundation of the township of Telungānapura together with wells, and mango groves by the architects namely, Pochoju, Mallōju and others.

Silparatna, a medieval treatise on architecture enumerates that in constructing vimānas, gōuras, choultries, houses and digging wells and temple tanks, people of Viswakarmakula should be employed and people of other communities should not be employed for above works because Viśwakarmas were experts in building technology.

Some of the Silpīns seem to have won the favour of the ruling kings and generals and earned positions of considerable distinction. The famous blacksmith Nukāndi, Surana of Viswakarmakula, and Ākaremi Surāchari alias Vīrājendra Chōlāchāri, are some of the examples. Apart from the architects, the artisans also participated in the royal services. In an inscription from Nadendla dated 1141 A.D. there is a reference to the family of Viśwakarma. The famous blacksmith Nūkāndi, son of Kutandi was in the service of the Velanāti chief, Kulothunga Choda Gonka and bore the title Karmarabharana which means "an ornament among blacksmith". Another inscription from Chebrolu states that, Surana, of the Viswakarma kula, son of Kannoju and Prolama, served the King Verramanda who was a subordinate of the Chola king Kulothunga I. Surana as a general of the army rendered invaluable services to king Verramanda in checking the western Chalukya depradation of his territory and was rewarded with the position of the Chief Minister. There are two Tamil inscriptions,
inscribed on stone at Daksharama by the scribe named Surachari alias Virarājendra Chōdāchari of Qākaremi. It will be evident from his name that he was the official scribe and he must have obtained the surname from Vira Rajendra Chola(1163-1170 A.D.), the reigning monarch in whose time he rose to prominence. The name of the scribe is written in Telugu script. This information also denotes the status of śilpīs in social and administrative hierarchy.

The boundaries of kingdoms or, the change of dynasties formed no barriers to their movements. Reference to the architects who migrated from one place to another for constructing temples or sculpting idols are also available in the epigraphical sources. They, in all probability, acquired fame in their particular profession and were therefore, sought after by other communities. An inscription from the eastern gateway of the courtyard of the Virupaksha temple mentions that the Sūtradhāri Gunda constructed it for Lokamahadevi. The occurrence of the name Gundaya as the sculptor of the Vengi court (cf. Vengināṭṭu Velanādu Gundaya) inscribed on a dwāraoala sculptor of Bejawada, has something to suggest about the migration of artisan families from one kingdom to another in quest of royal favour and patronage. It is also well known that when the Chālukyan king Vikramāditya II conquered Kanchi, he took some Tamil architects with him and got the temples constructed at Badami and Pattadakal. Another artisan Cattara Revadi Ovajja belonged to the guild of Sarvasiddhi Acharva of South India and he was said to be the builder of the Lokesvara temple at Pattadakal.

There is evidence to suggest that the architects from Gundikarru and Dakaremi migrated to work in Kurnool and Nellore districts. In an
inscription from Sangamesvaram in Kurnool district, it is stated that the temple of Nakaresvaradeva in the village was built by Nadipi Yovoju, son of Gundikarti Doyuri Achari or the master silpi of Doyuru in Gundikarru. According to Venkata Ramanayya, this Gundikarru was situated in south-western corner of Guntur district which falls in the northern corner of the present day Prakasam district in Andhra Pradesh. A recent study made by S.V. Padigar reveals that a guild of craftsmen working at Badami from the commencement of the Chalukyan rule comprised of craftsmen who migrated from Eeleeswaram of Nalgonda district in Andhra Pradesh. Likewise, the names Chalukya Sundarāchārī, Vīrarājendra Chōlāchārī of the inscriptions denote that there was mobilisation and migration of sculptors from one place to another during the early medieval period.

Some inscriptions from the contiguous regions of Tamilnadu and Karnataka are forthcoming which furnish similar kind of information. The inscriptions from Tamilnadu of the regnal period of Kulothunga Chola I and Rajendra Chola mention the name of an architect as Chandrashekara Ravi who built the Mahadeva temple at Purisai and renovated the temple at Thiruvotriyur respectively. These inscriptions further inform that the architect Ravi was known by the titles Cholendra Simhāchārī and Veerachola Tachchan thereby denoting that architects were given the titles after the names of the king or, the dynasty whom they were serving. A similar evidence comes from Karnataka in which an inscription of the Hoyasalas refers to the architect having a title of Poyasalachari after the Hoyasala dynasty. An inscription datable to the 11th century A.D. from Bhimavaram East Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh refers to one sculptor-architect by name, Chalukya Sundaraya Achari. From his name and
prefix one can suggest that Sundarayachari might have migrated to Andhradesa from Karnataka and vice-versa also from Tamilnadu. The prefix Chalukya seems to have been offered by the royal people for his position held in the service of the Chalukyan kings. It can also be suggested that the guild of sculptors known as SaraswatTgana mentioned in the Chalukya Bhimavaram inscription could have been the same guild known in Karnataka probably with a branch at Bhimavaram looking after the construction of temples. It is also possible that the persons mentioned in this epigraph might have migrated from Karnataka to Bhimavaram but were still affiliated to the Karnataka office.

The above survey reveals that we have some early references to artisans engaged in the building activity from the 3rd century B.C. onwards as seen in the early literary works on an all India level. These were known by several appellations as Śīpi, Takshaka and Vardhakis. The early epigraphs also contain references to the above and their hierarchy. From the 7th century A.D. onwards on the basis both literary and epigraphical sources, a clear line of hierarchy was marked among the various categories like Kase stone-cutter on the one hand, and to the śilpāchārya the chief architect on the other. The artisans were organised into craft guilds called Śrī Utpattipidugu, Panchānamvāru and SaraswatTgana. Inspite of the useful functions which these artisans have offered in society, their status was always low in a society dominated by the priestly and millitary classes. However, it was from 10th-11th centuries A.D., onwards that these expert social groups were given prominence in the royal courts also. These builders of different ranks were given lands as their remuneration by individuals, communities and people of authority. Many of these architects migrated to distant places. Thus the people who were specialised in
various crafts were responsible for raising monumental edifices backed by financial resources of their patrons right from early historic to early medieval times in Āndhradeśa.
FOOTNOTES


5. Tāttirīṭva Saṁhitā. 1.2.2.1.


7. Rg Veda. X.72.2.


14. Lüders list, nos.350 and 687.


16. Lüders List. no.154; EI, Vol.XX, p.17.

17. Lüders List. no.1202.


22. EI, Vol.XX, pp.22-23.
23. Luders List, no.1202.
25. ARAP, 1982-83, p.22.
29. ARE for 1937, no.340.
31. Ibid. p.324.
32. Ibid. p.324.
33. Ibid. p.325.
34. Ibid. p.325.
35. Ibid. p.326.
38. Ibid. p.324.
39. E. Siva Nagi Reddy 'Saraswathīgaṇa': New Epigraphical Evidence of a Guild of Architects from Medieval Andhradesa', a paper presented at the 3rd National Seminar on Silpaic Tradition in Ancient India held at University of Mysore, Mysore, January 28-31, 1994, conducted by the Academy of Art and Architecture, Mysore. Also see S11, Vol.V, Inscription no.64 which reads:

1. swastisri srimathu bhirudarivari (minni) kotti
2. Saraswathīgaṇa pādāpa
3. ūkaia bramara bhiruda sikhāmani bhiruda vidda
4. ma bhirudamani darpana bhiruda Nirghāta Saraswathi
5. gana manoraniana Srimathu Viddhachari Prasasthi
6. Viddāchāri Tammundu Mallā Chari (ma) tti trinetra
7. Prā (gma) dabhirudagala graha sthambha biruda
8. tta sangrama Jātralatākarmadasi Srimathu Mallā


42. EC, Vol. VII, 1904, Ins. no. 1080, Sloka 293 of the Inscription which reads: Saraswatigana padaṇkaṇa bṛamara.
45. SII, Vol. V, no. 158.
46. Ibid. Vol. VI, no. 666.
47. Ibid. no. 1179.
51. CII, Vol. 11, no. 3.
54. Mahabharata. I. 66. 28-38
55. Manasara. Chapter II.
56. Matsuvarana. Ch. V. 11. 54-6.


63. Mahabharata. II.5-118.

64. Ramayana. VII.94.9-10.

65. Harshacharita, by Bana with Commentary of Sankara, Bombay, 1918, p.142.


68. SII, Vol.X, no.22.

69. Ibid. no.66.

70. Ibid. no.74.


73. Ibid. no.396.

74. Ibid. no.122.


77. Ibid, no.334.

78. Ibid. no.359.

79. Ibid. no.451.


87. Ibid, no. 66.


94. *Manasāra*. Chapter I.


99. Ibid, no. 951.


102. *Samarāṅgasūtradhāra*. Ch. 44.


104. N. Mukunda Rao, Personal Communique.


111. Ibid. p.170.


117. £11, Vol.V, no.80.