CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction:

In the annals of South Indian history in general and Karnataka in particular, the Vijayanagara rulers have played a dominant role during the medieval period. They tried to check the invasion of the Muslims and stood for the good cause of 'Hindu Dharma'. Their contributions to polity, literature, art and architecture are of immense value.

The role of the feudatories or pallegara who ruled their petty chieftaincies under the Vijayanagara is also important. The empire was divided into provinces or rajyas - like Tuluva rajya, Udayagiri rajya, Penukonde rajya, Mulaväyi rajya and Rajagambhira rajya. Some of these provinces were ruled by the appointed chiefs under the Vijayanagara empire and were called the 'Nayakas'. They had to give tributes to the Vijayanagara king annually and had to give precious gifts on special occasions like the birthdays of the king, prince or princess, coronation ceremony and so on. During the
medieval period it was a common scene of frequent wars among the rulers for the extension of their territories and power. On such occasions these Nayakas had to be ready with their own contingent at the king's disposal. They also had to safeguard the border areas from the external attack.

The Nayakas of Keladi, Gutti, chiefs of Sode, Gerusoppa, Billig, Jamburu and Karkala belong to this group of chieftains under the Vijayanagara rulers. After the downfall of the Vijayanagara empire, these Nayakas became independent. Some of them extended their boundaries by subduing their neighbours.

Keladi Nayakas represent one such dynasty. They had started their career in the beginning of the 16th century as the subordinate chiefs under the Vijayanagara rulers. They ruled from 1499 upto 1763. Their rule extended at the zenith of their power from the Mirjan river in Uttara Kannada upto Candragiri river in the present Kerala state including major parts of the present districts of Shimoga, Uttara Kannada, Dakshina Kannada, parts of Hassan and Chikamagalore. The Keladi Nayakas ruled their province on the model of their overlords. After the fall of the Vijayanagara empire in 1565, they ruled as independent rulers and
fought for the same cause of 'Hindu Dharma' and tried to check the encroaching Muslim attacks from Bijapur. They also patronised literature, religion, art and architecture on the model of their suzerains and also contributed to the development of regional idiom in art.

1.2. Nature of study:

The art and architecture of these rulers are stretched out in a vast area of Keladi kingdom. Here is an attempt to locate or identify them and study the architectural details of these monuments under the Keladi Nayakas. As the present work is a study of art and architecture, it is essentially field-work oriented. The monuments which are scattered include temples, mathas, forts, palaces, agraharas, towns, bridges, ponds and sluices in the malnad and coastal Karnataka. These monuments are studied in detail and analysed so as to trace the Keladi Nayaka style. It has to be examined whether the style of these Keladi Nayakas has indigenous or borrowed. What is their contribution to the art and architecture in general and regional art in particular? This has to be assessed in a proper perspective.

The Keladi Nayakas who were benevolent rulers patronised all the sects of Hinduism; not only that
Christianity and Islam also co-existed. The scope of the present study includes the monuments - temples belonging to both Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism, Jainism, Vīraśaivism, mathas belonging to the saints of these sects, mosques and churches which were constructed during the Keladi Nayaka period. The present study also includes the several palaces built during this period, the residences of the officials, the forts at different strategic places, public works and other monuments. It further includes the monuments built in stone, mud, mortar and wood. On the whole, the architecture of the Keladi Nayakas can be classified into three categories - religious, military and civil architecture.

1.2.1. Religious architecture:

This group includes the temples at (i) Keladi - Rāmeśvara temple, Parvati temple, Viṣṇubhūṣana temple, (ii) Ikkērī - Aghorēśvara temple, Parvati temple, Ānjanēya temple, (iii) Kollūr - Mūkambīka temple complex, (iv) Nagarā (Bidanūr) - a good number of small shrines - Dodda Basavanna temple, Kalmatha, Gudde Venkaṭaramana temple, Pañcamukhi Ānjanēya temple, Nilakaṇṭēśvara temple, (v) Tīrthahallī - single-celled shrines like Gaṇapati temple, Sōmeśvara temple, Bhāskarēśvara temple,
(vi) Kaulêdurga (Bhuvanagiri durga) - temples like Sânjîva Āñjanéya, Lakșmînârââyana, Viṭhâla, Virûpâkṣa, Bhuvâneśvara, Vi'râbhadra, Kaśi Viśvēsvâra, Lakṣmî-Nârâyana, Śikharēśvara and other temples. Apart from these temples, Malabânîkârēśvara temple at Śrûgrēra, Śāradâ maṭha, Śankara Nârâyana temple at Śankaranârâyana, Koṭîśvara temple at Koṭēsvara, Venkatârâmanâ temple at Gaṅgolî, Śrî Kṛṣṇa temple at Uḍupi, were either built or extended or renovated during the Keḷâdi Nâyaka period.

A number of Vi'râsaiva maṭhas were built in the Keḷâdi kingdom. These monuments built of stone and mud mortar were the centres of learning.

1.2.2. Civil architecture:

The civil architecture of the Keḷâdi Nâyaka period includes the palaces and residences of the officials and nobles, construction of new agrahâras and towns, public works like the construction of roads, tanks, bridges, ponds, dams and sluices. Eventhough major palaces of the Keḷâdi Nâyakas are in ruins, Śivappa Nâyaka's palace at Shimoga deserves a special mention. Built of bricks, mud mortar and wood, it reflects the medieval style of residencial architecture. The present town 'Sagara' of the Sagara taluk, Shimoga district was
newly constructed and named as 'Sadaśiva Sāgara' by the Keladi Nayakas. Nagara (Bidanur), the last capital city of the Keladi Nayakas was extended by Śivappa Nayaka by inviting the people belonging to different professions. The construction of several roads and highways, tanks and ponds with paved ways of stone at Keladi, Ikkeri, Nagara and Kaulėdurgā, a stone bridge across the river at Nagara, sluices at several tanks, Dēvaganga ponds amidst the hills and 'Gaḷige baṭṭalu' (to denote the timings) of Śankara maṭha at Nagara speak of the technical know-how of the civil engineers of the period.

1.2.3. Military architecture:

The military architecture includes the forts and fortifications. Due to the frequent wars of the period, it was a necessity for the Keladi Nayakas to construct strong forts at the strategic points to safeguard their territories. These forts were constructed at Keladi, Ikkeri, Nagara and Kaulėdurgā as they were the capital cities of the Keladi Nayakas in course of time under different rulers. At Basrūr, Gangolli, Kundāpur, Kalvaṇapuṛ, Mangalore, Kumble, Kāsaragōḍ, Bēkal, Candragiri and Cittāri, several forts were built along the west coast to safeguard the commercial contacts with
the Portuguese, the Arabs, the Dutch and the English. Apart from these forts, there were a good number of forts in the Keladi kingdom.

1.2.4. Memorial stones:

Apart from the monuments mentioned above, the herostones, mahasati stones and lingamudre stones of the period suggest the increasing military activity in the kingdom as well as reflect the age-old social practice of the people. Viragals and Sati stones found at Keladi, Kauledurga and at Shimoga Museum of the Keladi Nayaka period reveal the above facts. The art-style depicted in these stones is also noteworthy as it suggests the decreasing art-activity in stone during this period.

1.2.5. Paintings:

Paintings of the Keladi Nayaka period are yet to be traced. Murals and manuscript paintings might have been developed during this period. Herbal colours were probably prepared and used for painting.

1.2.6. Sculpture:

The sculptures of the Keladi Nayaka period
include both lithic and bronzes. They constitute a wide variety which include the round sculptures which are elegantly carved, simple carvings, freizes, high and low relief sculptures, bronzes, silver and golden images, prabhavalis, masks and kalaśas.

1.2.6.1. Stone:

In the field of sculptural art also the Keladi Nayakas got the inspiration from their overlords in the beginning. The 'gaṇḍabherunda' sculpture carved in the ceiling of Virabhadra temple at Keladi is a masterpiece of their art. The medallion of fully blossomed lotus or 'Vikasita Kamala' motif in the ceiling of the same temple exhibits the skill and delicacy of art in the hard lithic medium like granite. The round sculptures of two elephants at the north entrance of the Aghorēśvara temple at Ikkeri are good pieces of art. The Nandi or bull in the Nandi mantapā in front of the same temple is not only monumental, but quite elegant. The dvārapālika images at Kollūr also exhibit skillful workmanship of the period.

1.2.6.2. Bronzes:

The bronze images in the temples of the Keladi Nayaka
period which are worshipped as utsavamūrthiśs deserve special mention. They point to the increasing activities of metallurgy and image-making in gold, silver and bronze. Icons affiliated to Śaivism, Vīraśaivism and Vaiṣṇavism are scattered in the various temples – at Keladi, Ikkeri, Nagara, Basrūr, Kollūr, Soraba and other places. Śiva, Pārvati, Vīrabhadra, Mūkāmbika, Ānjaneya, Ranganātha – Śrīdevi-Bhūdevi, Veṇugopāla, Mahāliṅgēśvara and other forms are noticed.

The art activities of the Keladi Nāyakas deserve a systematic and thorough study.

1.3. Earlier attempts:

The art and architecture of the Keladi Nāyakas in particular so far as we know at present has not been exhaustively studied. References have been made to its speciality by the historians like S.N. Naraharayya, Lakshminarayanayya, K.N. Chitnis, G.S. Dikshit, S.R. Rao, A. Sundara, Sa. Shi. Marulayya, Late B.S. Shastri, Keladi Gunda Jois, K.G. Venkatesh and others. They tried to draw the attention of the scholars towards this new area of study.

Eventhough the art and architecture of the
Leladi Nayakas was almost a continuation of the Vijayanagara tradition, it was not a blindly imitated copy of the Vijayanagara architecture. Modifications were made according to the need of time and place. There arose a distinct style of art which may be considered as a mixture of Vijayanagara style, regional style and influence of the Islamic and Portuguese architecture. In the annual reports of the Mysore Archaeological Department some of the monuments of the Keladi Nayakas are noticed, as slightly varied from the Vijayanagara style.

1.4. Sources for the study:

The sources for the study of the art and architecture of the Nayaka period include archaeological, epigraphical and literary sources.

1.4.1. Archaeological sources:

The major archaeological sources for the study of the art and architecture of the Keladi Nayakas are the very monuments constructed by them at various places - Keladi, Ikkeri, Sringeri, Kollur, Nagara, Kauledurga, Thirthahalli, Anandapura, Shimoga, Cannagiri, Gangothri, Kalyanapur, Mangalore, Kasaragod and other places.
Keladi, which was the core area of the Keladi Nayakas' political activity in the beginning, has three notable monuments - Ramaesvara temple, Parvati temple and Virabhadra temple. Ikkeri which was their second capital city is known for Aghoreesvara temple, Parvati temple and Anjaneya temple, apart from the tanks, sluices and extinct fort.

At Kollur, Mukambika temple was renovated and extended by Venkatappa Nayaka I. At Kauledurga apart from the seven-walled fort which are in ruins, there are Sanjiva Anjaneya, Kasi Visvesvara, Virupaksha, Viṭṭhala, Virabhadra, Lakṣmi-Narayana and Śikharēśvara temples. At Nagara, which was their last capital city, apart from the extinct fort walls (which were seven in number and extended to a vast area of several kilometres, there is a small fort on a hill called Śivappa Nayaka's fort which is in ruins. The monuments include temples - Pañcamukhi Anjaneya, Guḍḍe Veṅkaṭaramaṇa, Nīlakanṭēśvara, Gopālakṛṣṇa, Subrahmaṇya, Parvati, Kalmaṭha and Śivappa Nayaka's Samādhi.

Apart from these structures, there are a number of monuments which are scattered in the malnad and coastal Karnataka. Mention may be made of the Bekal fort at Kasaragod, Śivappa Nayaka's palace at Shimoga, temple
amidst a pond at Anandapura, Ranganātha temple at Soraba, Veṅkaṭaramaṇa temple at Gangolli. An extensive study of these monuments not only help us to understand and appreciate the Keladi art and architecture but assess their place in the art history of South India in general and Karnataka in particular.

1.4.2. Epigraphical sources:

Both lithic and copper plate records of the Keladi Nayaka period are found in the malnad and coastal Karnataka. They are also found in the present Tumkur taluk, Gadag and other places. Most of them are land grants to the learned persons, temples, mathas or agraharas. They throw light on the building activities of the period. But the inscriptions which have direct bearing on art and architecture are not many. Mention may be made of the inscription at Ikkeri Aghorēśvara temple. It informs us that the range-mantapa of the said temple was constructed by the acāri (sculptor) Hombucada Veṅkaṭayya. The lithic record on the steps leading to the Navaranga doorway at Kollūr Mūkāmbika temple informs that Keladi Cennammāji has given grants and visited the temple. The lithic record at Gangolli Veṅkaṭaramaṇa temple states that the said grant was made by Bhadrappa Nayaka to one Nārāyaṇa
Malya (who has constructed the temple) for the maintenance and worship of the said temple. The copper plate inscriptions at Kollur record the grants to the goddess by the Keledi Nayakas. The inscription on the golden and silver masks at Kalasa and Nagara also record the grants to these deities.

A number of copper plate charters record the construction of several agraharas and the land grants endowed to them or the temples renovated or constructed.

The dhvajastambha in front of the Virabhadra temple at Keledi was probably erected by Cennammaji.

The utsavamurti (procession image) of Pranesvara temple was donated by the minister of Cennammaji, Nirvaṇāya.

1.4.3. Literary sources:

The major literary sources of the period throw a flood of light on the temple building activities of the Keledi Nayakas. They include both indigenous works and accounts of the foreigners. Śivatattvaratnakara and Keladi Nṛpa Vijayam are the major literary sources which are helpful in tracing the art-history of the Keledi Nayakas in the absence of the epigraphical sources. The
accounts of Pietro Della Valle, Peter Mundy and Alexander Hamilton who were the eye-witnesses, give us a clear idea about the temples, festivals, folk traditions, town-planning, forts and fortifications.

1.4.3.1. Indigenous sources:

Śivatattvaratnākara (S.T.R.) was composed by Basavappa Nayaka I, one of the Keladi ruler. Keladi Nrpa Vijayam (K.N.V.) was composed by poet Linganāḍa in the 18th century. Though a literary work, K.N.V. contains valuable information about the Keladi Nāyakas. It supplements the epigraphical sources. In the absence of epigraphical sources, the K.N.V. helps us to reconstruct the art-history of the Keladi Nāyakas. It describes in detail the forts constructed, occupied or renovated by the Keladi Nāyakas, temples visited during their pilgrimage and construction of several mathas, temples and agrahāras. Śivatattvaratnākara elucidates the art-activities of the Keladi rulers up to the reign of Basavappa Nāyaka I.

1.4.3.2. Foreign Accounts:

Apart from these literary works, travelogues
of Pietro Della Valle, Peter Mundy, Alexander Hamilton and others give us a vivid picture of the socio-religious activities of the Keladi Nayakas. Pietro della Valle, the Italian traveller, who visited the court of Venkatappa Nayaka I, gives us the customs and manners of the court, education system, the festivals at the temples, sati system and about the concentric, three-walled mud fort of Ikkeri, which is now in ruins. Peter Mundy, who visited the Keladi court during the reign of Virabhadra Nayaka, also gives his account about the customs and manners in the royal court and secretariat. These eye-witness accounts are of historical value for the reconstruction of the art-history of the Keladi Nayaka period. Based on these sources and references, we have collected the data and analysed the basic elements of the style of their architecture.

1.5. Scope of the study:

A detailed study of all the monuments of the Keladi Nayakas has not been systematically undertaken yet. All the temples in their territory have to be analysed and studied in greater detail against their cultural background. As they were the feudatories under the Vijayanagara rulers, their role during the Vijayanagara
period and post-Vijayanagara period is noteworthy. They stood as the strong supporters of their overlords during the times of war. After the downfall of the Vijayanagara empire, they became independent and continued the legacy of their masters. The temples built by the Keladi Nayakas were modelled on the Vijayanagara style, but with local variation.

The Indo-Saracenic elements like the dome, the arches, the minarettes and the trefoiled discs found their places in the Keladi Nayakas religious architecture. The niches, windows and the doorways of the temples had the arch shape. Some of the Vimanas resembled the dome. The slender towers at the four corners of the flat roofs of the mukhamantapa resembled the minarettes. The trefoil discs edging the top portion of the roof became a decorative motif. A pleasant mixture of some of these elements made their architectural style indigenous and peculiar, different from all other previous styles.

Regarding the defence architecture of the Keladi Nayakas the fort at Bekal (in Kasaragod, Kerala state) and at Kauledurga can be mentioned here. Bekal fort which stood at a strategic place was surrounded by
the Arabian sea on three sides. The strong fort with its bastions, walls built of laterite bricks and granite, the watch towers and secret passages to the Arabian sea - give us an idea of the art of fort construction and its importance during the medieval period. The Kēḷadi Nāyakas could successfully withstand and fight back any attacks from the Nāyamārs of Kerala or the Portuguese or the local chiefs. This fort stands as a fine example for 'Jaladurga'. Kaulēdurga fort (in Tirthahalli taluk, Shimoga district) is a fort with seven walls. Two of the outer walls were constructed out of mud and brick, which are in ruins. They surrounded the village of the same name, below the hill. The five fort walls are surrounding two or three hills together, accompanied by the dense forest of the western ghats. During the Kēḷadi Nāyaka period, this fort was formidable for the enemies. Amidst the western ghats and thick evergreen forests, this fort stands both as 'Vanadurga' and 'giridurga'. This was also a refugee place for the Kēḷadi Nāyakas during the times of any strong attack by the Adil Shāhi rulers of Bijapur (as in the case of Vīrabhadra Nāyaka) or during the internal struggle (as in the case of Cennammaji). Conquered by Venkaṭappa Nāyaka I from the local chiefs and renamed as 'Bhuvanagiri durga', this fort was of strategic importance to the Kēḷadi Nāyakas.
As far as the civil architecture is concerned, except 'Sivappa Nayaka's palace' at Shimoga, all other palaces are in ruins. Built of brick, mud mortar and wood, it can be said to be the typical representation of the medieval palace architecture. Situated on the left bank of Tunga, this palace is distinct for its open balconies, tall, slender, rounded, wooden pillars, cusped wooden arches and majestic look. Having slanting roof of tiles, it suits to the environment of heavy rainfall of the Malnad region. The importance of the study lies in the fact that the proper context—physical, environmental, politico-cultural—should be borne in mind while studying the Keladi Nayaka art activities.

1.6. Methodology:

The present work is based on the field work. Each and every surviving monument could be individually studied. Based on our field work, we have tried to follow a general descriptive method without forgetting the interpretative aspect. With the help of the data we have collected, an attempt has been made to give an assessment of art and architecture of the Keladi Nayakas in their proper perspective.

In order to trace the style of the Keladi
Nayaka art and architecture, representative monuments are studied in detail. This has been possible due to our study of the monuments of the Keladi Nayakas as well those of the Keladi Nayaka period.

With this general historical methodology, we have approached the subject. The work is divided into nine chapters. They are as follows:

Chapter I:

This is the introductory chapter. The importance of the study of this style is highlighted and the earlier attempts in this regard is pointed out. The sources for the study of the Keladi Nayakas — archaeological, epigraphy and literary have been reviewed. The methodology adopted is pointed out. The importance of the regional art is also highlighted.

Chapter II:

This chapter deals with the historical background of the Keladi Nayakas with special reference to their socio-cultural activities. The founder-ruler of the dynasty was Cauḍappa, who ruled a small principality in and around Keladi (in Sagar taluk, Shimoga district), with the consent of the Vijayanagara rulers. His son
Sadasiva Nayaka changed this petty chieftainty into considerable feudatory territory. Venkaṭappa Nayaka I, the first independent ruler of the Keladi Nayakas was a great warrior and builder of the dynasty. Virabhadra Nayaka changed his capital from Ikkeri to Bidanur, a safer place amidst the western ghats. Śivappa Nayaka was a notable commander and administrator, Cennammāji enhanced the glory of the Keladi Nayakas by her military prowess and by giving asylum to the Marāṭha chief Nājarām (Śivāji's son), which in turn led her to fight with the forces of Aurangzeb. Basavappa Nayaka I was a benevolent ruler and a patron of literature, himself being the author of the Sanskrit work Śivatattvaratnākara. Śomāsekhara Nayaka II was a pious ruler and granted enormous wealth to the religious institutions. Basavappa Nayaka II was a warrior as well as a builder of forts.

Chapter III:

This chapter reviews the socio-religious conditions of the Nayaka period. The Keladi Nayakas were religious minded who continued the legacy of the Vijayanagara rulers. A large number of grants made by them to the religious persons and institutions speak of their religious mindedness. The importance given to the festivals is highlighted.
Chapter IV:

The fourth chapter is devoted to the study of the architectural style that prevailed in Karnataka during the medieval period. An attempt is made to present the salient features of the temple architecture of the Vijayanagara period. It also deals with the changes that are brought in the style and medium under the Vijayanagara rulers. Elevational view, Pradaksinapatha, Garbhagriha, Pillars, Gopuram, Stūpi and the treatment of the walls are slightly changed in shape and dimension according to the need of the terrain. A new element being introduced in the secular architecture of the period is identified. The influence of the Indo-Saracenic architecture like the dome, arches and minarets are noted in the royal monuments of the period. Our study suggests the influence of this style in the monuments of the Keladi Nāyaka period.

Chapter V:

The fifth chapter gives a descriptive and systematic study of most of the monuments of the Keladi Nāyaka period. This is in fact the major part of the thesis. It includes the religious, civil and military architecture under the Keladi Nāyakas. The religious
architecture deals with the temples built under the Keladi Nayakas, with special reference to the temples at Keladi and Ikkeri. A list of known temples both region-wise and period-wise is given. The emergence of a new art-style which is the outcome of the intermixture of the geographical set up and the heritage of architecture is noted. The contribution of the Keladi Nayakas to the field of architecture is discussed with special reference to the temple architecture — plan, elevation, medium used and the art-style. The influence of Indo-Saracenic style on the temple architecture is discussed.

The civil architecture deals with the palaces built under the Keladi Nayakas and the plan, elevation and the existing style of wooden architecture in these buildings. A list of the places where the ruined palaces of the Keladi Nayakas can be located is given. Shivappa Nayaka's palace at Shimoga is studied in detail. Apart from the residencial buildings, the civil works of the period are also noted — construction of towns, cities, tanks, sluices, ponds and bridges, which reflect the technical know-how of the period.

The military architecture consists of forts and fortresses. The forts that were constructed or strengthened during the period of the Keladi Nayakas are
listed out. The plan, elevation, geographical set-up and
the types of the forts are discussed. The Nagara fort
and Bekal fort serve as models for the study of the
military architecture of the period.

Chapter VI:

This chapter reviews the important sculptures
of the Keḷadi Nayaka period and their salient features.
These sculptures are classified into important religious
groups - Śaiva, Vaiṣṇava and Jaina. The elegant 'gaben-
ābhērunḍa' in the ceiling of the Vīrabhadra temple at
Keḷadi, Nandi sculptures at Ikkerī and Bidanūr (Nagara),
beautiful carvings of the elephants at Ikkerī and Ānanda-
pura, dvārapālaka images at Ikkerī and Kollūr speak of the
art-tradition of the period.

Chapter VII:

This chapter focusses our attention on the
hero-stones and mahāsati stones, suggesting the increasing
military activities in different parts of the kingdom
and the political unrest in South India. It also explains
the continued social practise. At the same time, an
element of deteriorating art style in these stones is to
be noted. The hero-stones and mahāsati stones at Keḷadi,
Shimoga Museum, Nagara and Kauledurga are studied in detail.

Chapter VIII:

In this chapter attention is focussed on the bronzes of the Keradi Nayaka period. As the paintings of the period are not many, the literary references are pointed out and the stray examples of the paintings are noted down.

The bronzes constitute a variety, belonging to different religious groups and regions like 'below the ghat and above the ghat' - as explained in the inscriptions of the period. The systematic study of these bronzes reveals the skillful workmanship of the sculptors and the religious catholicity of the Keradi Nayakas. The variety suggests the mining and casting activities, metallurgy, image-making and the expertise of the sculptors. It also deals with the names of the artists and sculptors during the Keradi Nayaka period, as found in the epigraphical and literary sources. The role of the artists in transforming the socio-cultural ideas in their respective medium is noted. The art-degeneration is noted in the hard medium of granite. At the same time, skillful workmanship exhibited itself in the bronzes and wooden
art is also noted.

Chapter IX:

This is the concluding chapter in which an attempt is made to point out the significance of the art and architecture of the period. During the period of political disturbances and frequent wars, the efforts of the Keladi Nayakas to continue the tradition set by the Vijayanagara empire is noteworthy. The influence of the Indo-Saracenic style along with the development of the regional sub-style is highlighted. As a result of all these factors, a sub-regional style emerged which can be called the 'Keladi Nayaka style'.

1.7. Need for the study:

The micro-historical study of art and architecture of the Keladi Nayakas helps us to have a better understanding of the Indian art and architecture in general and Karnataka architecture in particular. The study also helps us to trace the regional art which is the neglected field so far. In the larger context of the art activity as a whole it helps us to study the man's creative ability in art activity. Therefore, though we have to concentrate on the micro-historical study of the art and
architecture of the Keḷadi Nayakas, we have to realise the importance of the micro study and transform the regionalism to the wider field of man's creativity. Thus, a fair analysis and assessment of the art and architecture of the Keḷadi Nayakas could be possible.

Secondly, it is in the regional study of art that we find the use of the locally available stone, artistic talent and style by the local rulers under the Keḷadi Nayakas. But still drawing the inspiration from the overlords is as it were one of the common features of regional culture. Therefore, it is regional in one sense and it is part of national or macro study in another sense. The thesis tries to see the Keḷadi art in the proper context of Indian art so as to trace the individuality which adds to the variety and richness of Indian art.

The thesis also attempts to make some fresh observations on the art activity of the post-Vijayanagara, with reference to the Keḷadi Nayakas taking into consideration the advancement of the temple art, techniques or the development of engineering science - both theoretical and practical.

As already noticed, the Keḷadi Nayaka style is a combination of the existing Vijayanagara style,
Islamic style, Portuguese style to some extent and by and large the regional style - sometimes a synthesis of all these elements may be appreciated in their political, socio-cultural as well as environmental context.

Notes and References

2. Ibid., op. cit., loc. cit.
3. Ibid., op. cit., loc. cit.
9. Ibid., op. cit., p. 95.
12 E.C., VI, Bangalore, 1901, Sg. 5.
14 E.C., VIII, part II, Bangalore, 1904, Sb. 55.
16 M.A.R., Mysore, 1944, No. 53, p. 175.
17 Thanks to Dr. K.G. Vasantha Madhava who drew my attention to this inscription.
19 Noticed during the field work.
21 M.A.R., Mysore, 1938, No. 86; E.C., VI, Bangalore, 1901, Sr. 5.
22 E.C., VIII, part II, Bangalore, 1904, Tl. 6, 178; M.A.R., Mysore, 1933, No. 30.