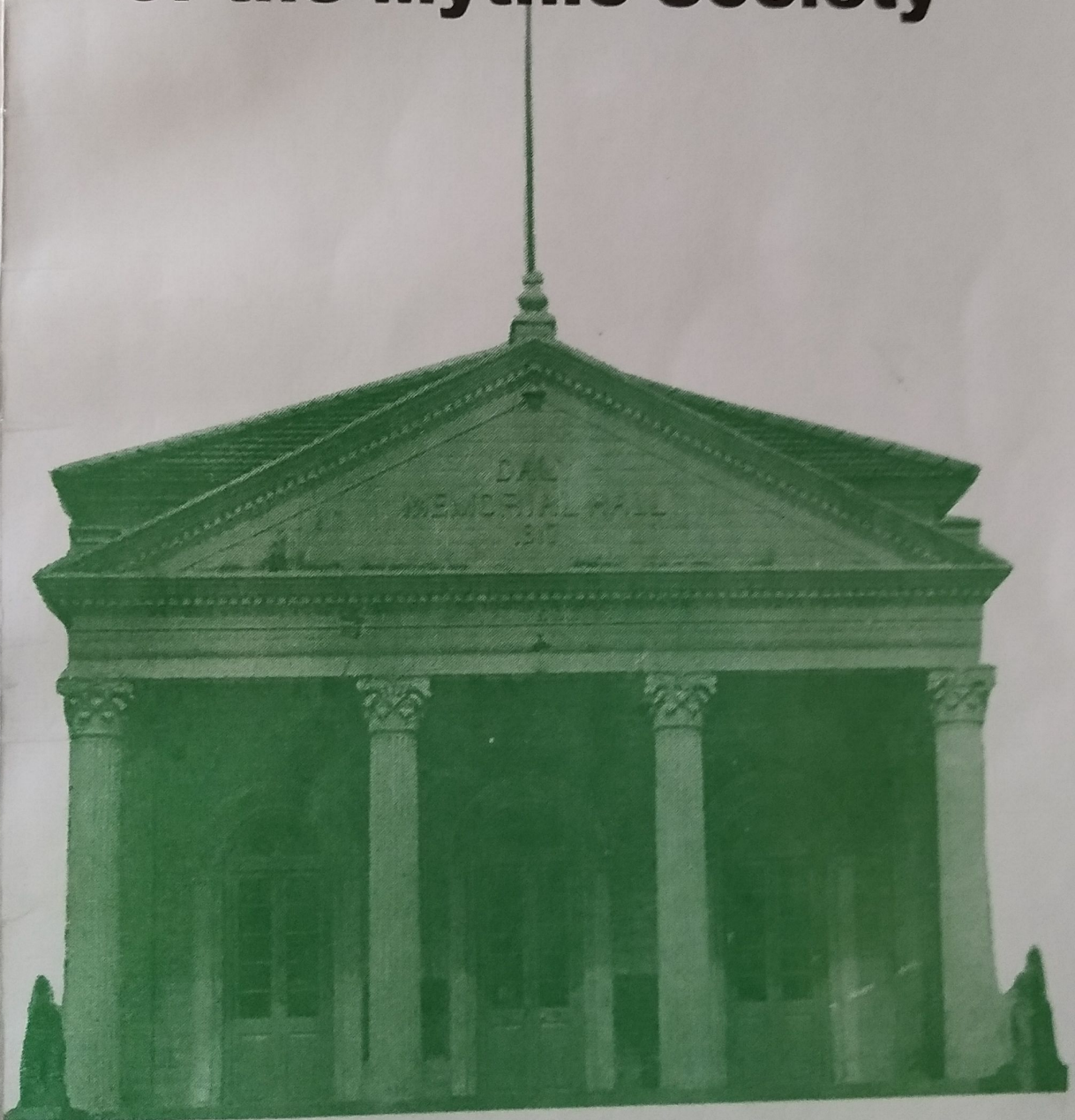




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MALE DRESS PATTERN OF THE NAYAK PERIOD IN TAMIL COUNTRY: THROUGH THEIR ART AND LITERATURE

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Dress is a reflection of the culture of a period. Dress is an inclusive term for garments, jewellery, cosmetics and hair dressing. Here it is considered as an aspect of the culture of civilized people, in this sense the term 'dress' may be used interchangeably with the term costume.¹ Dress is influenced by geographical factors such as climate and available materials by technological developments such as weaving methods and by historical events including war, trade patterns and religious movements. The sculptures and paintings of the Nayak monuments throw much light on the different kinds of dresses which the people of that period used to wear.

The costume of gods and goddesses did not differ much from those of the kings and the aristocracy of the Nayak period. The two pieces of clothing of dhoti or *vetti* or lower garment and *uttarium* or upper garment was continued during this period. According to John Nieuhoff, the men wore nothing but single piece of calico wrapped about their middle and another piece about head.² They did not wear any upper garment in their body.

The kings of this period appeared to have dressed in a simple manner. Many of them as may be seen from their statues in the Pudu Mandapam in Madurai and in other monuments of this period did not wear any dress over the upper portion of their bodies. A tight full-sleeved jacket of thin material was sometimes worn as may be seen on the statues of Kasturi Rangappa and Tirumalai Nayak. A dagger of the Vijayanagara type appears on the right side of the waist of Viswanatha Nayak.³ It appears in the left side of the waists of the other Nayak sculptures.⁴ It actually represents the hierarchy maintained during those days.

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