

Visual Narration and interfaces in Indian Painting with reference to the episode of “Kiratarjuniyam” from Lepakshi Murals

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Abstract: *The Kiratarjuniyam story is an episode from Mahabharata which was most favorite theme for the painter and sculptors. The Kiratarjuniya theme features the mood of valour (Vira Rasa) written by Bharavi of 6th century A.D. It was a small narrative episode in while Pandavas exile in Vana parva in Mahabharata. This is painted on the ceiling of Natyamandapa of Veerabhadra temple at Lepakshi in Andhra Pradesh state. These are the best preserved murals in Andhra Pradesh. The entire narration is depicted in 16 frames on 4 panels as horizontal bands on the ceiling. The narrative is painted in sequential mode with mature levels of composition that unfolds interfaces in terms of style, religious impacts and influences. The narration describes from the scene of the arrival of sage of Vedavyasa to the Dvaitavana and suggestion to Dharmaraja to get weapon Pasupatha in order to win over the Kauravas as the first scene to Vrishabharuda Shiva and Parvathi granting Pasupatha to Arjuna as last scene. The narration run from right to left and South to the North in direction, depicted in four panels.*

Keywords: *Lepakshi - Kiratarjuniyam - Vira Rasa – Sequential narrative - Natyamandapa- Pictorial space wild boar- foliage.*

1. INTRODUCTION:

The images painted on the walls of the temples represents mostly mythological scenes and stories a from epic literature. In the shavite temples especially Virabhadra swami temple at Lepakshi, Macherla, the shavite themes such as marriage scenes of Shiva and Parvati, forms of Anugrahamurti, and famous stories Shibijataka, Kiratarjuniyam, Dasavataras scenes, Bhagavatha scenes are seen were drawn with great efforts by using the Indian standards. Most of the temples painted scenes are narratives.

The narration is the primacy of Indian painting. The narrative painting is based on a story of historical, sociological, or mythological in nature and it was supposed to communicate the story by visual means¹. Similar to a verbal narration of a story, the visual narrative also should present a hero in a specific important action with some appealing consequences. In the visual narrative artist should suggest possible endings of the story which leads to create a sequence.

The tendency of depiction of narration is evolved from the living style of an average Indian which naturally reflects in our habits, art and crafts. Representing ideas in the form of storytelling is known as Narrative art which is simple and realistic to convey the theme to the beholder. In portraying mythological themes and scenes the painter had many options. In the narrative art, artist tries to convey or communicate to the audience in the direct terms through indigenous two dimensional paintings. Since the stories revolve around human actions and emotions that occurs in the space and time. It's a big challenge to the artist that he has to choose the mode of depiction a how to represent the time, space and number of characters. Moreover he has to achieve the decorative quality in the work of art in order to attract the beholder. Further it is highly important to arrange the story in the series of episodes and the manner of its composition within in the limited wall area or ceilings. Visual narration demands the artists with several options as in the case of poetics narration exercised by the poets. From the study of the murals of Lepakshi it has been noticed that the considerations of space and restrictions imposed thereby might responsible for the choice of narrative mode. The narrative episode of Kiratarjuniya executed on the ceiling of natyamandapa.

Two important aspects are involved in the narrative depiction. They are content or story that comprise the sequence of events and expressions conveyed to the beholder. The French historian have studied this aspect and emphasized the dichotomy between the content and form of the story². It is only in the case of the studies on the Buddhist art in the Indian context done by Vidya Dehejia that the modes of the presentation of the story in the visual narrative form the focus of the study³. It is clearly said that in Indian art that narratives are focused and examined mainly on the content and analysis of the story, identification of legends, comparison of textual legend and portrayal of the scene as per the text and given little preference to the play of visual elements and even any representation of representation of legends. This has been resolved in the narrative of Kiratarjuniya episode at Virabhadra temple at Lepakshi. Artists adopted the technical elements such composition and dynamism to the event and partitions of the scenes without visual disturbance. The further inquiry may unfolds the how this narrative at Lepakshi temple has crossed many challenges and problems in narrative depiction.

Time and space are two essentials of progression and protagonists, the agents of progression are highly indispensable components in the visual narration. While studying the Indian Art Vidya Dehejia referred seven types of visual narrations of which are some loosely allied and some are different. They are Mono scenic, continuous, sequential, synoptic, conflated narratives. Almost all these compositions were followed by Indian painter. For better understanding we go a little deeper into them.

Mono Scenic mode: we observe a single event in a story, it is easily identifiable event. We need not to necessarily to know the beginning and ending of the Story. For example, the mural painting of Lepakshi, the murals like Markandeyanugrahamurti and Chandesaanugraha Murty, Hari hara, Krishnaleela scenes from Bhagavatha for Srikurmam Murals and childhood scenes are best example for this mode of representation.

Continuous Narrative: In this mode, the Painting depicts successive events of an episode of story within a single framed unit.

Direction of movement: the direction of the movement in a narrative painting may commence from either left or right depending on its position, relative to the temple. In the case of temple sculpture particularly several small panels that measures one foot or above presents 3 to 4 scene form a story. We find that movement is from left to right. In this connection may be mentioned that the Indian system of writing moves from left to right across a page or a stone tablet. This may not be entirely followed. In some event may run from top to bottom and in some right to left. Most of the Vijayanagara paintings contains the movement from left to right, In the Kiratarjuniya episode, the narration runs from right left in all panels.

Sequential mode: like continuous narrative, in the sequential narrative mode also the main character of the episode will be depicted at different times and spaces. The difference between the modes is spatial composition and gyrate around the main character of the narration. Generally each episode depicted within a separate frame in which each scene is a unit itself; each event occur at a specific moment of time and one particular space. This is mode is evident in the mural paintings at Kanchili of Srikakulam district. The same is present in the episode of Kiratarjuniyam at Veerabhadraswamy temple at Lepakshi, Andhra Pradesh.

2. Narrative episode of Kiratarjuniyam:

This episode finds the visual representation in the art of Lepakshi temple both in two dimensional and three dimensional means in painting as well as sculpture. The former is presented in Natyamandapa and latter is on the wall of ardha mandapa. Categorically this was painted on the ceilings of natyamandapa as panel no 4. The narrative is painted in sequential mode with mature levels of composition unfolds many interfaces in terms of style, religious impacts and influences.

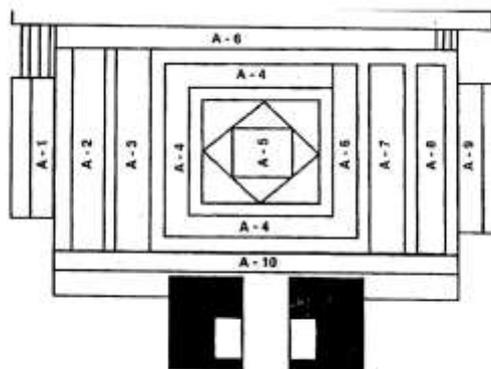


Fig.1 KEY PLAN OF NATYAMANDAPA, LEPAKSHI TEMPLE

The Kiratarjuniya theme describes the mood of valour (Vira Rasa) authored by Bharavi of 6th century A.D. It was a small episode from Vana parva in Mahabharata. In their exile, Draupadi and Bhima has provoked Dharmaraja to declare war with Kauravas while he does not relent. At the last, Arjuna, with the instruction of Indra to appease shiva with severe penance in the forest to be blessed with Pasupatha from Shiva. Shiva pleased for his severe penance of Arjuna, Shiva decided to reward pasupatha. Shiva ordered demon "Mooka" as wild boar which was charged and aimed at Arjuna to test his ability and valor. And he himself arrived as Kirata form as he hunting the wild boar towards Arjuna. Both of them shot the wild boar and argument held over that who shot the boar at first. They fought for long time. Arjuna was unable to conquer in the long battle, then realized and recognized that the opposite person was Siva, and surrendered himself to Siva. He was blessed and being given Pasupatha for his bravery.

Kiratarjuniya was a favorite theme in the Chalukya period. A beautiful narrative panel illustrating this theme is sculptured on one of the navaranga pillars in the sabha mandapa of Pacchala Someswara temple dated to later Chalukyan period. The same theme is depicted on the three panels of red sand stone which are preserved at Alampur archaeological

museum, ascribed to Rashtrakuta period of 10th Century AD, supported by the inscriptional evidence. A closer study of the sculptural representations by M.S. Nagaraja Rao revealed that the story slightly differs from that known from standard Mahabharata. This was very well discussed in Nagaraja Rao, M.S.'s Kiratarjuniya in Indian Art, 1979. The same theme in sculptural representation can be seen at Mamallapuram rock boulder carving as "Arjuna's Penance". The same story is found in another low relief sculpture panels on the eastern prakara of Sri Mallikarjuna swamy temple at Srisailam and also in Karnataka of Hoyasala tradition. The non-profit based research organization International Institute for Art, Culture and Democracy, Bangalore under the leadership of Prof. Vijay Chandru, Prof. Uma Chandru, done a wonderful documentation on the interactive plan of Lepakshi temple ceiling paintings with the support of Government of India.

This unique painting could be divided into four panels and could be read panels A4 (i), A4(ii), A4(iii) and A4(iv) were painted in the clockwise direction, between the beams around the central dome where the cosmic lotus carved. This narration comprises the sixteen scenes in total, narrated the story about the severe penance of Arjuna to obtain the weapon Pasupatha from Shiva is painted in sequential narration, this famous theme, recurrently adopted by the sculptors of India since the time of Pallavas in synoptic mode. It was depicted thrice in the temple. The multiple depiction of this narrative visual in the three places in this temple reveals the importance of the Kiratarjuniyam to the patrons, painters, Sculptors, and architects. In long narrative painting, artist celebrated with many pictorial elements such as detailed landscape, flora and fauna, various attires and postures. The entire narration is painted on the four panels with sixteen scenes as follows.

- Scene 1: The arrival of sage of Vedavyasa to the Dvaitavana and suggestion to Dharmaraja to get weapon Pasupatha in order to win over the Kauravas.
- Scene 2: Veda Vyasa teaching mantra to Arjuna to persuade Indra
- Scene 3: Arjuna journey to the Indrakeeladri
- Scene 4: Arjuna praying offerings to Shiva
- Scene 5: Arjuna worshipping God Virabhadhra
- Scene 6: Arjuna's severe penance and disturbed by celestial nymphs sent by Indra.
- Scene 7: Blessing of Indra to Arjuna
- Scene 8: Arjuna leaving to Indrakeeladri mountain to do severe penance to please Shiva
- Scene 9: Arjuna's severe penance to please Shiva as he was covered by serpents and creepers
- Scene 10: Arjuna's severe penance that shakes the Kailasa.
- Scene 11: Sages and celestial beings reporting to Shiva about Arjuna's penance
- Scene 12: Shiva and Parvathi came from heaven to test Arjuna
- Scene 13: Arjuna seated on hill, doing penance
- Scene 14: Shiva and Parvathi hunting the boar in the form of hunters (kirata and kirati)
- Scene 15: Boar was hunting and shot by Shiva and Arjuna
- Scene 16: Vrishabharuda Shiva and Parvathi granting Pasupatha to Arjuna.

The description of each panel for unfolds better understanding of the event and articulation of the each characters.

Panel A 4 (i) : In panel A4(i) from the eastern side, has been painted in nearly 4 feet 1 inch in height and 31 feet 3 inch in width. The entire panel was depicted with six scenes which should be perused in the direction from right to left. The narration of Kiratarjuniyam starts with the extreme right of the panel 4a, with a scene of sage Vyasa meets Pandavas and advises them to weapon pasupatha to win over Kauravas. which is most powerful weapon to win the battle. Arjuna taking part from his brothers from Kamyavana and heads towards Indrakeeladri mountain to invoke Shiva through severe penance. In this painting, Arjuna showed that he encounters two men, herding cows and a dwarf guided to reach the Indrakeeladri mountain. On the way he worships Shiva linga and Bhairava and finally reaches the heart of the mountain depicted on the extreme left of the panel.

Panel A4 (ii)



Fig.2. Indra blessed Arjuna and guided him to do penance on Indrakeeladri.

In the panel A4(ii) is the continuation of the Kiratarjuniyam consisting 3 feet 6 inches and 24 feet 1 inch in width executed in the north side. The panel is located at South direction of the mukha mandapa. We find nearly twelve human figures can be identified, each differs in variety of positions.

This panel starts with narration of scene “that Indra tries to disturb the penance of Arjuna by luring his Apsaras”. However Arjuna is undistracted from his penance and finally blessed by Indra and guides him towards the objective of the penance. On the right side of the panel, Indra was seated posture in his palace with his attendants listening to a right, informing him about the severe penance of Arjuna. Of course the central portion of the panel damaged and vandalized. On the left side of the panel, Arjuna showed in standing single leg and mediating pose. Next to this we may find Arjuna is prostrating in front of Indra. Indra appeared in his true form and blessed, then steered him to do penance on Indrakeeladri mountain.

Panel A4 (iii):



fig.3 . Shiva and Parvathi in the form of Kirata and Kirati , depicted in the Panel A4(iii)

This is the third panel of the narrative of Kiratarjuniyam story, painted in the panel of 4 feet 6 inches height and 31 feet 5 inches in width, existed in the western side of the ceiling of the Mukha mandapa. As usually the narration runs from right to left of the panel. Totally forty number of Human figures were depicted in different poses without similarity. The wild boar is represented in large size to draw attention of the beholder as well as the centre of the theme. After knowing the Arjuna's severe penance through her maids, Parvati reports to Shiva, accompanied by Nandi, ganas and other sages. The divine couple wish to test the valour of Arjuna. Shiva ordered Demon Mukasura to become a wild boar. The boar valiantly, terrorized the forest and rishis and birds and animal are frightened with the fear of Boar. The divine couple had landed on Indrakeeladri as Kirata and Kirati (Hunters). They are roaming around the Indrakeeladri while chasing the boar. This caused disturbance to the Arjuna's Penance. Arjuna attacked the boar from one side while Shiva on the other side. The boar was shot by the arrows of the both at a time.

Panel A4 (iv):

Panel A4 (iv) is the visualizes the narrative of Kiratarjuniyam with the measurements nearly 5 feet in height and 22 feet 2 inches width. Eighteen human figures are identified in this panel. This panel existed on the ceiling of Southern side of Mukha mandapa. The panel describes the fight regarding the boar that who shot at first to dead. Though Arjuna shown his valor and held upper hand in the fight, astonishingly Arjuna could not win over Shiva who was in the form of Kirata in that long fight. Finally Shiva revealed his true form as Shiva to Arjuna who surrenders himself to him. Then the divine couple blessed Arjuna with weapon pasupatha, in the form of Vrishabharudamurti with his consort at the extreme left of the panel.

The many sculptural representations can be found as arjuna's penance at Mahabalipuram of 6th century A.D and Virupaksha temple at Pattadakal, Kailasanatha temple at Ellora etc. in Andhra Pradesh, in the Akkanna –Madanna caves at Vijayawada, the pillar with *trikoti boyi* inscription dated in 9th century AD has relief sculptures depicting the penance of Arjuna on Indrakeeladri. similar representation are found at Alampur and Hemavathi also. In the region, this episode is noted in the temples at Chilamkuru, Animela, Pushpagiri and Peddamudiyam. Among these the Chilamkuru one is early dated to 9th to 10th century A.D and rest are of Vijayanagara Period. In the Mukha mandapa pillar of Agasthyeswara temple at Chilamkuru this theme is depicted in three panels as Killing of boar by Kirata and Arjuna, fight between two, and bestowing of pasupatha to Arjuna. In the bestowing Pasupatha panel Shiva and Parvathi are shown in seated posture and Arjuna on his knees praying the lord with his hands in Anjani mudra. Image of Shiva was shown with four hands, carrying trisula (trident) and damaru in the upper right and left hands respectively. His lower right hands shown in Abhaya mudra and left hand holding pasupatha which is not clear.

The same story depicted into four panel in the Southern wall of Santana malleeswara temple at Pushpagiri of Kadapa district. The first panel represents that Arjuna performing his penance standing on one leg. In the next panel that Arjuna and Kirata (shiva) were in disguise of Killing boar which was depicted in the center being struck by the two arrows

released by Shiva and Kirata(Shiva) .the next and third panel represents the Physical fight (mushtiyuddha) between Shiva and Arjuna being witnessed by Parvathi, and gana of shiva and rishis in the forest. The Last panel depicts Shiva is bestowing Pasupatha to Arjuna. Similar theme is depicted on the wall of girbhagriha of Mukkantiswara temple in two panels only showing Arjuna standing on one leg doing severe penance and in the second panel Shiva and Arjuna were depicted in the disguises of boar , depicted in the middle hit by arrows. In Sangameswara temple at Animela the same story was depicted in three panels on the exterior walls of west and North girbhagriha. The First panel represents the Arjuna 's penance with hands raised above the head in praying manner. Second panel Arjuna and Kirata killing the boar simultaneously. The thirds panel depicts the fight between Arjuna and Kirata. By knowing all the above depiction we may say that this theme is best represented in painting at Lepakshi as the limitation of the hard granite the sculptor might not go for the meticulous details as the painter proceeded. This is the advantage of painting medium for rendering narratives.

3. Pictorial Composition:

The compositional aspect this narrative painted mural has different types of backgrounds are been observed. Its is wonder to no such repetition in the postures of human figures enriched by the textile designs as borders. Vijayanagara paintings are generally painted in the format of square or oblong rectangular and lengthy panels . It is evident in the early style of Vijayanagara paintings, the ceilings of Virupaksha temple we may notice the compartmental division of space which resembles us of western Indian manuscript painting tradition. The Vijayanagara painters has executed small paintings like Shiva as Tripurantaka. And kamadeva⁴. The wedding of "Shiva and Parvati", Vidyanarayana, at Virupaksha temple unfolds the influence of Jain paintings. The similar influence will be noticed in Kiratarjuniyam panels at Lepakshi Temple. Beards given too many characters have been a Jain derivation as they were popularized by this school. The painting of "*wedding of Parvati*" and narrative depiction of "*Kiratarjuniya*" brings the reminiscence of Jain painting style⁵. In the first instances trees represented as the objects of background. They treated conventional. Their foliage is often composed with a series of circles and bouquets. Such trees gives the impression of Umbrella. The trunks are covered with fine sensuous lines⁶. Similar types of tree representations are profusely found in the Nayaka paintings. The same feature in jain miniature paintings such stereotyped trees are found for the division of space as a compartment for one episode. We find this kind of treatment in the manuscript illustration of Vasanthavilasa of the secular paintings of Gujarat. An illustration from Vasanthavilasa gives us the clues about the rudimentary compositional aspects of Lepakshi murals. Perhaps Lepakshi or Vijayanagara painter adopted this idea of division of space to narrate the scene on single surface. Trunks of the trees are emerging as they are creating a space for an event in the whole narration , on the single oblong panel. In the narrative panel of Kiratarjuniya of 4(b) towards north, at the extreme left to the panel, pose of Arjuna's penance was depicted. The artist used to create space for Arjuna's penance. conventional , stylized tree were used which were touching the both edges vertically. At the extreme right from the starting of the panel the artist depicted a tree along with house with surrounding which is Hindu custom of having space around the house. In the panel 4c of the Kiratarjuniya tree has been used to demarcate the spaces for various events in a single and lengthy narration. We may notice almost every tree is stylized and touching the horizontal lines of the panels. This articulation continued in the next panel also. In the second type the back ground is decorated with ornamental hangings, cloud , hills, flowers , flying Apsaras etc. Semi circular , rectangular, multi curved and bell shaped ornamental hangings are fond on the top section of the panel they appears as if they are hanged for stage decoration. They are profoundly found in the paintings at Lepakshi, Somapalem, Tiruvalanjuli, etc⁷. Persian influence is seen in the Kiratarjuniya hunting scene of Shiva and Arjuna's confrontation, indicating further that the boar painted there was a symbol of Vijayanagara state which would suggest the ascent of Vijayanagara power. Socio, religio and political situation of the Kingdom. It is felt that artists of Lepakshi or Vijayanagara thought that Persian forest further reinforces the Islamic conventions. It means the Boar has entered into the domain of Islamic states and indicates the aggression of Vijayanagara kings. Further Regine Pachner believed that the wall paintings of the Virupaksha temple can be attributed in their religious and political connotations especially through Tripurantaka panel. Three circles of demons , representing three demonic cities suggest the three kingdoms of Muslims in the Deccan.

4. Decorative elements:

The impact of Jain painting is predominant in all aspects of Indian painting. The Kiratarjuniyam episode of Lepakshi temple murals is not an exceptional. Jains also introduced borders in their manuscript illustrations, perhaps adopted from Persian influence. It is later became stock motif in subsequent Indian wall painting tradition. We find exquisite borders under the wall paintings of many centers in Rajasthan, especially in Kotah fort. The later tradition of Rajasthan in Kotah and Amber also broke up the horizontal panels with vertical panels of human and animal figures. This became stock fashion for displaying scarves in both miniature and wall painting (see A jain saint preaching to a king Mandu Kalpasutra of 1439 A.D. jain Miniature, national Museum, New Delhi , fig no 347 and see queens, Jain Miniature at National Museum and also see fig 348 , Seth Mira, Great Indian Mural tradition, Harry N. Abrams,2008, Inc Newyork p.408). The bright patterns of the painted and woven textiles is a unique feature of jain painting seems to have been carried further northwest to ladakh from Gujarat. Gujarat was not only a great exporter of textiles but also supplied textiles to the southern states under the regain of Vijayanagara as part of internal trade. This tradition has spreaded to Virupaksha temple in Vijayanagara. Jain wall paintings had already been created in the Vijayanagara kingdom at Tirupattikurnam in the 14th century A.D and artist and patrons were conversant with this style. The same was cited by Gopalakrishna murthi in his

book on Lepakshi. The influx of the Gujaratis due to the prosperity of the Kingdom possibly brought the illustrated manuscript with them and painters were might be Jains in majority. Thus we say and find the traces absolutely that the tradition of decorating borders is inherited from the Jain miniature later adopted to Lepakshi mural tradition with adaptation of local textile designs to achieve the decorative quality than the others traditions.

5. Religious Impact:

This is best mural from Lepakshi mural tradition is an insignia of the religious tolerance of Vijayanagara kings. The narrative unfolds that they are fusion of Vaishnavite, Shaivite, Jain and Islamic styles. In Indian painting tradition such a situation never seen in anywhere in all over India. The religion which found favor with the emperors of Vijayanagara during 16th century was Vaishnavism. But it never became the religion of the state. Moreover the kings never declared that they were attached to Vaishnavism. During the early 16th century the spirit of fanaticism which has a strong hold up on upon Virashaiva and Vira Vaishnavite sects. The propaganda was vigorous, in the same time the Islamic invasions appeared to revive. It was fortunate that founders of Vijayanagara empire came under the influence of eminent Advaita philosopher Madhavacharya Vidyanaya. As the essence of Advaita philosophy is comprehend that all religions were so many ways leading ultimately to the supreme reality. The Brahman. Under the directions of Vidyanaya, Vijayanagara kings built temples to Shiva and Vishnu, and extended their patronization even to Jains. Vijayanagara kings did not encouraged one sect to persecute another. Taking advantage of quarrel between the Vaishnavites and Jains, Bukka I laid down the religious policy of the state in an edict, copies of which he had engraved on stone in several important places⁸. In another version of same edict, the King declared that there was no difference "between Vaishnava darshana and Jaina darshana. He took the hand of the Jains and placing it in the hand of Vaishnavas issued his decree. The spirit of this edict has been continued by later Kings includes Islam. Although the Islamic rulers bitterly persecuted their Hindu subjects, Vijayanagara king shown concern on his subordinate ill treated Muslims. Further emperors extended their patronage to Muslim institutions. Vijayanagara Kings Employed the Muslims into his army and other duties also. All these policies are unaltered during the reign of Achyutadevaraya. Besides the Islamic threat, these four religion enjoyed their life without any disturbance. This reflected in Lepakshi paintings. Again I would like to imagine that Nayaka kings who were Shaivite in belief, The subordinated of Vijayanagara Kings were given chief post in the royal court. The sons of Lakkiseti Nandi Timmana, Viranna and Virupanna Nayak were raised to the position of the rank of Governor of Pengonda area. The Virupanna nayak built a temple for their tutelary god Virabhadra by extending the existing temple of Papanasesvara. The early phase painting are executed in Natyamandapa, and some other place in mukha mandapa many Shaivite paintings were executed. After Virupanna the kings donated lands and villages to the temple for the development subjected to the development of Vaishnavite cult in order to establish the religious tolerance. As the Jains are also one of the existing groups in Vijayanagara empire, many were migrated from Gujarat. Some Jain painters might have been employed for the task of mural paintings in Lepakshi temple. In result the early phase of Lepakshi paintings owes much influence from western Indian miniature painting tradition of Jains. Due to the rough style and not mature in line

The Achyutadevaraya might have commissioned to some other master artists from Tamilnadu, that is why we notice the drastic change in paintings that appears in Ardha mandapa, and later Raghunadhalaya on Vaishnavite themes. The painting of Vatapathrasai on a banyan leaf painted on the extreme left on the panel A2 on the ceiling of Natyamandapa is somewhat different in style, the huge size of Krishna as vatapathrasai when compare with rest of the figure in the panel. Because it seems there is no relation between the Virupanna and his retinue praying offers to Veerabhadra and Krishna's incarnation as vatapathrasai.

The Vijayanagara kingdom that lived face to face with the Muslim powers of Deccan was bound to come in contact with Muslims on various levels, through exchange of envoys, recruitment of Muslims as soldiers, many of Muslim traders are settled in Vijayanagara kingdom. With such close proximity Vijayanagara court is influenced by the Muslim culture. In many aspects, Vijayanagar kings followed the Muslim kings in the several aspects like annual review of armed forces, military knowledge and training, practicing of branding horses, prohibition of a person with physical disabilities such as loss of eyesight from Sultanship. And it became a practice among the Muslims to disqualify the contender to the throne by blinding him⁹.

In this painting it is identified that appearance of Blue (lapis Lazuli) and some muslimans features in terms of beard of men it is typical feature, women having nose ornament are can be noticed in Deccan and heavy decoration of foreground and background, depiction of animals owing their Persian influence through Deccan.

The painting Kiratarjuniya episode depicted on the ceiling of Natya mandapa is best example for intrusion of Deccan culture in to the Lepakshi style. Moreover reading a paintings from right to left is also should taken into consideration regarding above.

6. Conclusion:

The art of Ajanta has set the Iconographic standards for the entire scenario of Indian painting. Both emphasis on iconography and *rasa* as mentioned in *Chithrasutra* are present in that paintings. From Ajanta to Lepakshi, this phenomenon was followed. The tradition of Indian painting, one can observe the presentation of youthful culture. The Lepakshi builders are well versed on several treatises in architecture, Iconography which defines the construction rules of Temple building and iconographic details and forms of Gods and Goddesses that filled the entire temple. artists adopted

the suitable modes of narrative modes according to the limitations of the size of the panels and story. Most of the canons of the iconography culled from the Jain paintings were as enunciated in the Chithrasutra, Brahmasamhita and the Manasollasa.

The women in Lepakshi murals are seen young and beautiful. All the gods and goddesses and Kinnaras and Kimpurushas are seen young¹⁰. This tribute to beauty was continued from the Ajanta.



Fig. 4 Kiratarjuniya relief work at Laxminarayana Temple, Hosaholalu of Hoysala style

The human face is represented in Jain painting generally in a three-quarter view with the beak-like nose, small chin, and a padol (vegetable-shaped) eyes jutting out differently from the eyes at Ajanta, Bagh, Badami, Pallava and Chola centers of painting. The farther eye appears to flow away from the face, except in the faces of the Tirthankaras whose eyes are open and penetrating and foreshortened. The eyes of the animals are foreshortened but they stay within the contours of the head, generally only one eye is shown. The description of Kiratajuniyam was given in Amusbedhagama, Uttarakamikagama, Silparatna etc. was followed by the Lepakshi painter. In Indian art, this theme is widely represented in sculpture, so reflected in art of Andhra Pradesh. In united Andhra Pradesh, the Kiratarjuniyam has been represented from 8th century A.D to 16th A.D. in the form of low or high relief sculptures of Renadu Cholas, Nolambas, Vaidumbas, Rashtrakuta, Later Chalukyas and Vijayanagara periods. The depiction and iconographic features and peculiarities of sculptural representations of this theme found at Chilamkur, Attirala, Hemavathi, Alampur, Panugal, Pushpagiri, Lepakshi, Animela and Srisailem in the given sequence¹¹. When the theme is transformed into painting, the change of media, artists got the chance to show their creativity with by taking partial deviations from the sculptural canons, infused the social and cultural conditions of the time of Vijayanagara into the murals, that made the Lepakshi murals are the best in India.

Though it is a small episode in Mahabharata, artist successfully given pictorial form with delicate details through his technical skills and compositional methods to visualize as the most interesting theme in the history of Indian Art. The depiction of severe penance of Arjuna in jungle atmosphere, Shiva in the form of Kirata with his consort Parvati as Kirati, galloping run of the wild boar, argument led about the wild boar shot by the both Shiva (Kirata) and Arjuna, treatment of forest, division of space in each episode of the entire narration certainly gives visual feast to the narration. The topic itself create and arouses interest in the people who visit and tries to know the episode irrespective of age and gender.

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