

Sculpture and Musical Instruments

Dr. Ramya C R

Bengaluru

9448052377

dance.ramya@gmail.com



Abstract:

The study of History helps to understand the present. Likewise, through the study of Art History, one can grasp the sources through sculpture, painting, architecture and literature. Sculptures are one of the main base for the study of art prevailed in the past. Along with the sculptures of Deities which speaks many Mythological stories, we also come through the concept of artefacts in these sculptures. Dance sculptures, musical instruments for dance are guided are seen mostly in Shaivate and Vaishnavite temples.

Rarely we come across to grasp the ornamented dance sculptures in Jina basadis which are meant to be the place to identify about the Tirthankara and Jain philosophical traits. It is a very interesting fact to know about the dance related sculptures of *Jina Basadis*. This paper deals only with the study of the Musical instruments through sculptures of *Shantinatha Basadi, Jinanathapura*.

Keywords: *Dance, Basadi, sculpture, History, Jinanathapura, Musical Instruments*

Introduction

Instrumental support to Music and Dance plays an important role. A wide variety of musical instruments were used in vedic age. The percussion instruments were *dundhubi, adambara, bhumi dundhubi*. *Aghati* was a cymbal which accompanied dancing. The *kandaveena* was a kind of lute, *vana* was a lute with 100 strings and the *veena*. Wind instruments included *tunava*, a wooden flute, a reed flute was called as *nadi*. Instruments have been mentioned in the Upanishads.

The musical instruments can be classified on the basis of the materials they are made up of and also the playing method. The earliest reference for the classification of instruments can be seen in *Natyashastra* of Bharata. They are *Tata, Avanaddha, Ghana* and *Sushira*.

In Sangam age literature the names such as *Tol karuvi* (percussion), *Narambukaruvi* (string), *Tulai karuvi* (wind), *Kancha karuvi* (mettalic), and *Midatru koravi* (voice) have been recorded in regard to the classification of instruments.

In *Sangita Makaranda* of Narada the classification of instruments are *Nakhaja* (string) , *Vayuja* (wind), *Charmaja* (percussion), *Lohaja* (metallic) and *Kantaja* (by voice).

1. *Tata Vadya* is a string instrument in which produce sound by plucking, bowing or beating the string.

Ex: Vina, harp, Kinnari Veena, Ravana hasta veena, Swaramandala, Dandika, Tambura, Gotu vadya, violin, Rudraveena, Mahati, Brihati, Kacchapi, Kalavati, Dande, Kamakshi, Tripiridande

2. *Avanaddha Vadya* is Percussion instrument in which the sound is produced by beating the side of it which is covered by animal skin.





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Ex: Mardala, Mridanga, Tammata, Tappeta, Dolika, Madduka, Tamuku, Dhakka, Damaruka, Jharjara, muraja, Gomukha, Tabala, Dol etc.

3. **Ghana Vadya** is metallic instrument in which the sound is produced through metal, wood or mud.

Ex: Cymbal, Bells, Nattuvanga

4. **Sushira Vadya** is Wind instrument in which sound is produced by blowing air into it.

Ex: Venu, Vamshi, Kahala, Sankham, Nagaswara, Kanchukommu, Buruga, Mukhaveena etc.

The Kings of various kingdoms gave patronage to art. The temples constructed during that period were not only the place for worship. It became the repositories of all arts like music, dance, sculpture and painting.

The antiquity of Architecture of Karnataka can be traced to its southern Neolithic and early Ironage. Over the centuries, architectural monuments within the region displayed a diversity of influences, often relaying much about the artistic trends of the rulers of twelve different dynasties who had contributed in the field of art and culture.

Here is the enlistment of few dynasties and their region

1. Amaravati and Jaggayyapeta of Shatavahanas
2. Ajanta, Ellora and Aurangabad caves of Vakatakas
3. Badami, Aiole and Pattadakallu of Western Chalukyas
4. Mahabalipuram, Tiruchy, and Kanchi of Pallavas
5. Kailasanatha temple at Ellora of Rashtrakutas
6. Darasuram, Chidambaram and Tanjavur temples of Cholas
7. Chalukyas at Hampi and Araluguppe
8. Beluru, Halebeed and Somanathapura of Hoysalas
9. Vijayanagara kingdom

Hoysala dynasty is one among them in which they have expressed the artefacts through their sculptures. *Madanikas* are the most beautiful creation of that period. The Hoysala architecture style is an offshoot of the Western Chalukya style, which was popular in the 10th and 11th centuries. (*Architecture of Karnataka*, from Wikipedia, retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Architecture_of_Karnataka, accessed on 27th January, 2016).

In Hoysala art, the ornamental elaboration and a profusion of iconography with figure sculptures are found in abundance. Hoysala rulers have also built *Jina basadis* along with Hindu temples.

In *Basadis* generally we get to know about the Tirthankara and Jain philosophical aspects. But very rarely we come across to know the artistic sculptures and dance sculptures in *Basadis*. In this regard, the *Shantinatha Basadi* at Jinanathapura is the only Jaina building that displays the ornate style with large figures encircling much of the temples, a style found in the famous Hoysala buildings built throughout southern Karnataka from the early twelfth century until the middle of the fourteenth.

We will get to know about the dance sculptures of exterior wall from many writings. But no documentation has been done about the interior dance sculptures. In this paper it has been dealt with sculptures on exterior walls along with the interior sculptures of the *basadi*.





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Musical Instruments in Sculptures of Shantinatha Basadi

We will get to know about the dance sculptures, musical instrument player sculptures of exterior wall from many writings. But no documentation has been done about the interior dance sculptures. In this essay it has been dealt with dance sculptures on exterior walls along with the interior sculptures of the *basadi*.

Shantinatha Basadi:

This was built in 11th century A.D by Veera Ballala-II of Hoysala dynasty. This temple is decorated with many dancing figures, sculptures holding different instruments, yaksha-yakshi figures and also thirtankara sculptures. The well carved image of Shantinatha, the 16th Tirthankara is seated on a lion pedestal. It is about 5.6” high. The *garbhagriha* is guarded by two *dwarapalakas*. The *navaranga* has elegantly executed pillars adorned with beaded work. The ceilings are also of good workmanship of art. The niches of the *navaranga* are now empty. The temple is known for its star shaped foundation (a typical feature of Hoysala temples), round bell-shaped pillars, elaborate doorways ceilings, niches in the hall and the fine craftsmanship.

In addition to this the temple is very impressive in terms of the 68 outer wall reliefs, dance sculptures inside the *garbhagriha* and *sukhanasi* which have iconographic and artistic importance. These include the reliefs of Tirthankaras, *Yakshas*, *Yakshis*, Goddesses, *nartaki*, *gayaka*, *vaadaka*, Goddess Saraswathi, Rathi and Manmatha, Manmatha, *mardala nartaka*, *vaamshikas*, *taaladhari nartaka*, and many other. The central Vimana Jinas each are flanked by dancers and musicians, instead of attendant deities. These images have drawn the attention of many historians and students of art and architecture.

Explanation Of Few Sculptures Of Jina Basadi

The east facing wall of the temple is much unadorned without any decoration whereas we will have a quintessence of creative and sculptural beauty at the south, north and west fronting walls. In almost all sculptures only the facial part has been ruined. This *basadi* is constructed on a star shaped basement panel which is the identical structural splendour of Hoysala period. They have string, wind, percussion and brass instruments. But percussion instruments are perceived more in number than others.

Along with the walls, the panels under the main sculpture had many dance figures. There are many dance sculptures inside the *garbhagriha*, *sukhanasi* and in *antarala* also. The dancing sculptures in front of the *garbhagriha* consists of *taaladhari*, *maardikas*, *nartaka*, *nartaki*, *vaamshika*, *Perini* dancer and so on. Inside the *garbhagriha* in the *Bhuvanewari* we have Jinanatha, different kinds of *maardikas*, *nartaka*, *nartaki*, *Perini* dancer, *taaladhari* and many other sculptures.

Goundali dancer sculpture (north facing wall, *shantinatha basadi*, *jinanathapura*)





In reference to the *Sangita ratnakara* text of *Sarangadeva* we had two traditional dance forms in Karnataka that are *Perani* and *Goundali*. *Goundali* was danced by women whereas *Perani* was danced by men only. To know about this sculpture it is necessary to have the knowledge of *Goundali* dance. It is a very graceful dance which have simple and graceful steps. In this dance a dancer will dance to different rhythmic patterns by playing drum herself. That drum is called *Hudukka*. If she only drums the instrument and dances without any song it will be called as *Muka goundali*. (Nandagopal.Dr.Choodamani, *Shile-kale*, 2007,pg no.140) We can see lot of these kind of dance sculptures in the period of Kalyana Chalukyas and Hoysalas. In this sculpture she is holding the drum in her left hand and playing it with a stick called *kona* with her right hand.

Sculpture holding the *Ghanta taala* (South facing wall, *shantinatha basadi*, *jinanathapura*)

In this sculpture we can observe that the dancer is dancing holding the cymbals. Cymbals are the *ghana vadya* which comes under one of the 4 divisions of instruments. We have the bell shaped cymbals which can be seen in Kalyana chalukya period. Hoysalas who have followed them have also used the same kind of *ghanta talas* in their sculptures. As Hoysalas were known for their decorative skills they have the cymbals decorated with ribbon kind of material that is *kuchchu*.



Addavuja vaadaka sculpture (south facing wall, *shantinatha basadi*, *jinanathapura*)



We have a drummer sculpture in this *basadi* in which the drummer had bent his knees and playing the instrument. *Mridangam* is one of the melodious percussion instrument. So from the period of Kalyana Chalukyas they have depicted this instrument while representing the art of music and dance. We have a reference that there was an instrument called *Addavuja* which resembles present day mridangam in the period of Hoysalas. It can be played either by beating the sticks or with the help of hands only. So with this reference it can be notified as *Addavuja* instrument. (Nandagopal.Dr.Choodamani, *Shile-kale*, 2007, pg no.270).

Mardala vaadaka sculpture (west facing wall, *shantinatha basadi, jinanathapura*)

We have so many varieties in percussion instruments. *Mardala* is one among it. This instrument was tied around the neck and has been played. The drummer use to insert his left hand fingers through the string tied around the *mardala*. This makes him to change the *sruti*. The same



depiction has been sculpted in this sculpture where the drummer's left hand is inside the string and playing the drum with his right hand. As there is a movement, we get to know that he was dancing while playing the drum.

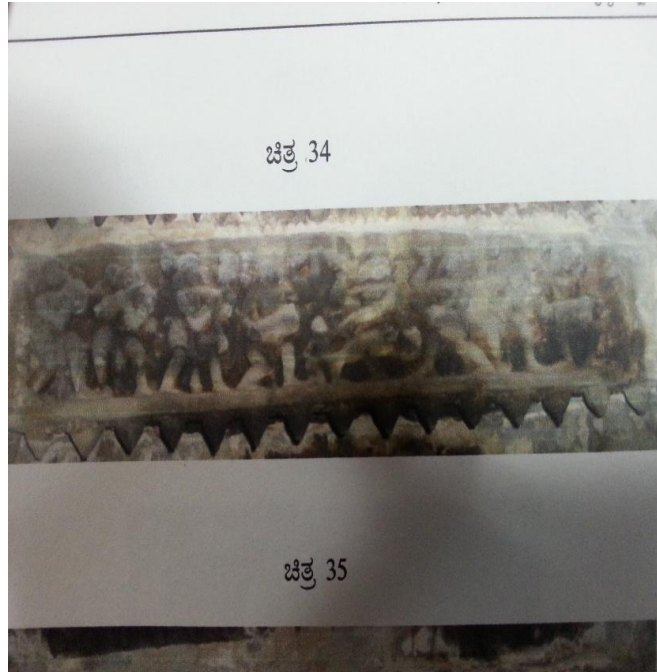
Vaamshika sculpture (flute player) (north facing wall,*shantinatha basadi, jinanathapura*) We have several names for wind instruments called *vamshi, kolalu, venu* and so on. Those who were playing this instrument were known as *vamshi vadakas*. We have the same kind of sculpture in other dynasties also whereas in Hoysala time it is quite different. We can see the flute player dancing only in Hoysala sculptures. The size of the flute is big enough as today's Bansuri.



The dance sculptures at Sukhanasi

We have many panels containing dancer and musician sculptures in the ceiling of sukhanasi.

Pannel 1 consists of Khanjira player, *taaladhari nartaki*, *mardala vaadaka*, *nartaka*, *vaamshika*, *mridanga vaadaka*.





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ಚಿತ್ರ 36

Pannel 2 consists of *mridanga vaadaka*, *vaamshika*, *taaladharini*, *Perini nartaka*, *mardala vaadaka*, *khanjira vaadaka*.



ಚಿತ್ರ 36



Pannel 3 consists *addavuja vaadaka*, *taaladharini*, *vaamshika*, *nartaka*, *mardala vaadaka*.



Panel 4 consists of *vaamshika*, *taaladharini*, *mridanga vaadaka*, *Perini vaadaka*, *mardala vaadaka*, *khanjira vaadaka*.

Other than these we have so many sculptures related to art at the eight panels surrounding in the sukhanasi. It consists of *Khanjira vaadaka*, *vaamshika*, *taaladharini*, *nartaka*, *mardala vaadaka*, *vaamshika*, *mridanga vaadaka*, *Perini nartaka*, *nartaka*, *nartaki* sculptures.

We can also see many dance sculptures in the ceiling of garbhagudi where the idol of Shantinatha has been sanctified. In the ceiling we can find a square panel where the idol of Jinanatha is in the center and other dance sculptures around it. It consists of *nartaki*, *mardala vaadaka*, *perani nartaka*, *nartaki*, *taaladharini* and *mridanga vaadaka* sculptures.

Conclusion

India is a nation of cultural heritage. There is a unity in diversity in our traditional morals. Each state is unique by its own regional values. Art and culture has made the place distinct. As per the records, Temples were the cultural centres of those days. These sculptures are the monuments which articulates the endurance of art. It has sheltered the artefacts. It is our duty to safeguard



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and preserve these educative memorials.

Belur and Halebid temples are the striking examples of Hoysala period. But as a very rare entity we got the treasure of art sculptures in the Basadi of a small village, Jinanathapura. It is a remarkable construction of Hoysala period. We can identify the desi and margi tradition of dances through this sculptures. There is a scope to study about the Margi and Desi instruments of that period. We acquire the knowledge about the costume, jewellery, hairstyles and the musical instruments prevailed in that period. These sculptures throws light not only regarding the dance aspect but also about the social life of those days.

While writing this article, it acquired me to a different world of sculptures. I relished the artefacts of Hoysala period. I get to apprehend the importance in blooming of art in the sculpture. Through this sculptural study I acquire to perceive the place of Art and its value in those days. When I was exploring this Basadi, I came to know many interesting facts.

- Generally the *Khanjira* and cymbals are played by female dancers.
- We have percussion instruments more in number than wind instruments. There is a very rare usage of string instruments.
- We can see the male dancer sculpture tying four to five lines of gingles where female dancer don't have the gingles tied.

This article has made me to understand the importance of sculpture to study the artefacts of past.

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