

Folktales, Myths and Legends on Sculptors of South India

Balakrishna B.M. Hosangadi, Kannur University, India

The Asian Conference on Literature 2017
Official Conference Proceedings

Abstract

History speaks on sculptures and silent on sculptors; whereas folktales take contradictory position towards this phenomenon. The folktales, Myths and legends on sculptors of south India narrate the dark shades of the life of sculptors. The present paper is intended to explore the tales from south India and hypothetically propose the four processes occurring in the narration of these stories: 1. Demonisation 2. Suppression 3. Marginalisation 4. Devaluation. So far, intensive studies have been carried out on the South Indian sculptures in scholarly texts. The major works have concentrated on the aesthetic elements of the sculptures rather than sculptors. So, finding the colossal void, present paper would discuss the narration. The paper is confined to the mythology of Thvastr-Vishwaroopa in Sanskrit and legends of Jakkana - Dankana in Kannada, Shambhu Kalkuda - Beera Kalkuda in Tulu, Raman Perunthacchan-Kannan Perunthacchan in Malayalam. These are the major mythological and legendary characters. The paper would use folktales, Myths and legends as primary sources and history works as secondary sources and it also would examine the adaptations of the folktales into theatrical, performing art form and cinematic works. A friction between the history and the legend is observed: historians have started questioning the very existence of these legendary sculptors and at the same time, folklorists are placing the counter points. Reading the reflections over each other would provide the multiple layers of meanings.

Keywords: Folktales on sculptors of south India, cultural study

iafor

The International Academic Forum
www.iafor.org

Introduction

The irony of the history is in its selective narratives and total denial of the oral history on the grounds of evidences and plenty of questions are being raised against the historiography itself. The present paper is focusing on various processes occurring in the marginalized oral history of south India, particularly of sculptors. History speaks on sculptures and unspoken on sculptors; whereas folktales take incongruous position towards this trend. The folktales, Myths and legends on sculptors of south India narrate the dark shades of the life of sculptors. The four processes occurring in these tales are:

1. Demonization
2. Suppression
3. Marginalization
4. Devaluation

So far, intensive studies have been carried out on South Indian sculptures in scholarly texts, which have concentrated on the aesthetic elements of the art rather than sculptors. So, observing the colossal void, present paper would discuss the oral narratives and is confined to the mythology of Thvastr-Vishwaroopa in Sanskrit and legends of Jakkana - Dankana in Kannada, Shambhu Kalkuda - Beera Kalkuda in Tulu, Perunthacchan and his son in Malayalam. The paper would use folktales, Myths and legends as primary sources and history texts as secondary and it also would examine the adaptations of the folktales into theatrical, performing art form and cinematic works.

The relation of history and oral history is much more problematic as historians have already started questioning the very existence of these legendary sculptors and at the same time, folklorists have been placing the counter points. Reading the reflections of historians and folklorists over each other would provide the multiple layers of meanings.

Details of life and achievements of the sculptors are the issues undiscovered by the history. Art-architectures and sculptures are the pageantry of the emperors of the land. Inscriptions, pillars, forts, temples, lakes tell the opulence of their regime. Sometimes the sculptor gets the patronage, at the same time the hegemony has demonized, suppressed, marginalized, and devaluated them.

As narrated in *The Orientalism* (Edward Said, 2000, p5)¹, The Idea, Culture and History cannot be studied without their original force. In concise, the original forces are the designs of the hegemony. The idea of demonization, suppression, marginalization and devaluation of sculptors are the ideas of the hegemony and these can be seen in Sanskrit and South Indian languages.

History is a design of the hegemony and it recommends the proofs generated by the kings and rulers, in other words, it rejects the multi-faceted narratives. The Myths and legends burst the bubble of the single faceted narrative. It is a kind of conflict between history and Mythology. History narrates the story of the haves and folk tales tell the

¹ Said Edward.(2000). *The Orientalism*. New Delhi: Penguin books

story of the have not's. If we have not read both facets of history and Legends, surely we will lose the great traditions of meanings. The sculptors, once the worshippers of Brahma, become the worshippers of Kaali can be read in lights hegemony.

Sanskrit: Demonization

Thvastr-Vishwaroopa

Demonization of sculptors began in the Puranic period, social structure started shifting and disfiguring happened in the same period and it seems to be Jnaana or Knowledge and Karma or Action took diverse way.

In Veda Mantras, particularly in Rig-Veda and Atharva-vedas, sculptor had occupied predominant role as Vishwashilpi or World-sculptor and in Puranic period he had been demonized and otherized. The longing for the highest power by the ruler was the reason behind it. As depicted in *A history of India*, The central force of the ancient Indian system was an emperor (Kulke and Rothermund, 2002, p6).² The Indra of the Vedas or the Emperor of the land, who was willing to expand his empire, had to eliminate his enemy and thus the horse sacrifice of Ashwamedha came to existence and either the enemy had to bow before the emperor or to fight and defeat him, at the same time internal enemies were demonized.

Asura: God or the enemy of God?

Wilkins W. J.(2012, p438-40)³, who studied the Hindu mythology in depth, throws light on the word Asura, its etymology and the transformation of meanings. In Earlier times the word Asura was used to mention the gods, and then turned to notify the enemies of gods, there after it was narrowed into the meaning of Demons. It seems to be, the word Asura had been used as both in positive and negative meanings.

Towards the Goddess worshipping

In Vedas, sculptors were worshippers of Brahma, later they began to Worship Kaali; reason for this can be defined as countering hegemony. Interesting thing is that, so called hegemonic culture was also having the vestiges of violence in various forms like Bali-Ahuthi-Tharpana. Vedic texts, particularly, Rgveda Suktas consider Thvastr as the generator of the world. 'Ya Ima vishwa bhuvanani..' are very popular (Griffith, 1896, Mandal 10, Sukta 81-82)⁴. Thvastr is being hailed in Rgveda Suktas as equal as Indra, Varuna, Mitra, Agni, Soma are being hailed.

'Thvastr is the Vaastuthajna or Architect of gods. He is the constructor of many places of heaven. War mongering gods are indebted to him. Brahmanaspathi or God of fire's axe is sharpened by him; he created Vajrayudha or weapon for indhra. He is very closer to human beings- these are descriptions seen about Thvastr.' (Wilkins, 2012, p75)⁵

² Kulke, Hermann. & Rothermund, Dietmar. (2002). *A History of India*. London: Routledge Publication.

³ Wilkins W. J.(2012). *Hindu Mythology*, NewDelhi: Rupa Publication.

⁴ Griffit, Rolf Thomas Hatchkin. (1896). *The Rgveda*. sacredtext.com

⁵ Wilkins W. J. (2012). *Hindu Mythology*. NewDelhi: Rupa Publication.

Creating the intimate enemy

In the Puranic age, the sculptor narratives took the way of demonization. The skills of the sculptors become the curse to them. The Puranas narrate how they have been demonized by the hegemonic power.

‘In VishnuPurana, Thvastr is the master of many arts, Machine maker to gods, designer of jewels, the head of the artists, Sculptor of the self starting chariots of gods. According to the fifth cantos of vishnuPurana, Vishnu managed the duty of Brahma. That means Vishnu Purana gives the right evidence of marginalization of Brahma. The Sixth Canto reveals the Chaturvarnya or the four castes (Dutt Manmathnatha,1896, p174)⁶. ‘In some parts he(VishwaShilpi) is called Brahma. In pictures, he is portrayed as Brahma...Vedic hymns recognized him as a creator and protector. But later texts have given him a lower status. Brahma becomes creator, Vishnu becomes protector. And Thvastr become servant of the both.(Wilkins, 2002, p406-8)⁷ Wilkins recognized how the Thvastr’s position was downscaled and how he become the servant, but did not consider the process in a serious manner.

Competition, jealousy, killing, revenge-are narrated here. Equal share to Gods and demons and Asuras was the viewpoint of Vishwaoopa and therefore he becomes an intimate enemy to Indra. This is the reason for the death of Vishwaoopa and Such an anxiety is also the reason and inspiration for demonizing the sculptors.

Sethubandha of Ramayana and Mayasabha of Mahabharatha

Valmiki Ramayana has depicted Monkey king Nala as the son of Vishwakarma. Nalas episode comes in the Sethubandha context in Ramayana (Griffith, 1895, p444-45)⁸. ‘Ramayana depicted Neela as one who came out of the fire. He has the special aura. He is more powerful and skillful than his own father(Wilkins, (2012, p 408)’⁹.

In the Sabhakriya parva or canto of the Vyasa Mahabharatha, Krishna says to Maya that ‘Construct an auditorium as you like it... O Dithiputrhra, if you want to give justice to Yudistira, just build a palace for him. Construct the unimitable palace. May it be having the designs of Deva/Devine-Asura/Demon-Manava/Human says Krishna. Thus Maya builds palace at Khandavaprastha(Ganguly, 2003, Sabhakriya Parva, Chapter 1.)¹⁰.

The sculptors belonged to Harappan culture and were also localities. Aryans, who came later, might have dominated them. Aryans applied the ‘Apavithra Siddhaantha ‘ or ‘theory of Impurity’ to the skills of sculptors.

⁶ Dutt Manmathnatha.(1896) *Vishnupuranm (Tr)*, Kolkatta, : Manmathnath Dutt.

⁷ Wilkins W. J.. (2012). *Hindu Mythology*, NewDelhi: Rupa Publication.

⁸ Griffith Rolf Thomas Hotchkin. (1895). *Ramayan of Valmiki*. London: E.J. Lazures and Company

⁹ Wilkins W. J.. (2012). *Hindu Mythology*, NewDelhi: Rupa Publication.

¹⁰ Ganguly, Kisori Mohan (tr). (2003), *The Mahabharatha Of Krishna Dvaipayana vyasa*. Sacred texts.com, ,

Anti-Sanctimonisation

In Vedic texts sculptors were called Rathakars. They were familiar to Vedic texts. In the Aryan culture chariots were took important role and there are very few mentions of other jobs. After the migration stopped and the habitats began, carpenters, potters and smiths appeared. These details can be seen in the Vedic texts. Metal, Bronze, Silver, Gold are some metals mentioned in the Vedic texts.

At the beginning of the Rig-veda period the black shadow of the Jaathi or caste was seen, later it was expanded. The sculptors were included into the Sudra system. The sculptors had regular contact with the fire and water and there was fear and anxiety about smiths and a fear of the ritualistic impurity also. Therefore the soil pot used in the Agnihotra or fire-ceremony was made by Aryans themselves. They thought, if it had been made by the potters it would be impure or Asurya.

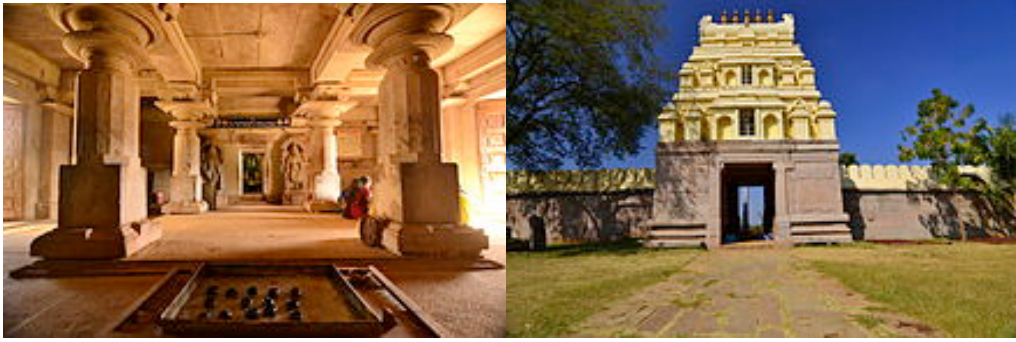
These anecdotes appeared in later Vedic texts, which tell many things. The localities were highly skilled persons. They were brown in color and faced the color discrimination, later which turned into their jobs also. The main reason behind the classification of the society was the lack of the skill in Aryans which were in sculptors. The categorization had the intention of establishing the social and political dominance of the Aryans(Kulke & Rothermund, 2002, p41)¹¹ 'In the name of purity in rituals Aryans demonized the sculptors and smiths were appeared to them as terrorizing persons'- says historian Burton Stein (2010, p46-67)¹²

The hegemonic culture had the antagonism with the sculptors, in every step of the knowledge construction the demonization, Anti-sancitmonisation and deculturalisation were taking place. The hegemonic culture internalized Buddha, but those sculptors who went beyond the lines of hegemony, have been externalized. The skills, the notion of equality, eagerness for the freedom have forced them towards demonization. Hegemonic culture considered them as 'intimate enemy'.

¹¹ Kulke, Hermann., & Rothermund, Dietmar. (2002). *A History of India*. London: Routledge Publication.

¹² Stein, Burton.(2010). *A History of India*. West Sussex: John Vile and sons publication

Kannada : Marginalisation Jakkana-Dankana



In the recent channel discussion in Karnataka panelists were fully engaged in the arguments and counter arguments of the existence of the Jakkana-Dankana, the two medieval sculptors. Historians, most of them belonged to the socially creamy layer communities, have suspected the very existence of the Jakkana-Dankana. They reiterated their stance that these are two imagined characters, nowhere have the historical background. Contradiction of these self acclaimed historians are they agree the myths and legends of the rulers and they disagree the myths and legends of the sculptors. They agree the diary of the foreign visitor and they disagree with the folk narrations.

While the Priest at Chennakeshava temple at Kaidala of Tumakuru in Karnataka was explaining about the sculptor Jakkana, The so called historians participating in the panel discussion in the channel were negating the very existence of Jakkana. They argued that there is no Jakkana; the character is itself an imaginary, cooked up story. There were more than historians, they are agenda setters. It seemed to be the conflict between the legend verses history. But the truth is looming somewhere else.

There are several legends regarding the existence of Jakkana. The legend of Kaidala, The legend of Jakkanapura, legend of Melukote is the few legends being told by the common people. Folklorists argue that the descendants of Jakkana are still living in Shivarapattana of Kolara district in Karnataka and are engaged in sculpting. They ask the question that without Jakkana how the legacy has been created. They draw the quotes from the Abhanga, a kind of song, in Marathi language.

But the position of the historians was total denial. Their argument is that, there is no information about Jakkana in inscriptions, or coins, or sculptures or temples which have been said to be chiseled by Jakkana himself. No information is available about Jakkana in any excavation. There are saying that the sculptures carved during 11 and 15 century were attributed to Jakkana, but how can Jakkana alone chisel the huge number of temples and sculptures in this period is the basic question of the historians.

How the legend of Jakkana can be removed and how the Jakkana, who is not in history, to be proved- is a complicated question. Folklore is the born oral history and the history is the constructed past. In folklore the pro people personality become the hero, but in history king and ministers become heroes. This is the point where written history and Oral history comes to face to face. The meanings implied by the oral history are many. Eulogy of kings become classical history and eulogy of common man become folk oral history.

Grand tradition and Small tradition

Probably it shows how scholars like Maxmuller and A.K. Ramanujan, whose view on India are entirely different. Maxmuller excavated classical, Vedic, Aryan and Grand tradition India, while A.K. Ramanujan explored Folk, Alternative, Small tradition India. To get the comprehensive outlook about India we have to combine the Vedic and Non-vedic India together.

In his book 'Speaking of Shiva', A.K. Ramanujan (1993, p16)¹³ gives an account of the Great tradition and Small tradition.

Hindu Religion		
Structure	Anti structure	
institution	Protest	
Public religion	Individual religion	
	Great tradition	Small Tradition
Texts	Vedas	Local Myths
Performance	Vedic rituals	Local sacrifice
Public association	Caste	cult
Mythology	Pan Indian gods	Local gods

The close observation of the Small traditions which have been having discourse with Great tradition is necessary of the hour. In connection with the narrations of sculptors Great traditions and Small traditions make layers of overlapping each other. The narration of sculptors is being seen both in Vedic texts-Local myths, Vedic rituals-local sacrifices, caste hierarchy-cults, pan Indian and local gods and goddesses. Therefore pure Vedic based or non Vedic based studies will be handicapped and incomprehensive.

The legend of Jakkana and its denial

In the book 'The Keshava temple at Belur'(Narasimhachar, 1982, p14-15)¹⁴, first appeared in 1911, has recorded some important informations:

'Kappe Chennigaraya god was thus called has its own tradition. The naval part of Chennigaraya idol was cavity where a frog seen was the traditional statement. Chennakeshava or beautiful keshava is the famous name for the idol. The background of the name is derieved thus-

Kaidala is a village in Tumakuru taluk in Karnataka. The former name of the village was Kridapura. That was the capital of the kingdom. This village is the birth place of Jakkana. Nriparaya was the king when Jakkana started his career. Then Jakkana left his village to work various palaces of various kings. He carved and chiseled great idols and sculptures. His son Dankana grown and he left his village in search of his father Jakkana. Thus Dankana comes to Belur where the installation ceremony of Chenna Keshava idol was going on. Dankana publically pointed out that there is a fault in the idol and such sculpture must not be worshipped. If the fault is proved I will chop off my right hand was the challenge by the sculptor Jakkana. To test the

¹³ Ramanujan A.K. (1993). *Speaking of Shiva*, New delhi: Penguin Books .

¹⁴ Narasimhachar R.. (1982) p 14-15. *The Keshava Temple at Belur*, New Delhi: Cosmo Publications.

fault the idol was smeared with the sandal paste, when it was dried only the naval portion was left wet. When tested the cavity in naval portion and frog and sand was found. Insulted by this incident Jakkana chops off his right hand. Co-incidentally, it is found that their relation is father and son relation. Jakkana got intuition to build Keshava temple in Kridapura, where he gets the lost hand while constructing the temple. Thus the village was named after Kaidala meaning getting back the hands.

In front of the Keshava temple of Kaidala there is statue, of one and half feet height, said to be the statue of Jakkana: Having a towel on his shoulder and khadga or dagger in his hand. But this tradition is not reliable. The architectures built in various periods in Mysore and other places are attributed to Jakkana. The existence of Jakkana is suspicious. No evidence is found so far regarding such a sculptor. But the names and details of other sculptors are available”

Even though he denied whole incident, R. Narasimhachar documented the tradition or legend in his book. But the ‘Hoysala Shilpa kale’ (Vasanthaxmi, 2008, p 53-54 & 74-75)¹⁵, a book published by the Shilpakala academy of Karnataka government dropped the tradition or legend. It gives the accounts of Kaidala and Chenna keshava statue, but the missing point is Jakkana. R. Narasimhachar’s account reads, ‘There is a statue on the entrance pillar of the Keshava temple at Kaidala is said to be the statue of Jakkana, who made the temple.’ But the author of the book ‘Hoysala Shilpa Kale’ excluded and marginalized the legends of Jakkana and included the legends in connection with the sculptures (Vasanthaxmi, 2008, 53-54 & 74-75)¹⁶ Thus the tradition of the marginalization continues as well.

Film, Novella and a Play

In 1964, the first color cinema in Kannada ‘Amarashilpi Jakkana’¹⁷ (Ranga, 1964) appeared on silver screen and it had the intention of revivalist nationalism. The whole background set was as in Hoysala period of eleventh century, it was the regime of Vishnuvardhana. An Ideal king and an ideal sculptor. B.S. Ranga created a new character called Manjari, a courtesan. Love with Manjari, changes in the life by the blessings of saint Ramanujan, the building of the chenna keshava temple, reunion with his family- are highlights of the cinema.

One of the English novellas in ‘Rayanna: the patriot and other novellas’ (Naikar Basavaraj, 2011)¹⁸ is on Jakkana. It describes the achievements of the sculptor. In this novella, Jakkana reads the horoscope of the newborn child of his own and suspects the illicit relationship of his own wife and also misapprehended that the child is not belong to him. He leaves his home and later he becomes a great sculptor. Basavaraj Naikar gives the touch of the previous life of Jakkana.

Chandrashekhara Kambara’s ‘Jakkana’,¹⁹ a Kannada play, begins with old woman screaming and begging in front of The Chenna keshava temple. On the other side the

¹⁵ Vasanthaxmi K.Dr.. (2008). *Hoysala Shilpakale*. Bangalore: Karnataka Shilpa Kala Akademy.

¹⁶ Vasanthaxmi K.Dr.. (2008). *Hoysala Shilpakale*. Bangalore: Karnataka Shilpa Kala Akademy.

¹⁷ Ranga B.S.(Dir.). (1964). *Amarashilpi Jakkana*. Chennai: Vikram productions.

¹⁸ Naikar Basavaraj. (2011). *Rayanna: The Portrait and other novellas*. New Delhi: Gnosis publishers.

¹⁹ Kambara Chandrashekhara (2011). *Jakkana Mattu Ithara Ekanka Natakagalu*. Bangalore: Ankitha Pusthaka.

chorus is talking about a boy. The second scene shows the Dankana touching the feet of Jakkana as a symbol of respect. Dankana introduces himself as he came from Kalinga country. Both Jakkana and Dankana want to be anonymous. `Jakkana says `Everyone has his own story of sorrow. My story is also like that. I have not told about me or king has not asked my whereabouts. Under the supervision of the queen the work is going on. She is also not interested in the personal information. Once she asked about my whereabouts, but I did not tell, she kept quiet.

In this play the highlight is about the anonymity of the sculptors. Anonymity – migration-and the hegemonic matters here are most complex. In Naikars novella, Vishnuvardhana sends a spy to watch the arrival of Jakkana. But Kambara’s king shows no interest to know the sculptor. `If the defected idol was installed, the king will be in the centre stage for the tales generating hereafter’ says a character in the plat, thus the designs of hegemony has been implied.

The important thing in this play is, how the politics grabs the personal life. In the novel Shanthala, K.V. Ayyar, and Pattamahishi Shanthala by C.K.Nagarajarao give the details of Jakkana. Though it seems to be the quarrel between father and Son, ultimately it leads nearer to power. The values, purity, honors of the art is decided by power. The Melukote legend says that, Jakkana took the challenge to complete the work of the entrance gate within a night. But his enemies blow the counc in the midnight and created the belief that it is already a day break. Jakkana stops at the sound and leaves the work unfinished. It seems to be the part of marginalization.

Tulu: Suppression

Shambhu Kalkuda and Beera Kalkuda



Folk ritual of Kalkuad and Kallurti



58 feet tall monolithic statue of Gommateshwara at Shravana Belagola

The story of Beera Kalkuda of Dakshina Kannada (Formerly known as Tulunadu) in Karnataka state, represents the process of the suppression. The story of Beera Kalkuda appears in a folk ballad or Paddana in Tulu language. Though there are many versions to this folk ballad, the primary motif is suppression and the agitation is secondary here.

There are three ballads called Kallurti, Posabhootha and Kalkude in A. Manors book 'PaDdanalu'. 'PaDdanagalu', a book by Kanaradi Vadiraja Bhatta gives some information about some texts. 'Beera Kalkuda', a PaDdana compiled in 'Tulu PaDdana Samputa', edited by Amrutha Someshwara has been selected here for in depth study.

There are three main parts in this story: in the first part Beera Kalkuda is travelling in search of his father Shambhu Kalkuda and he finds defects in the Gommata Statue of Shravana Belagola chiseled by his own father. Saddened by the defame Shambhu Kalkuda commits suicide. In the second part, Beera Kalkuda sculpts Gommata idol at Karkala in Dakshina Kannada. King, thinking such idol must not be chiseled elsewhere, orders to chop off his hand and leg. In the third part, Beera Kalkuda migrates to Venur and carves a Gommata using his single hand. Searching her brother Beera Kalkuda, Kaalamma reaches Venur and she is worried by the scene. Both of them vanish into air and began to haunt the king of Karkala.

In the stories of Kalkuda, the works of Gommata statues in Shravana Belagola, Karkala and Venur are mentioned. Scholars come to the conclusion that, the stories might have been taken place through generations. There are huge time gap between the installation of these Gommata statues. The anonymous poet of the Paddana shows much interest in how the Beera Kalkuda turned into the Daiva or Spirit.

''Karkala Gommateshwara charite ' by poet Chandrama (A.D. 1646) narrates how the king Bhairavarasa honored the sculptors. But there is no mention of the chief sculptor' points out Dr. Amritha Someshwara(1997, p64)²⁰. But the legend oriented 'Karkala Arasara Kaifiyattu' mentions the installation of the Gommata idol in Karkala. There is mention of the chopping off of right hand of the sculptor Chikkanna. The same matter is repeated in the Kaifiyattu by Ajila. (Gowda Kushalappa, 1983, p 111-117)²¹

²⁰ Amritha, Someshwara. (1997). *Tulu Paddana Smputa*. Hampi: Kannada University.

²¹ Gowda, Kushalappa, K. Dr. & Gowda, Chinnappa, K.,(Ed) (1983). *Dakshina Kannadada Kaifiyathugalu*. Ujire: SDM Pustaka Prakashanamale.

The story narrated in the ballad

The ballad²² (Someshwara,1997)., at the beginning, says `Acchavara Puttina Naadu Kellatta Marnadu` in Tulu, meaning Kellatta Marnadu is the land of sculptors. Iravadi and Shambhu Kalkuda are having five children including Beera Kalkuda and his sister Kamma. Each one has his own profession.

While Iravadi had been pregnant her husband Shambhu was invited to Shravana Belagola. Making all arrangements for the pregnant wife, Shambhu leaves for Belagola very next day with all his instruments. King says `there is no temple for god, no Basadi, have to work out Gommata statue, Seven Gods have to be installed in seven small temples. Elephant stone is needed. Shambhu gives his consent and goes to his assigned room. Waking up in the morning Shambhu evokes his god Guru Kaalamma or Kaali, and thus he finishes his work. `I came a long ago and I am returning to my hometown` says Shambhu to king. Shambhu was honored by giving endowments, cows for milk, shawls, beetle leaf, golden bangle and golden chain.

According to the Tulu folk ballad Gommata Statue at Shravana Belgola is by Shambhu Kalkuda. But according to the classical works it is by Aristanemi. Folk poet has not mentioned the names of king and minister of the Shravana belgola. Shambu Kalkuda has not been given any historical prominence. Whether he is actual or imagined character is not known. But the important thing here is the poets of kingly courts seen the Gommata through the eyes of kings and ministers but the folk poet observed it through the eyes of sculptor. This the dichotomy of the story.

In the second part of the story, at Kellatta Marnad the children of Iravadi were grown up. Beera and Kaalamma were twins. They were teased by friends as they don't have father. When Beera asked his mother, she says `your father went to Belagola for work`. Beera decides to meet his father and to see his work. Very next day he leaves to Belagola. The father was leaving from Belagola as vice versa is the son.

Son insisted the father to see the work and found defect in the Gommata Statue. `You born just yesterday and you point out the defect in my work? If the king came to know this, he will throw me to the foot of elephant and would beat me using horse stick` uttering these words, Shambhu took out the knife and stabbed himself.

The words of shambhu is important here: `If the king came to know this, he will throw me to the foot of elephant and would beat me using horse stick`. The Ruler who gives donations, can also chop off the hands of the sculptor. Sculptor decides that, it is better to commit suicide than the suppression of the Ruler. The King could grace and disgrace his subject.

Son Beera Kalkuda comes to Tulunaadu. The king of Karkala, Bhairavarasa sends him invitation to build temples and Gommata Statue. After having finished the work, Beera asks wages for his work. King asks him to come next morning. The next day the king orders the servants to put golden bangle to his right hand and chop off the left. And put the golden ornament to his left leg and chop off the right. Thus the king

²² Someshwara, Amritha, (1997). *Tulu Paddana Smputa*. Hampi: Kannada University.

of Karkala respected the great sculptor called Beera! Beera vows not to drink a single drop of water in such a kingdom and returns to his native place.

Thimmanaajila, the king of Venur invites Beera to build a Jain temple and Gommata Statue. Using single hand and single leg, Beera did the assignment of the king. On the other hand Kamma tells her mother to see her brother Beera. Making delicious foods for brother, she leaves, wanders and arrives at Venur. On the way she got the tragic news about her brother. She comes to her brother and asks `what happened to your hands and legs?`. Beera replies `It is not for theft, not for lying, but for my hard work`.

Till this point, the story is about the land or Jogo, here after the story is about the sky or Mayo. One is about this world and another one is the other. Kamma vows that, `We are suppressed in this world and will take revenge from the next world`. Thus they disappear and arrives at Karkala in the illusionary form and lit the torch and set the fire to castle of the karkala, fire captures the town. The black magician Balyaya seizes the spirits promising all kind of rituals or Nema.

The present Paddana gives many accounts on this: the competitions between the father and son, Affection of brother and sister, the husband leaving wife, Father and son challenge, King and sculptor relation. Suppression and revenge, Jogo and Mayo - are binary opposition appearing in the Paddana.

They are suppressed, victimized: The reason behind the suicide of Shambhu Kalkuda is fear of the ruler, Beera lost his leg and hand due to the hegemony. Even though the level of the suppression is high, the sculptor did not lose his temper. Sculptor did not have the voice against it until and unless the arrival of sister Kamma. Both, brother and sister, vanished into Mayo and took revenge against the ruler. Suppressed here is man and the rebellion is woman. She inspires her brother to take revenge.

`When they turn into Mayo, sister become dominating character to order her brother to engage in unlimited activities of revenge has been clear in the parts of Paddana. When they turn from Jogo into Mayo, the transition of the exchange of the power is an important matter` (Navada, 1987, p 170)²³

The word Acchava and Acchavadi is appeared in the Paddana . Acchava is the Tulu form of the word Acharya in Sanskrit. The other form appearing in Malayalam is Thacchan means sculptor. (The Beeru or Beera Kalkuda Paddana was collected by Amritha someshwara from Late kutty Nalike, Polya, Puttur, Dakshina Kannada, 68 years, Nalike Community, Education Nil. The date of the Paddana collection is 30/10/1975. Joga = appearing form, Mayo= Non appearing form.)

Folk scholar Dr. Amritha someshwara wrote a Kannada Yakshagana plot based on the Tulu Paddana which he had collected. In the introduction Someshwara wrote, `Most of the People who appreciate the gala of the sculptures forgot the sculptor. People of the Tulunaadu respect the Gommata sculptor, though not as the sculptor, but as the Daiva or Spirit; they worship. The Yakshagana plot of the *Tulunaadu Kalkuda* has

²³ Navada A.V. & Subhaschandra (Tr). (1987). *Tuluva Darshana* by Peter J. Claus. Kundapura: Prakashana.

been added with some historical events and also added the mythical story of Vishwaoopa. Historical gap between the makings of the three Gommata Statue is so wide. The present plot is an evidence of the unity of time as it has synchronized the three different periods. It is possible that the different sculptors of Kellatta Marnadu sculpted in different periods of time. The plot should not be seen in pure historical perspective, it must be observed in the dramatic aesthetic sense. Moreover it is not the job of the Yakshagana art form to report the pure realistic narrations' (Someshwara, 1979)²⁴. as he agreed, Amritha Someshwara's Yakshagana plot is the blend of the myth and folk tales facing the historical facts.

The myth presented in the Yakshagana Prasanga or plot by Amritha Someshwara reads like this: when Guru Brihaspathi came to court of Indra and Indra did not paid respect to him. Thus angry Guru left the heaven. Indra, without giving any hints to demons, brings Vishwaroopa and makes him a Guru. Vishwaroopa had three faces: One for vedic chanting, another for Surapaana or drinking and third for other things. Vishwaroopa is a Guru on agreement, so he expected full freedom and won't tolerate the pompous. Indra agrees to these conditions. According to this myth Vishwaroopa is a demon. The other demons came to him and requested to share the wealth of gods. Indra questions, Guru says to him all are equal. Vishwaroopa taking drinks, tries to pursue Indra's court dancer Rambhe, She denies. Indra kills Vishwaroopa. According to the Yakshagana plot the same Vishwaroopa born as sculptors on the earth.

The minister and military head in the Ganga dynasty was Chavundaraya. His mother had a dream to have a giant Gommata, to fulfill the dream of his mother he gives consent to Shambhu. Remaining plot runs as usual in the Paddana. But some changes appeared here are: Padmaji, Daughter of Bhairavarasa, a newly added character, fell love in with Beera. But he denies. She went to Bhairavarasa and tells that Beera tried molestation and escaped from. Thus Bhairavarasa orders to chop off his leg and hand. Amritha someshwara also transformed the same plot into a Tulu play (Someshwara, 1989).²⁵

According to another legend recorded by Milli Batra, 'Ganga king Rachamallas minister Chamundaraya installed the Gommata Statue. His Mother's dream was to have the darshan of Gommata at Podanpura. They began journey. On the way Chamundaraya had a dream at Shravana Belagola, he calls sculptor Aristanemi to install Gommata shilpa. Involving local sculptors he works for twelve years and complete the task'(Batra, 2014)²⁶. Upon this theme a novel called 'Mahashilpi' was written by H.B. Jvalanayya. Leading this novel a black and white cinema 'Mahashilpi'(Doreswami, 1966)²⁷ was appeared and the story includes the adventurous work of the sculptor.

Southern story of the Shravana Belagola emphasizes on sculptor, whereas northern legend of the same stresses on the minister. Here the history and narration comes to face to face, kicks off for the new discourse.

²⁴ Someshwara, Amritha . (1979). *Amara Shilpi Beera Kalkuda* . Kotekar : Prakriti Prakashana.

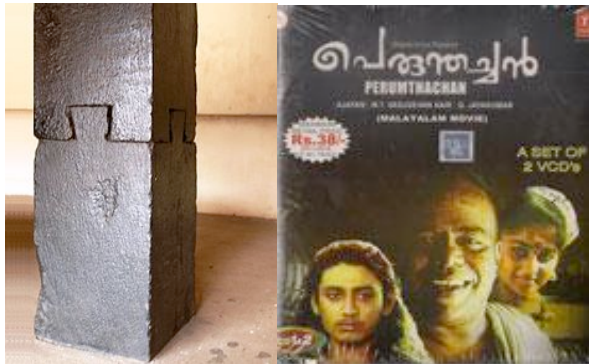
²⁵ Someshwara, Amritha. (1989). *Tulunada Kalkude*. Kotekar: Prakriti Prakashana

²⁶ Batra, Milli. (2014). *Shravana Belagola : An abode of peace*. New Delhi: Ahimasa Foundation
www.jainsamaj.org,

²⁷ Doreswami, H.G.,(Dir). (1966). *Mahashilpi*. Bangalore: Padma productions

Malayalam: Devaluation

Raman-Kannan Perunthacchan



The stone chiseled by Perunthacchan and The Cinema

Perunthacchan was a great sculptor. Carpenters were called as Thacchan in ancient Kerala state. Aithiyamaala²⁸ is a collection of legends published in Malayalam language by Kottarattil Shangunni. According to this legend, great sculptor Raman Perunthacchan is born to Vararuchi, a Brahmin and basket weaver belong to lower community. She hails from a village called Thrithala. After having marriage, both of them set out for a long journey, on the way she become pregnant for many times, give birth to children. Each and everytime Vararuchi asks whether the child has the mouth, she says 'yes'. Then he tells to leave the child there itself. If the child given mouth, god will also give food is the belief of Vararuchi.

Thus they left twelve children on the way and various community people took them to nurture. They all called like 'Parayi petta Pandrandu makkal' means the twelve children born to parayi or low caste women. Elder son is Agnihotri or fireworshipper, Pakkanar or basket weaver, Peruntacchan or great sculptor, Naranattu Branthan or great thinker people consider him a mad, Vayilla kunnilappan or a duff – so on.

Peruntacchan was adopted by the carpenters and become expert in wood art and architecture. He reads the books on sculpture. Builds temples, palaces. People believe that he is the incarnation of the god sculptor. He had a highly talented child. He become much more famous than his father. Father was so jealous about his son. According to Aithiyamaala, Father Peruntacchan kills his own son by dropping chisel while working the temple roof as if it seems to be the chisel fell down accidentally. It sees a tragic end. It narrates the jealousy of the father and son. Peruntacchan complex is father's control over a son. (Kottarattil, 2004, . Chapter 6)²⁹

According to another version, there was no jealousy or fury about his son. There is another reason. Raman Perunthacchan engaged in carving the goddess sculpture in a palace. The part of the face was yet to be completed. The queen was peeping, the work of Perunthacchan, through the doors. At last he took the model of queen for goddess and completed the work. When king went outside, queen and peruntacchan had the love. After the returing of the king the installation work of the goddess was

²⁸ Kottarattil, Shankunni. (2004). *Aithiyamaala Volume 1*. Kottayam

²⁹ Kottarattil, Shankunni. (2004). *Aithiyamaala Volume 1*. Kottayam : Current books

done. Queen gave birth to girl child. Many years later, Perunthacchan's own son Kannan loves that girl. Perunthacchan was in dilemma. 'Could my own daughter be loved by my own son?' - So Raman Perunthacchan decides to kill his own genius son Kannan, says the legend. The first legend tells the professional jealousy and the second one about the opposition to the marriage of a brother and sister.

Legend tells about various achievements of Perunthacchan. He was well established in sculpture and architecture. He studied the old scriptures and acquired the knowledge, was Chief sculptor of various temples and palaces. People believed him as the incarnation of Vishwakarma. He builds a lake which has the multi dimensional form. The temples attributed to him are Shiva temple of Uliyannoor and The temple at Valluvanadu. Koothambalam in Chenannur Mahadevar temple in Alappuzha is special to be mentioned. The art performance or Koothambalam has a special feature that if the all the lamps were lit there will no shadow of the performer be seen.

Perunthacchan is the source of inspiration to many poets and story writers in Malayalam. Poet G Shankara kurup (Kurup, 2012, p91-96)³⁰ wrote a dramatic monologue poem on Perunthacchan.

The poem reveals the interior of a sin consciousness filled protagonist called Perunthacchan. The jealousy caused the tragic end of his son. Both the father and son are equal in architectural and sculptural sublime. Raman invented a wooden doll and installed on a bridge. While a commuter walks towards the middle of the bridge, the wooden doll moves upwards and spit water upon the commuter's face. People of the village enjoyed this. Kannan invented another doll and fixed beside water spitting doll. Both dolls move upwards while the commuter walks towards the middle of the bridge. While the former doll yet to spit, the latter doll thrash at its face and makes the water fall again into the river. This made Perunthacchan feel total upset. Jealousy increased. Though the responsibility of the temple work came to him, people tell him to have a consultation with his son. Perunthacchan drops the chisel at his son- the all incidents were narrated in monologue with a flash back method.

Based on the second version the Perunthacchan³¹(Ajayan, 1991) legend, M.T. Vasudevan Nair wrote a Cinema script, which become a popular film in Kerala.

As in cinema, Raman Perunthacchan was born to the Upper caste male and lower caste female. Neither upper caste nor the lower embraced him. Though he learned the Veda, he does not belong to the Upper caste. He agreed to build a temple and statue to his friend Namboodiri. Raman was attracted by the girl in that family. But hesitates to progress. He used the face as model for his Goddess statue. Perunthacchan uplift the moral values. But his son Kannan differs from him. He is so modern and self centered. Perunthacchan consider him as a threat. Years later, Son comes to the same house and fell in love with a girl in the house. Kannan did not have any class consciousness. It makes Namboodiri sleepless. Perunthacchan comes to oversee the temple works. When he concludes that son cannot be controlled he drops the chisel and kills him. Vasudevan Nair narrated Perunthacchan as a great person with high values and traditional person, but the son is rebellious and questioning the social hierarchy, he loves the daughter of Namboodiri and lost his life.

³⁰ Kurup, G., Shankar. (2012) *Master Carpenter*. In George KM and AKR (Tr). The Oxford Anthology of Modern Indian Poetry. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

³¹ Ajayan. (1991). *Perunthacchan*. Thiruvananthapuram: Bhaavachithra Productions.

Here Raman Perunthacchan is not only the sculptor but also a great scholar, he follows Brahmakarma. But son mocks at him. To claim the achievements of Peruntachhan, It is possible to cook up a story of 'Brahmin father and Carpenter Guardian', says Kannan. He points out at the devaluation of the character and it is the agenda of the upper claste to claim the others achievement.

M.T. Vasudevan Nair depicts the clash of two generation. Perunthacchan was working on Swayamvara Durga statue. He sees Bhargavi, the queen. Whenever he chisels her face appears before him. When she nears to him, he controls himself. But his boyhood days friend Namboodiri suspects him. Perunthacchan leaves the house.

Years later, Son of Perunthacchan, Kannan, comes to the same house to build the Saraswathi Mantapam or divine porch. The incidents were repeated. Queen's daughter comes nearer and Kannan loves her. It becomes a controversy. Kannan rejects the words of his own father. To save his values Raman kills his son Kannan. The legend, the poem, the cinema- all are revolving round the single theme -that is **devaluation**. It is possible to cook up a story of 'Brahmin father and Carpenter Guardian' says Kannan. It is the way of devaluation. Talent is claimed by the hegemony. All these process happens with the consent of the person. Manufacturing the consent is an important thing in this process. It compels to adopt the narrations, and hegemony manufactures the knowledge according to them. Knowledge and consent were simultaneously produced.

In Indian history, knowledge was produced to defend the shameful practices of un-touchability. Theories were woven to deny the freedom to women. We and other were created; Otherisation was justified in several texts.

Conclusion

Narratives relating to the sculptors in Vedic texts and Puranic texts are entirely different. Major changes in the social strata take place when transcending to the Puranic age from Vedic age. Theory and practice or knowledge and work might had been deviated.

Vedic Mantra or hymns, particularly in Rig-Veda and AtharVeda, hail and invoke the Chief sculptor a major god, but in Puranas he becomes a demon. The process of demonization occurred due to the power ambition and hegemony. This ambition caused Otherisation and Demonization. To retain the power one has to exclude from the power sharing. Through the demonization these sculptors were turned into intimate enemies, they have been othered, have been excluded.

Earlier sculptors worshipped Brahma and later they turned into worshipper of Kaali. It might be the befitting reply to the hegemonic designs of demonization.. So, the word culture in India is mostly hegemonic in nature and it is used to discriminate and exclude the other equal cultures terming lower cultures. The vested culture in India is also having the vestiges of Bali-Ahuthi-Thrpana as representing the cruelty and the violence.

In the puranic age, the sculptor narratives took the way of demonization. The skills of the sculptors become the curse to them. The Puranas narrate how they have been demonized by the hegemonic power.

Historical Narrations have blossomed under the hegemonic designs and it has its own agenda. The gods in Vedic texts become demons in Puranic texts show the shift in the social order and hierarchy system based upon the accumulation of the power and manufacturing of the knowledge. Demonization is the part of otherisation. Creator of the world becomes the destroyer of the world, means Brahma becomes Shiva due to the pressure of the cultural hegemony. In this process, Softness to hardness, Creator to Destroyer and Men to Women binary can be observed. Vishwaroopa's motto was that everything must be shared: Gods and Demons are eligible for the Havis. it is the cry of the right to food to all in ancient times, social and cultural equality.

Harppan Culture is basically the culture of the sculptors and later the invasion of the Aryans everything was applied with the 'theory of impurity' or 'Apavithra Siddantha'. In this way sculptors were victims of ethnical discrimination. Demonization, Otherisation, Anti Sanctimonisation, De-culturisation were package of the hegemony to control the sculptors in ancient times. Case study of Jakkana proves the continuation of the marginalization of oral history and the question is being raised as is the falsification is ultimate?

Hegemony decides the value of art, sacredness, prize and honour, according to which the rules change, according to which grace and disgrace would be decided. In oral history common people are heroes and written history the kings. The Tulu oral tradition considers Shambhu Kalkuda as the hero and the rulers as villain. Jogo and Mayo are the two important concepts. Jogo or the worldly is for kings and Mayo or the other worldly is for common people; they can be suppressed in Jogo but cannot be resisted in Mayo. 'Best belongs to us', is seem to be the agenda of the hegemony, can be seen in the legend of Perunthacchan. So Kings rule the history and the Sculptor live the legend.

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank my colleagues at the department of Post Graduation Studies in Kannada, Government College Kasaragod, for their support.

Thanks also to Devu Pattar who initially encouraged me to take the task of writing on the oral history of South Indian sculptors. I must acknowledge my sincere thanks to Hemalatha-Divakara, Soumya-Sriharsha K.S., Swathi-Rajesh, Amritha-Yogesh, B.Sadashiva, Lokesh MB, Sajesh, Shibu, Aravind, Ramdas, Ashok Kumar Chavla, Hemlata Joshi, Mounesh, Rathan, Raviraja, Palakshamitra, Yogesh and Kamalaksha, without them I could not have completed this work.

I owe Profound thanks for encouragement my partner Divya B. Hosangadi and mother Geetha BM for their encouragement.

Contact email: bk.hosangadi@gmail.com
bm.hosangadi@gmail.com