

## Shadanga: An Analytical Study of the Pallava Sculptures of Mahabalipuram

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### Abstract

“The Vishnudharmottara declares the rules for painting as valid also for sculpture, which either may be hollow or massive (Ch. 43)”

Tamil Nadu is known as land of culture and traditional enthusiasm particularly through its conventional sculptures of Mahabalipuram. The Sculptures are enhance with the depiction of mythological and spiritual themes, the art gets life through its fundamentals and stands complete as a creation by the creature ability of the creator. during this materialistic world, an art to return come in purest form an creative person should invest himself completely and put in his maximum dedication and concentration. Artist follows certain rules and regulations to convey the message of his art work to the viewers. So I have discussed Shadanga. It's speaks concerning the principles of creation of artwork. (Six limbus of art). A good work of Art should have incorporated the six essential elements described by shadanga which fails to incorporate the six limbus of shadanga is considered to be a fruitless, in completed and meaningless creation. This paper gives knowledge about manifestation of sculpture which are directly and indirectly based on the six limbs of Indian art. I have figured out the main characteristics of the pallava art which will help us understand these more in detail.

**Keywords:** Pallava Sculptures; Shadanda; South Indian art

### Introduction

Shadanga is the most prominent term of the ancient art tradition of India the word shadanga consist of two meaning words. One is “**Sad**” which means six and “**anga**” which means part.

The word shadanga is very clearly elaborated in the legend Vishnudharmottara is a script based on the Hindu Practices, and the mythology of lord Vishnu along with it, the book list a set of regulations and references for various fields of art like music, drama, literature, architecture, Sculpture, and painting.

The book is detailed and big so that it was compiled with so many contents separately put into three parts of the purana. The Vishnudharmottara is

divided into the three parts. The third part deals with the practicality and all aspects of the art performance. These references can be found in the chapter "CHITHRASUTHRA".

Chapter one of the third part deals with the methods of painting and techniques making, and the self-completed arts. Chapter 35-43 talks about the different branches' process and theories on Indian art. The book not only talks about the religious aspects but also deals with secular aspects.

Colour and form are used to represent the things seen and imagined by an artist. It gives immense joy for an artist when his representation is complete and effective.

"RupaBhedaPramananiBhavLavanyaYojnam  
SadrashyamVarinka-Bhangaitichitrashadegakan"

Rupa-bheda (variation of form), Pramana (proportion), Bhava (depiction of emotion), Lavanya-yojana (infusion of grace), Sadrisy (likeness) and Varnika-bhanga- (mixing of colours).

### ***Rupa-bheda***

Rupa means form and Bheda means the variation in form. It is the individualities in living and non-living things. Rupabheda is basically a knowledge of appearances, the objects are classified as living and non-living things.

Living things are divided into three categories

- Uttama- All the superior characters of arts God, goddesses and king
- Madhyama - all the human beings
- Adhama - includes demons, disgusting and ugly looking characters.

Non-living refers to the object like mountains, clouds, trees, etc., that are included in the background of an artwork.

Rupabheda is a deep and detailed exploration of the variation and diversity in everything.

Rupabheda consists of special characteristics of natural and manmade things. It is the difference in appearance among many types of men, women nature and other subjects of a painting.

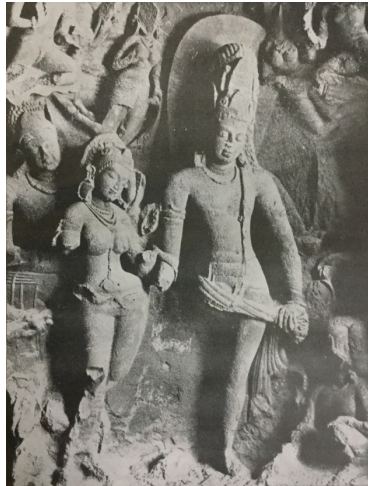
We live with our form from our birth till our day of death. We see through our five senses and feel with our mind. The forms which our senses feel and perceive are endless and varied. Rupabheda means the analysis and synthesis of the forms given to us, whenever we look at any object, we see

only its external shape, size, color and structure. To know the object in deep detail, with our five senses and mind.



**Fig. 1 : Arjuna's penance**

**Fig.1**, the artist create different form of human figure in this sculpture, on the lower level to the left, a group of yogis have gathered around little temple. One of the them sits at the small temple door in yoga posture with two others a little distance away, near the top of cleft, also to the left, the skeletal Bhagiratha stands on one leg in the pillar like rigidity with the fingers of both hands interlocked above his head. The gigantic four armed lord Shiva stands before him. With Ganas accompany him. The remainder of the rock face is covered with different forms of life: divine, titan, human and animal forms all to be perfectly differentiated and show in truly typical attitudes of movement or repose.



**Fig. 1(b): Himavan giving away Parvati in marriage to Siva, Elephanta Caves**

**Fig.1(b)**,The marvellous carvings sculpture. This panel showing the marriage of Siva as Kalyanasundara in his form as bridegroom, Siva is shown holding the hand of Parvati in wedlock, and just find Himavan and Mena, in human form, presenting their daughter in marriage to Siva. The dignity of great sculpture. Showing different age group of human forms.

### *Pramana*

A sculpture/painting should maintain a sense of harmony, balance, and sense of proportion within itself, with relation to the other figures and also with the painting as a whole to be transferred to the viewers.

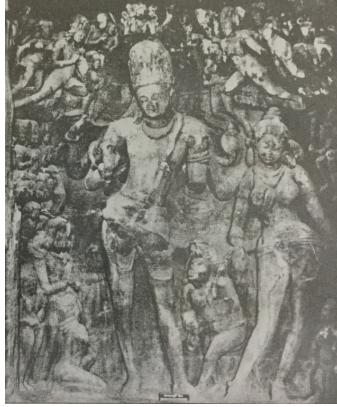
The Indian artist gave more attention to proportion than measurement. The proportion were often symbolic and suggestive measurement is to understand the important and less important things or subject of the artwork.

**Fig.2(a)**, In the sculpture of the fifth incarnation of lord Vishnu, his size is monumental he won the three worlds with his three feet, in order to balance himself as he measure the two worlds with his legs, one foot our haven, second on the earth and finally he places his third foot on demon Bali's head to destroy his arrogance, in the sculpture, since he is the winner of the three world, he is shown gigantic in size for and the rest of the figures smaller in size

**Fig.2(b)**, The sculpture representing Siva and Gangadhara, representation of a mermaid like figure for the river. The three streams of Ganga, as she flows in heaven, on earth and in the nether world , here lord Siva is shown Gigantic in size at the same time Parvati also represent equal importance and rest of the figures in smaller size sculptures in this panel. Siva is standing *Thribanga* pose.



**Fig. 2(a) : Thiruvikrama**



**Fig. 2(b) : Ganga descending on Siva's locks, Elephanta Caves**

### *Bhava*

Bhava is a states of mind. It is the emotion, feeling, mood, state of mind and also the emotional energy created through the sculpture. The expressions of the character/ subject in an artwork fulfil the meaning of the sculpture and the concept or the story of the artwork.

The Natyasastra (performance art) deals only eight rasas with eight corresponding bhavas (which basically consists of drawing out the inner world of the subject. In a sculpture or painting, it takes many factors combination stunningly stand to articulate the bhava or express the inner feelings of the characters. The bhava is brought out through eyes, through facial expressions, gestures by hands and limbs, symbols, the surrounding nature, animals, birds and other human figures. Even the rocks, water sources and plants help in bringing out the bhava in a narrative painting. The depiction of the dramatic impact and reactions of the characters from frame to frame except special skills.

Colour plays a significant role because the medium of painting. The emotions and moods are expressed through manipulating colors, lines, light and dark. The imagination and skills of the artist discover their limitations here.

**Fig.3,** A large panel Mahisasuramardini It shows the most famous exploit of the unconquerable goddess in the mardini of the Buffalo demon thus rescuing the world from his repression. The brave young warrior goddess, astride on the fierce lion mount, attacks the sharp looking buffalo demon, much bigger than herself and stronger than all the gods. Within the sense the outcome of the battle hangs within the balance. The demon (mahisan) stands ready to strike with his great iron club, as he eyes his opponent

waiting for the opportunity moment. It seems an uneven battle with the slender diminutive goddess playfully shooting her arrows over the mahisan's head and not even looking at him as she advances with drawn sword and other weapons in her eight arms. Solely the intensiveness of her mount and also the assured attitude of her attendants, who.e the demon's followers cringe and flee indicate the outcome of the battle. With discreet restraint the artist shows the superiority of the courage and trust in higher power as she looks upwards, over cunning and brute strength.



**Fig. 3(a) : Mahisasuramardini**

**Fig:3(b)** Siva is fighter. In the chariot which is the earth on wheels composed of sun and moon, the horses yoked to biting the vedas controlled by charioteer who is Brahma himself. In the hand of Siva is the mighty bow pinaka, composed of huge mountain meru with vasuki as the bowstring, the arrow being Vishnu himself. With this formidable equipment Siva is presenting as the victor of Tripura, the Asura who were a menace to the world.



**Fig. 3(b) : Tripurantaka- Ellora Caves**

### *Lavanya - Yojanam*

It is the infusion of grace. It is the planning of an artist to create a beautiful and graceful environment, in addition to the beauty of the subject/character. Emotional and lyrically depict a beautiful Sculpture is the creation of grace, beauty, charm and tenderness, and illuminating the sculpture to the viewers. It aims at uplifting the mood of the figures, the viewers and the surroundings. It is very important for every sculpture the same way as bhava. While bhava is the expression of inner beauty, lavanya yojana is the making of the outer beauty.

Arjuna ratha at the ground floor of three of its sides has panels and various figures are adorning these niches. The figures possess some of the simplest and most refined. There are five niches on all side, of every side two niches at extreme are decorated with dvarapalas.

In central niches on the northern side a male figure is shown with attendant. The male figure has four hands. Niches on the left includes a couple. (Fig: 4a)



**Fig. 4(a) : Northern side**



**Fig. 4(b) : Eastern side**



**Fig. 4(c) : Southern side**

In central niches on the eastern side shows a male rider over an elephant. Two ladies are found on adjacent niches, while a bearded man and child is shown on another niches, The ladies are have praised for their beauty and charm by visitors alike. One dvarapala holding bow and bearing a thread made of human skull while the other is standing with on the thigh and another hand raised in adoration. (Fig: 4b)

In central niches on Southern side Shiva as Vrashbhantaka-murthi, leaning on his bull, on either side of the niches are shown two couples.(Fig: 4c)

**Fig:4(d)** In the panel from Deogarh representing Naranaarayana, where Vishnu, in the guise of sage, is expounding the highest truth, the atmosphere of the tapovanam is vividly presented by snake, the deadliest receptacle and harmless pair of deer, and also by the tiger, with terrible teeth, ordinarily a great source of fear but can't here excite any. So it's creating the beauty of this panel.



**Fig. 4(d) : Naranarayana, Deogarh**

### *Sadrashya*

It is about how faithful a picture is to the original or similarity in the form and ideas.

It is to extend a resemblance to the objects of the world around and the humans. Nature always extended to the details, but likeness are not common thing in nature.

Whether the identity is imaginary or true, the painter/artist should be recognised. It enhances the character of any particular or individual and create him complete by himself.





**Fig. 5 : Ardhanari**



**Fig. 5(b) : Dakshinamurti**

If the lord Shiva is sculpted it should be look like Shiva not human or other. The sculptures of the Dharma-ratha at Mahabalipuram, the shrine walls are decorated good illustrations.

The Ardhanari (Fig.5a) a form of Shiva half a male half female (Siva-Parvathi) sculpture, in particularly, is composed of a balanced male and female body structure. In this sculpture, masculinity is represented through the twist in the brows and the holding of the hands, while the feminist is represented by the subtle raise of Uma's hips. This has magnified the artistry and beauty of the sculpture.

Fig.5(b) Siva as a teacher for the sage themselves, seated under the large spreading banyan tree as Dakshinamurti showing the innocent deer and venomous serpent together

### ***Varnik-Banga***

Varnika-Bhanga has been placed in the last of limbs of Indian painting. It's talk about colour and expertise of Colour scheme. Colour scheme is enlisted as a communicative aspect of paintings. So apart from other artistic manners, Colours also work as an interpreter of the painting. Artist should have knowledge about colour scheme of particular subject matter, colour has the capacity to influence human perception, manner and their emotions deeply. In people of India they are more affection of the colours and motifs are so

deeply belief in arts. The Hue play in our day to day life and correlated with certain feelings and emotions of entire life. For example, Red is assigned with furious and yellow with heroic, white colour with comic, blue and black are associated with erotic and terrible.

The ultimate purpose of the act of painting seems to be the worship of an image which is the incarnate of all auspicious elements and contains proper measurements and proportions (Sivaramamurti-1970).

We don't have a more and larger size of Pallava painting but at a same time get some evidence and Splendid example of the pallava phase of painting Traces of line and colour in cave temples, as at Mamandur, indicate how great was this last period of painting.



**Fig. 6(a): Devi, Pallav, Panamalai**    **Fig. 6(b): Padmapani - Ajanta**

In the structural Pallava temples at panamalai and Kanchipuram there are other fragments which give us a glimpse of the development of painting a few decades later.

**Fig:6(a)**, The beautiful goddess, with a crown on her head and an umbrella held over her, from panamalai, is Parvati watching the dance of her lord, Siva . She stands gracefully with one leg bent in exactly the same manner as the princess is represented in sculpture of 2nd century at Amaravati and vakataka painting of the 5th century at Ajanta. This favourite pose continues even into later times.

**Fig:6(b)**, In the given painting of padmapani from Ajanta cave no. 1, so many forms are visible. Padmapani a form of Buddha, holding a blue lily, showcased like a youthful king with luxury and charm, standing along with the princess, attendants, musicians, kinnaras animals like monkeys and birds. In Background with the architectural scene, trees and plants. And figures with different colour complexions, poses and performing actions.

### Conclusion

On the basis of the above study it can be concluded, six limbs of art have been critically analysed on the basis of depiction of the Pallava art. The pallava sculpture has artistic interpretation, elements like form, shape and textures are generally recognised. It is vital to form of use those components, so its creation becomes balanced, fascinating, and systematic. These six limbs have a important place in art and aesthetics because these increase beauty, grace and quality of artefacts which is the basic requirement of an object. Artist hasn't need any new ideas and principles such principles had already been evolved and perfected. All these elements needn't to be used at an equivalent time, creative person has got to be chosen per his composition.

Now a day's young fashionable creative person and inventive painters are becoming references from western master painting and their techniques, however it's not required to follow them, abundant enough references we've in our ancient legends Vishnudharmottara urana, we tend to should discover details from our ancients creations Vishnudharmottara has enough details what we would have liked for art works. Not just for painting, sculpture additionally any form of art and every one creation. Analysis of principles and elements, changes and amendments of the paintings take place time to time. Due to action and reaction new possibilities take birth. Evolution of civilisation and culture continue and new art forms still move and new dimensions were established.

### Works Cited

- Fig.1(a) *Arjuna's Penance*- Mahabalipuram.  
 Fig.1(b) *Himavan giving away Parvati in marriage to Siva*, 6th century A.D., Elephanta Caves, Western India.  
 Fig. 2 (a) *Thiruvikrama*, Mahabalipuram.  
 Fig. 2(b) *Ganga descending on Siva's locks*, 6th century A.D., Elephanta Caves, Western India.

Fig. 3 *Mahisasuramardini*, Mahabalipuram.

Fig. 3 (b), *Tripurantaka*, 8th century A.D., Ellora.

Fig. 4 (a), (b), (c), *Arjuna's Ratha*, Mahabalipuram.

Fig. 4 (d), *Naranarayana, Gupta* 5th century A.D., Deogarh, Uttar Pradesh

Fig. 5 *Ardhanari*, Dharmaraja Ratha, Mahabalipuram.

Fig. 5 (b), *Dahinamurti*, 8th century A.D., Kaveripakkam, South India

Fig. 6 (a) *Devi, Pallava*, Panamalai

Fig. 6 (b) *Padmapani, Ajanta Cave no. 1*- [www.indatales.com](http://www.indatales.com)

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