

Iconographical Approach in the Art of Hinduism: A Study of Pranāmī Temple at Malkā Hāns

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Abstract

This study comprises on the identification and documentation of inter cultural influences within the aesthetical manifestation of wall painting (frescoes). Mostly frescos has vanished their painterly qualities but still their remaining give a glimpses of aesthetic appeal. Without understanding the visual conception of frescoes at Parnāmī Temple, it is difficult to understand its philosophical approach of reality. The significance of frescoes in Hinduism can be appraised by religious mythology. Such indistinguishable phenomenon has been ensued in the religious architectural structure of Pranāmī Temple at Malkā Hāns during the period of subcontinent. Visual syntax plays an integral part in the architecture of Pranāmī Temple. The dynamic characterization of frescos is the evidence that this temple is prominent among its devotees and shows their psychological approach towards religious emotions of artists.

Keywords: *Mythology, Absolute Reality, dharmā, Māyā, Metaphysical, Mokshā, chitra-shālās.*

Introduction

This article endeavors to identify inter cultural inspirations and study of aesthetical expression of wall painting (frescoes) within architectural assertiveness of Pranāmī Temple, exists in Malkā Hāns, a small town near Pākattan. This intercultural exchange can be seen in the fables of French author Jean de La Fontaine. "He acknowledged having inspired from the

Indian *Bidpai* published in 1644. Imām Baksh̄ Lahorī illustrated the fables in 1840, in a late Mughal style. The 17th century is considered as intercultural interactions were the first beginnings for mutual cultural amelioration of Europe in subcontinent particularly in the art of painting.”¹

During the course of the history, the significance of frescoes in Hinduism can be evaluated by religious mythology as *Vishnudharmottara* painting is the most implausible of all art creations and endowments *dharmā*, *arthā* and *karmā* the three objectives of life in Hinduism. As a matter of fact, the pictorial essentials are considered to be responsible for a dynamic ground for visual practices within religious theological ideology. The actions of gods and human beings are accompanying together in a continuum in which time is perceived as a cyclic system. According to the Hindu metaphysical view point, “the universe is destroyed by fire and is dissolved into the cosmic ocean out of which a new universe is created and another cosmic era begins. A single cycle of creation to destruction is sometimes described as one day of Brahma, the active creator-god of the universe. On the human time-scale, the blinking of an eyelid of the god Vishnu may encompass a complete life-span. In this manner mythology express the chronological sequences by which the divine and human time-scale is related. Each cycle of creation to destruction is divided into four ages (*yugas*) arranged in order of declining strength, peace and happiness. This inherent tendency towards destruction influences the affairs of both the gods and man. As man is mostly unable to perceive the cyclic nature of time and the universe, he can discover no explanation for the recurring rebirths that he must endure. His past, present and future lives are all linked together in a continuous time system, as are the actions of gods and the dynamic mechanism of the universe. Man’s entanglement in this cycle is likened to a spell or illusion (*maya*) and it is aim of all Hindu thought to learn secret of this *maya*. In Hinduism this liberating process is evocatively termed release (*moksha*). The gods have compassion for mankind and when provoked by exceptional circumstances may reveal the delusion

from which man suffers, thus indicating for him the path towards true knowledge.”²

Without understanding of visual conception of frescoes at Parnāmī Temple one cannot understand its philosophical approach of reality. In the order to illustrate the epic stories of the *Mahabharata*, *Ramayana* and various Krishna legends, Hindu art evolved a narrative series of consecutive scenes in which episodes from these stories are portrayed. Predominantly most of spurs are from *Mahabharata*, as well as episodes from *Ramayana*. Throughout the iconographical representations, Krishna is widely held subject for narrative art at Pranāmī Temple, these stories strained from the childhood of the god and his youthful involvement with the beautiful Radha.

The element of divinity uttered as a transient form, which is a fundamental proposition of Hinduism as well as reflected into sacred images from the earlier times (mythology). Bronowski has a thought-provoking short passage on the understanding of painting as a vision of the future, he stated; “For us, the cave paintings re-create the hunter’s way of life as a glimpse of history; we look through them into the past. But for the hunter, I suggest they were a peep-hole into the future; he looked ahead. In either direction, the cave paintings act as a kind of telescope tube of the imagination. They direct the mind from what is seen to what can be inferred or conjectured. Indeed, this is so in the very action of painting; for all its superb observation, the flat picture only means something to the eye because the mind fills it out with roundness and movement, a reality by inference, which is not actually seen but is imagined.”³

The above statement once again evokes the aesthetic norms and receptivity revealed by frescoes of Ajanta cave painting (*chitra-shālās*) which is also mentioned in Sanskrit literature and basis of innovation throughout in history of art. In fact the relationship of Indus-valley culture with Vedic civilization of the Indo-Aryans considered one of the major

sources of inspiration in subcontinent. Sir John Marshall says, "the School which these paintings epitomize was the foundation and fountain head from which half the art of Asia drew its inspiration, and no one can study their rhythmic composition, their instinctive beauty of line, the majestic grace of their figures and the boundless wealth of their decorative imagery without realizing what an in-depth stimulus they employed on the art."⁴

It is obvious through the ages that culturally association of all civilizations give a pure and sufficient evidence that a dominions always intended to accomplish the vibrancy of pictorial demonstration, either in the tangible or the imaginings, responsible on the evolutionary stage of his civilization at the certain phase of time, for this determination, he embraced visual dialectal expression of image making in stone while the other is painting or drawing. This is the motive which lies behind the both Eastern and Western Indian classification of styles and evidence of significant adaptation from naturalism of the cave painting style.

In subcontinent such vague sensation has been arose in the religious architecture of Pranāmī Temple at Malkā Hāns. The religious approach of artists is subjugated along with the beautification as according to *Silpa-Sastras*, "it is canonical injunction to decorate temple walls with painting. The frequent references in early Pālī and Sanskrit literature to *chitra-shālas* in palaces, to the expertise of the monarch and of the nobility and their ladies in drawing and painting, give evidence to the great worth the art of painting. In the *Rāmāyanā*, mural paintings are often manifesting. A scene in the first act in *Bhavuti's* masterpiece, Uṭṭar Rām *Charitā* is displayed in the gallery of Rām's palace at Ayodhya. As earlier as in 3rd century AD., a comprehensive interpretation of the theory of painting was extravagantly concise by Vatsyayana under six classifications;

1. *Rupa-bheda* (the peculiarity of forms and appearances).
2. *Pramanam* (measurement, scale and proportion).
3. *Vhava* (sentimentality and expressions).

4. *Lavanya Yojanam* (conveying of refinement and aesthetics).
5. *Sadrisyam* (simulated of rendering).
6. *Varnikabhanga* (use of materials and method implements)."⁵

In Pranāmī Temple, the practical method of fresco appears to have been in traditional techniques. The surface of wall was firstly concealed with rough coating of mixture of bonding material. When it was still saturated the technique of painting is employed in water colour. The representation of mythical compositions of gods on the walls of Pranāmī Temple plays a vigorous role in the religious persuasion as well as in cultural emergence. The artists effectively heightened the mythical characterization of divinities and portentous their sovereignty over marvelous of natural powers through forms and colours.

The religious assertiveness of artists is dominated on the walls of Pranāmī Temple and aesthetical value of frescos remained alive. These walls donated the impression of consciousness of the artists. The sensual perception of synchronization integrates with the subject and surface. Nevertheless, the mystic consistency between mysticism and realism is attained through colours and compositions which are spaced on celebrated scale.

The subject matter of these frescoes is centered on divine refrains such as *Gita Govinda* and *Bhagavata* or even materialistic (secular) love. Basil and Douglas argue that, "the *Chaurapanchasika* painting series emerged and its influence lasted for more than two centuries (Fifteenth century to early seventeenth century), so we can observe clearly the nature of the Mughal influence and what it had to work upon."⁶

The Krishna and his celestial love for Radha are portrayed throughout, as *Brahmavaivarta Pūrana* recites Krishna as a child with the company of *gopīs*. This was mostly reflected in the art of painting about the fifteenth century, blossom the exquisite Hindu art, called the Rajput art. "This was the time when a revival of a popular culture in the grab of Vaishnavism was dominating the art and literature of the country.

Vaishnavism stirred the innermost depths of the common consciousness and brought about psychological changes in the moods of the people. By Coomraswamy the main center of whose early phases were Rājputāna and the Punjāb Hills, where the art flourished in separate groups known as *Rajastānī* and *Pahāri*. O.C. Gangoly stated that the school of Rajput Art embody a whole cycle of Hindu culture, chiefly covered by mediaeval Vaishnavism, with its doctrine of love and faith, though rooted in the old Classic Sanskrit culture. The themes of pictorial representations were based upon the Hindu literature, inspired by the renaissance of the *Pūranic* Hindu religion.”⁷

Traditional Rajput paintings did not deal with genre life somewhat these paintings concern with divinities or theoretical style. “The style of the Rajput paintings is an archaic, unsophisticated style. The figures mostly appear according to the principle of perfect visibility which is contrary any attempt at giving the illusion of a third dimension: the heads are shown in the profile, but with the visible eye in full length, the chest is displayed in full expanse and the gestures are confined to the front plain. The background is, comparatively, simple; buildings as well as landscape setting have opened to serve linear system of surface.”⁸

In sixteenth century, Mewār paintings signified Krishna as a boy with his mother Yasoda (maternal love). From seventeenth to nineteenth centuries Pahāri paintings highlight with this same theme of Krishna and Radha, in Basolī style of painting Radha waiting for Krishna while in Kāngrā narration centered upon the meeting between Krishna and Radha. “In late Kāngrā period, paintings had the realism of Mughal paintings but symbolism of Hindu mind.”⁹ These paintings are essentially an interpretation of universal stance because the unification of two lovers is emblematic suggestion of union of human soul and Absolute. Their eternal love, beauty surrounds nature and the passionate powers of flute (music) as well as poetry express this universal outlook.

Later on, Paintings under the patronization of Mughal dynasty gave birth to the new ideologies (subject matters) as well as techniques. At the court of Shāh Tahmāsp the significant state of affairs presented a dynamic character in determining the new style of Mughal art in the subcontinent.

Even though when the art of painting under the Mughal sovereigns was flourishing at the Imperial Court at Agra and Delhi, Hindu art did not quiescent, but was having with a more enthusiastic determination than ever for some centuries before. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy states “the Mughal painting is academic dramatic, objective and eclectic; Rajput painting is essentially an aristocratic folk art, appealing to all classes alike, static, lyrical and inconceivable apart from the life its reflects.”¹⁰

The execution of deities is principally cultural amalgamation of Central Indian style of painting as well as western. The symbolical depiction of nimbus (halo or *prabhamandala*) which surrounds the head of deity is purely Western influence and symbol of cosmic power.

Under the sponsorship of the European merchants during the eighteenth century, the Mughal School formed a new style, being impregnated comprehensively with Western inspirations. “There is sincere appreciation for the experience of the West but at the same time a deep consciousness of the spiritual quality which forms the basis of the national art is also noticeable. The artists believed that modernization of art does not necessarily demand casting off its traditional character or even a departure from aesthetic intentions. With delicate sensibility they have shown themselves capable of playing with form and colour in a manner which never seems to lose coherence sense of aesthetics as understood by hundreds of years.”¹¹

The Western culture and Christianity captivated during the sovereignty of Akbar. The result was that a two-year Mughal mission to the Portuguese Centre of Goa in (1575-1578) to accomplish European

artists for Akbar's court was followed by a Jesuit mission who was affectionately recognized at Agra and Fatehpur Sikri. The books they conceded, containing the great polyglot Bible (Plantin at Antwerp 1569-1572) may have had little instantaneous inspiration upon the painting of Imperial studio. The Wall painting in so many illustrations to the *Khamisa of Nizāmī* (1595) demonstration of this established tradition.¹² From this statement it is somewhat clear, that Akbar went so far in relation to other religion also as Zoroastrian, Hindu, Jain and Christian, even Sikh court welcomed foreign artists, who introduced new styles and techniques. August Schoefft, an experienced painter from Hungary in the service of Sher Singh, accomplished paintings in huge size with the practice of oil paints on the surface of canvas. According to the K.C. Aryan, some of the indigenous painters "gradually started working in the same style." While William Archer states, that enormous sizes of paintings in the method of oil paints used by foreigners admired by the natives.¹³

Even Jahangir's captivation with Christian subject matters and following statement by Guerreiro is particularly revealing, "Throughout the discussions of which we have spoken, the King always showed his deep regard for Christ our Lord. He also spoke very strongly in favour of the use of pictures, which, amongst the moors, are regarded with abhorrence, and on coming from Lahore, and finding his palaces at Agra very beautifully decorated and adorned both inside and outside with many picture which had already been completed, and others that were being painted, in a balcony where he sits daily to be seen by the people; nearly all these picture were of a sacred character, for in the middle of the ceiling there was painting of Christ our lord, very perfectly finished, with an aureola, and surrounded by angels and on the walls were some small pictures of the saints, including John the Baptist, St. Anthony, St. Bernadino of Sena, and some female saints. In another part were some Portuguese figures of large size also very beautifully painted."¹⁴

The fresco of Pranāmī Temple has given an impression of artist's deliberation with his narratives slightly with the effecting of his completion as well as successively the extreme conceivable practice is made of symbols and ideas, irrespective of the composed figurative compositions and coherence of colours. Beyond a shadow of a doubt, the expression is conventional with the constituent of decoration.

In this fresco, a vase with flowers is frequently painted. Lord Krishna embraces a flower pot in his hand; this pot is similar to a pot which is embodied on the walls of Pranāmī Temple. The series of this pot is repeatedly denoted with Krishna. The significance of pot is concealed behind its tradition as terracotta or metal pots have been used in numerous ceremonial events, where these are used to fulfill a specific determination of rituals related with divinity. The pot in Indian literature is referred to as a receptacle that holds life, signifies through water, soma and amrita. The *kumbha* or *kalasha*, have had a tremendous significance in Vedic, Buddhist and Jain ritualism as not only symbols of wealth and fertility but also as a repository for mortal remains.¹⁵

The frescoes in Pranāmī Temple are grounded on the knowledge of religious perception. Even though the extremely dignified metaphorical arrangements transaction the considerate of forms and comprise receptive expression of idealism of artists. Another component is in this demonstration which can be understood behind the seated figure. The nimbus adorned the portraiture of seated figure, though its execution is not in details. This hallows or nimbus enhances the divinity of seated figure.

This symbolical demonstration is evidence of inter cultural inspirations. "In fact, nimbus traces its origin to Asia, in the early Persian civilization, in the Buddhist tradition and later in Indian religious art. From there it passes on to Byzantine and Europe, where it was acknowledged grudgingly at the beginning of Christian art, and later became a sign of holiness. With the escalation of Islam it wiped out in the

Near East, and it began to reappear under the Abbasids, the source was Greek artists. In the 14th century it ceased to be used, when Persia closed its doors to the West, infrequently it was used except exclusively for the religious founders and as a golden flame or spark."¹⁶

The characterization of figure deals with simplicity and elusive depiction enriches through application of colours. Their colour divergence heightens the expression of psychological state of artist rather than aesthetically alluring.

Along with the seated figure a border with floriated strategy is running at the lower section. Doubtless, this is a remarkable feature of traditional wall painting throughout the history. The description of deities has same postures and gestures with flat background. The whole demonstration indicates the earth and sky as there is no line to extricate them. The stiffness in the movements of hands, holding a flute are displaying of less energy and action. The angles of eyes are more prominent rather than a face which is little more filled out and rounded. The protruding eyes are enhanced to exaggerate the sense of realism. Overall the expression of painting is expressing an elusive mood and a particular dramatization of divinity.

The performance gives an impression as the image of a god is a direct symbol of the god himself. The approach of painting would be more precise to express that in the image of the god signifies the spirit of the god.¹⁷

Repetition is certainly one of the reasons that elucidate the formal evolution of Hindu temples. The reappearance of mystical icon above the wall surface generates a sense of unity and connects with art as irrepressible belief. The abstraction of patterns is as instrument to unify the diversity of design. Thus the repetition in design elements is considered a constant reminder of the majestic power of god. The floral patterns are in brilliant pallet using ultramarine blues, the greens, reds

and the yellows which are blended with white colour. "In Hinduism the four cardinal directions are allotted their own colours: white for the east, blue for the west, yellow for the south and red for the north."¹⁸

The colour palette is constrained to merely reds, yellow, green, blue and white. Edgar Cayce the spiritual healer says that white is the perfect aura.

"If our souls were in perfect balance, then all our color vibrations would blend and we would have an aura of pure white." In her book, *The Healing Power of Color*, healer Betty Wood also describes white as a most sacred color associated with wholeness, purity and innocence. Whilst the Sherwin-Williams Co., who specialize in painting and decorating give this description of the influence of white on moods. "White purifies energizes, unifies in combination, enlivens all other color." Finally, in his fascinating book "*The Secret Language of Symbols*" psychologist Dr. David Fontana notes: White represents purity, virginity and transcendent for the Tibetans, white is the color of Mount Meru, the mountain at the center of the world embodying ascent to enlightenment."¹⁹

White colour has its own significance almost in all the religions of the world. White is symbol of Being and unites all colours. White is the mixture of all colours, pure and stainless. The traditional usage of colours is more with the intention of evoking a reminiscence of the celestial reality of effects than of imitating the natural object. Whereas, the red colour tone has a vigorous essence. Its complement is green which retains the reverse qualities of coldness and humidity. It characterizes the superior soul and passive, contractive and soluble qualities. The yellow colour represents air, heat and its qualities are contemplative, active. It signifies youth.²⁰

There are many sources to obtain colours, some colours get through natural sources while others are synthesis of minerals. Mukerji, "who deputed to enquire in 1883 about the manufacture of *peorī*, (Indian yellow is called in Hindi), states that the urine of cows was collected, allowed to cool, and then heated. The fine sediment was then set rolling into balls, dried out first on the charcoal fire and then in the rays of sun."²¹ The yellow colour had been fed on mango leaves. But now the production of yellow colour is illegal due to cruelty of this sacred animal. So the synthetic version of Indian yellow is used."²² The selection and application of colours is basically characterization of artist's state of mind, connecting with the reason and logic. The colours are well-thought-out as a medium of dialogue between visuals and its conception. In Mughal paintings it is perceived that yellow colour is used for the attires of Krishna, by this means creating a strong contrast with his deep blue skin tone. It is perhaps appropriate that the garments of the cow herder god (Krishna) should have been painted with pigment derivative from the urine of his favorite animal.²³

The Krishna sits on the yellow podium of lotus petals which has symbolic suggestion because lotus always swims in the surface of water but it never get wet. "In the 5th chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita* by Lord Krishna;

*"One who does all work as an offering to the Lord,
abandoning attachment to the results, is as untouched by sin
(or Karmic reaction) as a lotus leaf is untouched by water."
(5.10)²⁴*

The lotus has figured conspicuously in the artistic traditions of several ancient civilizations. "The Aryans had borrowed the flower from the Egyptians and Assyrians during their stay in the Valley Euphrates before coming to India. The Hindus favoured the open flower with turned down petals, signifying the heavenly vault maintained by the sacred mountain, the axis of the cosmos. In Hindu poetry and Literature and art

of painting, it is rising or setting sun depicted as the flower floating on the cosmic water. The lotus represents the mystery of the sunrise as the Brahma sits enthroned upon it."²⁵

In the *Rig Veda* There are several Classic names of deity (shrī and Lakshmī) on the significance of lotus in Hinduism. "She is praised as lotus-born (*padmasambhavā*), lotus-coloured (*padmavarṇa*), lotus-eyed (*padmāksī*), decked with lotus garland (*padmamālīṇī*)."²⁶ T.S.Eliot borrowed the symbol of lotus from Hinduism as he expresses the idea of completeness in these verses;

"And the pool, was filled with
Water out of sunlight,
And the lotus rose, quietly, quietly,
The surface glittered out of heart of light."²⁷

R.S.Pathak explains Eliot's thought about this symbol of transcendence over the material world. As he stated that "it represents a state of complete detachment and serenity. It is akin to the thousand petalled, lotuses (*sahashra*) of Indian hath yoga. The terms sunlight and heart of light in Eliot's poem confirm this interpretation. Lotus is a symbol of heart, while sun represents blissful knowledge. Just as the rays of the sun falling on the lotus make it bloom, the human heart suffused with true knowledge attains bliss (*anandā*)."²⁸

Another fresco painting from Pranāmī Temple gives evidence that it belongs to a series of the ten *avatāras* of Vishnu. The representation of Vishnu as appears from the mouth of fish, has an emblematic association. The god has shown with frequent hands and crown. The figure of Vishnu is extraordinary formalized and sets its own bounds to the artist's self-determination. The geometric shapes of celestial figure rest on the symbolism of forms and shapes. The form of fish is simplifying and stylized, then composed into a comprehensive image which is observed as

cubism. The geometrical form of shapes has been transformed into flat surface in more communicative way. The fragmentation of fish along with god is in diagonal movement. The sensation of depth of composition is emphasized on the flat, two dimensional planes within the element of idealization as well as the idea of perspective seems to be rejected.

The painting gives evidence that it belongs to a series of the ten *avatārās* of Vishnu. The representation of Vishnu as appears from the mouth of fish, has an emblematic association. The god has shown with numerous hands and crown. The figure of Vishnu is extraordinary formalized and sets its own bounds to the artist's freedom. The geometric shapes of divine figure depend on the symbolism of shapes. In this painting the figure of Krishna (Vishnu *avātār*) is signified in the form of fish (*Matsya*), "Westerners, who are so uncertain about, have long argued about the correct number of these descents or avatars: some texts list ten, others twenty-two and other say limitless. But most of authors generally agree with the number of ten. It is generally deliberated that whenever order, justice and morals are in danger, Vishnu himself puts these words into mouth of his greatest avatar, "I come down to earth and take human shape."²⁹

Through *māyā* Vishnu is able to resume many forms. *Māyā* is a creative power that gives a god such as Vishnu the ability to change bodily forms. In Vedic literature, *māyā* refers to the ability of gods to create and change forms.³⁰ Jayadeva puts some verses into single stanza (*Gita Govinda* 1.16, translated by Barbara Stoler Miller, 1978), summarizing Vishnu's valorous deeds of protection;

"For upholding the Vedas,
For supporting the earth,
For raising the world,
For tearing the demon asunder,
For deceiving Bali,
For destroying the warrior-class,

For conquering Ravana,
 For wielding the plough,
 For spreading compassion,
 For routing the barbarians,
 Homage to you, Krishna,
 In your ten incarnate forms."³¹

This poem also shows the humanitarian power of god, that is indication of basic essence of Pranāmī sect in Hinduism. The Sanskrit term for incarnation is *avātāra*, which connotes descent. It is not unreasonable for curious reader to ask the following question; why does a transcendent deity incarnate himself on earth? Krishna gives to the warrior Arjuna the Classical *Vaiṣṇava* replied in *Bhagavad Gītā*;

“For protection of the good,
 And for destruction of evil-doers,
 To make a firm footing for the right,
 I come into being in age after age.”³²

The classification of most often contained ten avatars, “the first three of which take the form of animals; the fourth and tenth are half animal, half human in forms while the five others appear in human guise. In the form of fish a myth is related Krishna who stands for humanity and redeemer from destruction, as one day when the sagacious Manu was performing his ablutions, he found in the hollow of his hand a small fish which was pleading him to anodyne its life. He put in a vessel but next day it become bigger even it was shifted into a lake and gradually lake become too small. Then fish itself said throw me in a sea. Then he warned Manu of an approaching flood. He sent him a large craft and ordered him to take on board with a pair of each living species and the seeds of all plants. Almost before Manu could obey, the world was flooded only it was Vishnu who remained visible in the shape of sea-unicorn with scales of gold (*matsya avatārā*).”³³ The mythological representation of Krishna in

the form of *Mathsya avatārā* is connected with the story of fish that saved mankind in the terrible condition of flood.

This is basically symbolical association with humanity. "Throughout the history such illustrations' are found such as Noah's Arch (Biblical legends) as well as mythology belongs to Babylonian god Enki saved mankind by sending boat to rescue them to mountain top when Enlil (god) sent huge floods to destroy the land. In this representation the spiritual values connected with blue colour which is the personification of pureness. In mythology and ancient religion blue is considered as a colour of Eden and of the sea as well as association with moon and archetypal mother figure. For example the Greek goddess Demeter was clothed in blue wrap."³⁴ Artistic expression executes the devotional level of imagination towards mythology. The *Rig Veda* teaches that "Vishnu is of astonishing supremacy (*purudasma*). He is generally represented pictorially as a beautiful adolescent, blue in colour. Ramakrishna explains that if some gods represented in the forms of men, seem blue, it is because they are immense and far away from us. The dense layer of atmosphere that intervenes colours them in this way."³⁵

In *Gita Govinda*, "the love of Krishna is eminent by Jayadeva with pure nature of Krishna, "who is none other than Vishnu. Jayadeva celebrated all his incarnations. His verse form, *stuti* is a song of admiration and also one of the earliest proclamations of the numeral and order of the god's ten avatars. In the seas that rage as aeon of chaos collapses in the form of fish.

This is symmetrical balanced composition of Vishnu, who appears in the pair of fishes. Here he has shown as Vishnu rather than Krishna because the blue god has four arms so he should be Vishnu. *Matsya āvatār* of Vishnu is emerging from the open mouth of a giant fish.

The composition is attempted to create an image, the artist didn't try to paint minute details or physical anatomy of figure rather his focus is

on internal quality of retained breath. As it seems the inward quality is more important to show than outward depiction. The aesthetic value of figures is sacred and involved with purification of subject matter. Both figures, wearing a crown with lotus flower, adoring its points, could be seen as a celestial being. The scarfs rest lightly on right and left shoulder and its end dangling. Their shoulder-cloth consisted of heavy brocade and flaps less lightly in the air. Their faces are in round with full cheeks and higher drawn eyebrows and still rounder chins.

The pair of fishes has symbolic association with religion. "In Sanskrit the pair of fishes is known by the term *matsyayugma*, meaning (coupled fish). This alludes to their origins as an ancient symbol of two sacred rivers. The pair of fishes is also considered as an auspicious symbol in Hindu, Jain and Buddhist traditions. In Egypt a pair of fishes associated with fertile water of river Nile. In Christianity the paired fish is an emblem of Christ and acrostically interpreted the letters of the Greek word for fish, *ichthys* to mean Jesus Christ."³⁶

The couple of fishes are in blue colour, in reality Krishna is always represented in blue colour. The muted blue in Krishna's complexion is all part of palate of this atelier. The significance of blue colour connected with religious inference as David Fontana summarizes its significance;

"The hue of intellect, peace and contemplation. It represents water and coolness, and symbolizes the sky, infinity, the emptiness from which existence arises...the colour of the Virgin as Queen of Heaven...denotes faith, compassion and water of baptism...the goddess of love."³⁷

The authors such as Edgar Cayce, Ingaer Naess and Betty Wood collectively agreed about the significance of blue colour.

"blue...moves us towards the more spiritual aspects of life and away from the physical level. Naess continues

to explaining blue colour as a peaceful and relaxing colour, having a pacifying effect. It is also spiritual stimulating, being a colour of soul, and of purity. Whereas Betty Wood goes into considerable depth in explaining the values associated with blue including its cultural association with truth, revelation, wisdom loyalty, fertility, constancy and chastity."³⁸

While some modern psychologists identify the value of blue colour an essence of the calmness and coolness, the opposite of excitement and mental tumult.³⁹ Even *Brahmā-Samhitā* refers the "colour of Krishna's body is compared to that of a bluish cloud. The colour of the lord is not poetical imagination."⁴⁰

Conclusion

These frescoes evoke the final stage of symbolism which is subjectively based on patterns, repetition and design like addition of elements of art. Apparently, these paintings are wrapped in the visual compositions but behind this appearance the realm of mysticism is hidden that echoes through the purity of colours. Then the physical existence of frescoes approaches the stage of metaphysical. The abstraction form of figures and line touches the Divine law, their concept based on mysticism that have its place to inner dimension of ones' heart (devotees). This is a point that leads a devotee towards origin of inner reality and truth that is reflected on the walls of Pranāmī Temple

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