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DEVELOPMENT OF HINDU ICONOGRAPHY

THE DEVELOPMENT OF HINDU ICONOGRAPHY

BY

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TO

THE SACRED MEMORY

OF

SIR ASUTOSH MOOKERJEE

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PREFACE

T. A. G. Rao's *Elements of Hindu Iconography* (Vols. I and II, published under the auspices of the Travancore State in 1914 and 1916 respectively) has so long been and still is the standard work on the subject. Some other works on it, such as H. Krishna Sastri's *South Indian Gods and Goddesses*, B. C. Bhattacharya's *Indian Images*, Part I, J. Dubreuil's *South Indian Iconography*, the Brahmanical section of N. K. Bhattasali's *Iconography of the Buddhist and Brahmanical Sculptures in the Dacca Museum*, etc., have been published since then. Krishna Sastri's and Dubreuil's works, as their names imply, deal with the South Indian images only, while Bhattacharya's book treats of several North Indian Hindu images of the Gupta and the post-Gupta periods. Bhattasali discusses the special features of the Brahmanical sculptures found mostly in Eastern Bengal. So none of these works can claim to be as full and comprehensive as the monumental work of T. A. G. Rao. But comprehensive as the latter is, it still lacks certain features which are essential for the study of Hindu Iconography. Rao, no doubt, collected a number of very useful iconographic texts (many of which were then unpublished, some are still so even now) in the appendices to his volumes, and reproduced numerous early and late mediaeval and some modern sculptures, mostly South Indian, to illustrate the same, but the development of the individual iconographic types has seldom been discussed by him. To show this development, it is not only necessary to study critically the extant reliefs and single sculptures of the Gupta, Kushan and pre-Kushan periods, but a careful and systematic handling of the numismatic and glyptic remains of India of the

same periods is also indispensable. When earlier sculptural types of gods and goddesses are not available, ancient Indian coin and seal devices help us remarkably in determining the mode of their representation in the remote past. To refer to one or two instances: The Buddha type on Kanishka's coins, the Gaja-Lakṣmī device on the coins of Bahasatimita, Azilises and Rajuvula, and the 'Varāha avatār,' one on the 'Ādivarāha drammas' of the Gurjara Pratihāra king Bhoja I, fully show how they were based on the contemporary representations of the same divinities in Indian plastic art.

Not only the above-mentioned data have not been utilised by Rao, but the earliest monumental and epigraphic ones also have not been fully made use of by him. But his was a pioneer work and it must be said that many of the above materials were not available to him. In the course of long years of teaching the subject to the Post-Graduate students of the Calcutta University, I felt the need of the systematic collection of the above materials and their careful study in relation to Hindu Iconography. The present work is the outcome of years of collection and first-hand study of not only such archaeological data, but also of bringing together many new texts relevant to the subject, which have not yet been fully noticed. This volume, however, mainly deals with the general principles of Hindu Iconography, and the early iconographic types of Hindu divinities as determinable by ancient Indian coins and seals. It is thus complete in itself and I intend to follow it up with two more volumes dealing with the numerous Hindu cult images and their accessories.

In the first chapter of this book, after giving an idea about the subject itself, I have indicated the lines in which the study of Hindu Iconography should be conducted and the varieties of materials handled in its scientific treatment. The second and third chapters contain elaborate discussions

about the antiquity and origin of image-worship in India. In them I have tried to appraise critically the views of previous scholars on the above problems and have given my own based on literary and archaeological data. In the fourth and fifth chapters I have shown how the ancient Indian coins and seal-impressions can materially help us in ascertaining the early iconographic types of a number of Hindu divinities and their emblems, many of which would have otherwise remained unknown to us. In the sixth chapter I have elaborately discussed the technique of the Iconoplastic art in India with the help of a variety of indigenous texts, few of which were critically studied by the previous writers on the subject. I have also discussed there the various factors which contributed to the development of this art in India and the nature and extent of their individual contributions. In the seventh chapter have been explained the various technical terms and terminologies that are frequently to be be found in iconographic texts, a correct knowledge of which is essential to every student of Hindu Iconography. In the eighth and last chapter the Indian canons of Iconometry have been discussed, a proper understanding of which is necessary for the study of this subject. In course of this I have instituted a brief comparison of the Indian canons with those followed by the Egyptian and the Hellenistic artists of ancient times. It has been found necessary to add three appendices to my book, in the second one of which I have re-edited the iconometric text entitled '*Pratimāmānalakṣaṇam*' with translation and notes. In all these tasks I have often referred to the views of various previous writers; reasons have often been adduced by me, whether I accepted or rejected them. I may submit here that my method in the above studies is mainly objective and I have approached the subject chiefly as a student of history and archaeology. This is the reason why I could not utilise some comparatively recent publications of eminent authors,

which, remarkable as they are, treat Iconography from an angle different from that of mine.

Ten plates are appended to this work, the first five of which contain drawings carefully made by Mr. S. Banerjee, artist, under my supervision, from early Indian coin and seal devices and sculptures; the last four plates are reproductions of the reverse figures of some coins and of a few seal impressions. These mostly illustrate the fourth, fifth and the seventh chapters of my book. Figures 1, 2, 3 in plate No. VI illustrate my observations contained in the last chapter; figure 4 in the same plate shows the broad proportions of the height of a human body followed by modern artists of the West.

A few words about the system of transliteration adopted in the following pages are necessary. I have followed the system recommended in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, with slight modification; for example, I have invariably used *ṃ* in place of *ṁ* to denote an *anusvāra*. In writing modern place names as well as ancient ones still current, I have usually desisted from the use of diacritical marks. But sometimes, due to oversight, the same name (*e.g.*, Gandhāra) has been spelt with or without these marks; but such lapses, I hope, are comparatively few.

I have prepared a General Index as well as a Bibliographic one for the convenience of my readers. Attempt has been made to make both as full and comprehensive as possible; Sanskrit words of technical import have been incorporated into the former.

It was the late Sir Asutosh Mookerjee who first kindly offered me facilities for studying Indian art and archaeology. I take this opportunity to dedicate my book to his sacred memory as a token of gratitude and esteem which I shall always cherish for him. I am also greatly indebted to his worthy son, Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee, the President of the Post-Graduate Council in Arts, for the encouragement

I always received from him in my work, for which I shall remain ever grateful to him. My former teacher and the present head of my department, Dr. H. C. Raychaudhuri has taken a keen interest in my work all along and I am much obliged to him for a few suggestions of his, which I have incorporated in the first chapter. Dr. P. C. Bagchi, my esteemed friend and colleague, has laid me under deep obligation by kindly allowing me to use the manuscript copy of '*Pratimāmāna-lakṣaṇam*' which was brought by him from Nepal sometime ago. Dr. Stella Kramrisch, my distinguished colleague, kindly went through most of the book, while it was being seen through the press. Mr. S. K. Saraswati, one of my former pupils and now one of my colleagues, has obliged me with some practical suggestions in the formal get up of the book and in other matters. I am also much indebted to Dr. N. N. Law, the learned editor of the *Indian Historical Quarterly* for kindly allowing me to utilise several blocks which were prepared at his expense to illustrate two of my articles published in his Journal. I should also express my obligation to him and to the Joint Editors of the *Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art* for permitting me to incorporate in this volume a few of my articles published in their respective Journals. I cannot but be grateful to the different authorities of the Indian Museums, especially Calcutta and Punjab Museums, and the authorities of the British Museum, London, for kindly allowing me to reproduce a few of the coins and seals in their collection, all of which have been previously published. I shall remain thankful to Mr. J. C. Chakravorti, the Registrar of the Calcutta University, for his great help in the publication of this volume. My thanks are also due to Mr. D. Ganguly, the Superintendent of the Calcutta University Press, and the members of his staff, for the unfailing courtesy and kind attention which were shown to me while the book was going through the press.

A few errors and misprints in the following pages could not be avoided; certain suggestions relevant to different topics discussed in the book occurred to me when the particular sections had been printed off. The former have been corrected and the latter added in the few pages on Additions and Corrections. Some more printing and other errors might have escaped my notice, for which I crave the indulgence of my readers. No one is more conscious than myself about my own limitations; I can only say that I have made an honest effort to throw some new light, however small and fitful it may be, on the study of Hindu Iconography. It is for my readers to judge how far I have been successful in the attempt.

CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY,
1st December, 1941.

JITENDRA NATH BANERJEA

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

A.B.I.A.—Annual Bibliography of Indian Art and Archaeology (Kern Institute, Leyden).

A.S.I.A.R.—Annual Report of the Archaeological Survey of India (New Series), by J. Marshall.

A.S.R.—Archaeological Survey Report (Old Series), by A. Cunningham.

B.M.C. / B.M.C.G.S.K. — British Museum Catalogue of Coins of the Greek and Scythic Kings of India.

C.A.I.—Coins of Ancient India (Cunningham).

C.C.A.I.—Catalogue of Coins of Ancient India (Allan).

C.C.A.W.K.T.B.D.—Catalogue of Coins of the Andhra, Western Kṣatrapa, Traikūṭaka and Bodhi Dynasties.

C.G.C.B.M. / C.C.G.D.B.M. — Catalogue of Coins of the Gupta Dynasty in the British Museum.

C.C.I.K.—Coins of the Indo-Scythians and Kushans (Cunningham).

C.I.I.—Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum.

H.I.I.A.—History of Indian and Indonesian Art.

I.H.Q.—Indian Historical Quarterly.

J.A.O.S.—Journal of the American Oriental Society.

J.A.S.B.—Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.

J.I.S.O.A. / J.I.O.S.A. —Journal of Indian Society of Oriental Art.

J.N.S.I.—Journal of the Numismatic Society of India.

J.R.A.S.—Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society (London).

J.R.A.S.B.—Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal.

M.A.S.I.—Memoir of the Archaeological Survey of India.
M.I.C.—Mohenjo-daro and the Indus Civilisation.
M.M.C.—Mathura Museum Catalogue (Vögel).
O.Z.—Ost-Asiatische Zeitschrift.
P.M.C.—Punjab Museum Catalogue (of Coins).
R.V.—Ṛgveda.
S.B.—Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa.
S.B.E.—Sacred Books of the East.
Śvet.Up.—Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad.
V.R.S.—Varendra Research Society.
Z.D.M.G.—Zeitschrift Der Morganlandischen Geschelschaft (Journal of the German Oriental Society).

THE DEVELOPMENT OF HINDU ICONOGRAPHY

CHAPTER I

STUDY OF HINDU ICONOGRAPHY

Iconography—the nature of the subject—the importance of iconographic studies from the point of view of the study of religious, general and cultural history—materials for the study of iconography, archaeological : monumental, epigraphic and numismatic ; literary data, divisible into several groups such as religious and mythological literature of the early and late periods, accounts of foreign travellers, iconographic and iconometric texts—the nature and importance of these texts—the *dhyānas* of different deities as aids to iconographic studies—date of various groups of iconographic and iconometric literature—correlation between these texts and extant images.

The term *Icon* (*ikon*, Gr. *eikon*) means a figure representing a deity, or a saint, in painting, mosaic, sculpture, etc., which is specially meant for worship or which is in some way or other associated with the rituals connected with the worship of particular divinities. Thus, though this is not exactly the same as a fetishistic symbol used for their crude ritualism by undeveloped mankind, yet it is not very far removed from the latter ; it has attached to it, however, some higher clear-cut conception which is missing in the other term. This Greek word *ikon* with its above connotation has its close parallel in such Indian terms as *arcā*, *bera*, *vigraha*, etc., which definitely denote sensible representations of particular deities or saints receiving the devout homage of their *bhaktas* or exclusive worshippers. Euphemistically, these are often described in various Indian texts as the very body or form of the gods concerned (*tanu* or *rūpa*). These representations are mainly anthropomorphic or theriomorphic in character, but they may also at times be purely symbolic

without any such explicit form. The special branch of knowledge or study which deals with these images is generally known as *Iconography*, a proper understanding of which enables one to be quite conversant about one of the most important aspects of the religious life of certain races of mankind. But this branch of knowledge is not merely concerned with the study and interpretation of the characteristics of the principal ikons or images proper which are enshrined in the main sanctum of a temple or church, but it also deals with the delineation of the special features and the understanding of the true significance of the figure-sculptures, frescoes or such other objects which are executed on different parts of the shrine mainly for decorative purpose. Thus, in its broader sense, the term *iconography* really signifies the interpretative aspect of the religious art of a country, which becomes manifest in diverse ways. Even before the evolution of the image proper representing the principal deity of the cult, when such a divinity is usually represented by various aniconic symbols as in the case of early Buddhism, the monuments (mostly funerary in character) associated with it contain numbers of reliefs illustrative of various mythological stories connected with it. Thus, the early remains of Bharhut and Sanchi, which are really funerary monuments, do not contain any icon of the Master (in the developed sense of an anthropomorphic representation), but contain numerous figure-sculptures, medallions and reliefs which are extremely interesting to any student of religious art of India. A proper interpretation of these scenes reproduced in stone reliefs falls necessarily under the province of a student of iconography and he will do scanty justice to his subject if he fails to take note of them. In another respect, the interpretation of pictures painted on canvas, manuscript covers or such other objects, *e.g.*, the banner paintings (*tańkas*) of Nepal, Tibet and Central Asia, etc., also falls within the scope of this subject when it is conceived in its broader aspect. But,

it must never be lost sight of that, in all these cases, a definite religious character must permeate all such objects, in order that their study and interpretation may come under this branch of knowledge.

The above account of the nature of the subject will fully prove how it is intimately connected with religion. In fact it is nothing but the interpretation of the religious art of man. It has been time and often shown by various scholars that the art of man in its very beginnings is mainly religious in character. Grünwedel observes, "The most important basis for the development of an independent art among any people lies in its religion." Della Setta, in the work on '*Religion and Art*' has shown the intimate connection which exists between the art and religion of various nations of the world. This deep association is the more pronounced in the case of the early Indians. Grünwedel has rightly remarked, "The religious character, so deeply rooted in the national life of the Indian races, has also continued the guiding principle in their art."[1] Foucher has in a very striking manner endeavoured to show how the innate religious tendencies of the Buddhists have been mainly responsible for the beginnings and dissemination of the Buddhist art in India.[2] Thus, this intimate association between the religion and art being clearly demonstrable,

[1] Grünwedel, *Buddhist Art in India*, p. 1. But he seems to have gone too far when he remarks in the same place that "the architecture as well as the sculpture (of India) which has always been intimately connected therewith, was never and nowhere employed for secular purposes." That there certainly flourished a well-developed secular art which was mainly utilised in the building of royal palaces and in the construction of cities and forts, etc., is clearly vouchsafed not only by the indigenous literary texts, but also by the accounts left by foreign travellers in ancient and mediaeval India. Again, the art of sculpture was employed in the execution of royal statuaries which, though at times endowed with some sacred character, were mainly secular ones.

[2] Foucher, *The Beginnings of Buddhist Art*, Ch. I, pp. 10-18.

it is hardly necessary to point out how the study of iconography helps one to understand the nature of religious practices indulged into by some races of mankind. In the very first instance, the discussion about the presence or absence of the practice of image worship among the early Indo-Aryan races in connection with the study of this subject will enable the student of Indian iconography to get hold of positive data for the true evaluation and appraisement of their religion: An intensive and historical study of this subject will throw much valuable light on the gradual changes which were constantly being introduced in certain well-defined religious practices of the Hindus. The ever-increasing pantheon of a particular cult and the constant increase in mythological stories associated with it will find a ready illustration in the iconographic representations which will throw very interesting sidelight on these transformations. Sometimes, a proper and scientific study of this subject will help us in correcting errors made by previous scholars in the understanding of the religious practices of different peoples. Thus, Fergusson, after a close observation of the reliefs of Bharhut, Sanchi and Amaravati remarked that "about one-half of the bas-reliefs of Sanchi, . . . represents religious acts such as the worship of the *dagoba* or of trees ; once or twice the wheel is the object of adoration and once the serpent.'[1] Now, this explanation of the significance of many of the above reliefs has been proved to be erroneous by the patient researches of subsequent scholars. No student of iconography would interpret them in that way at present; but what he would find in them is that in most cases the trees within railings, with a rectangular seat underneath them, especially when they are adorned with garlands and parasols, are really the tangible emblems of the Master or his predecessors who are not iconically represented;

[1] J. Fergusson, *Tree and Serpent Worship in Ancient India*, p. 104.

other trees without these honorific adjuncts are really the *rukkha-cetiyas*, not usually objects of worship by themselves, but so many objects of veneration because of their being residences of different Yakṣas. The *dāgobas* or *dhātugarbhas*, funerary structures, also symbolise the *Mahāparinirvāṇa* of Śākyamuni Buddha or that of the other Buddhas that preceded him. In the case of the Nāgas, Yakṣas, Yakṣiṇīs, etc., who can be recognised in the reliefs, it is to be observed that originally they were no doubt objects of worship, but they are depicted on these monuments in quite an opposite role, *viz.*, in that of so many worshippers of the Bhagavān Buddha. Fergusson, even in that early stage of the study of iconography, could partially hit at the truth when he remarked in the same context, "There are also half a dozen scenes that can be identified with more or less certainty as representing events in the life of Śākyamuni"; but his statement that "a considerable number of representations of scenes in domestic life, regarding which it will probably be impossible ever to feel sure that we know who the actors in them were," has been falsified to a great extent in the light of subsequent research.

The study of this subject also throws some interesting sidelight on the presence of rivalry and jealousy between diverse Indian sects. In the whole history of religious developments in India, there might not have been instances of intense hatred and violent strifes between the members of opposite sects as are to be found in the religious history of Europe.[1] But these sectarian animosities of the Indians found vent through the milder channel of concoction of

[1] But, reference may be made to the story of the impalement of the Jainas through the efforts of a renowned Śaiva saint of Southern India, *viz.*, Tirujñānasambandha; a less known era used to be current among the Śaivas there, the initial year of which dated from this event.

mythological stories and construction of interesting images in illustration thereof. Thus, the story about Śiva having incarnated himself as Śarabha for the chastisement of Narasiṃha (an incarnatory form of Viṣṇu, itself an outcome of sectarian rivalry—Hiraṇyakaśipu, an ardent devotee of Śiva was killed by Viṣṇu in this hybrid form, on account of his bitter denunciation and cruel persecution of his own son who was an exclusive worshipper of Hari) was illustrated by the peculiar image of Śarabha, none other than Śiva himself in the composite form of man, bird and beast, killing Narasiṃha with his claws. In the creation of many other images, this characteristic mode of giving vent to sectarian ill-feeling is clearly discernible. Just the opposite tendency is to be marked in the case of other icons which illustrate genuine attempts towards a reconciliation between the principal rival sects. The images of Hari-Hara, Ardhanārīśvara and such others can be distinctly shown to bear traces of this different mental approach to religious problems. In the collection of the Indian Museum, Calcutta, there are several sculptures which emphasise this peculiarity; on the four sides of roughly square Śiva-liṅgas are carved the figures of Viṣṇu, Durgā-Pārvatī, Sūrya and Gaṇapati, which four, along with the central liṅga, symbolise the cult pictures of the five principal sects, *viz.*, Vaiṣṇava, Śākta, Saura, Gāṇapatya and Śaiva. Miniature shrines, with the representations of these chief sectarian gods carved on their different sides, mostly of early and late mediaeval period, have been discovered in various places of northern India, especially at Benares which has been the happy home of the different Hindu sects through remote past.

The importance of the study of this subject can also be rightly emphasised from the point of view of its association with artistic studies. Many images of the gods and goddesses are in themselves great works of art and a proper

and careful study of these will enable students of iconography to acquaint themselves with the general character of the artistic achievements of different races. The excellence or decadence of art in particular localities in different time-periods can be easily demonstrated with the help of images found in those places. The study of a Buddha image of Sarnath belonging to the fifth or sixth century A.D. or a Brahmanical or Buddhist bronze or stone image of Magadha or Bengal of the early Pāla period won't fail to impress on the student of iconography the flourishing nature of the iconoplastic art in those places, at those different times. Similarly, a Buddhist or Brahmanical stone image from Bengal of the late Sena period will throw light on the artistic decadence which had already set in there. Thus, these images form the true index of the achievements in the domain of religious art and are, in this manner, very interesting aids to the study of the artistic activities of particular races.

Sculptures or images are sometimes indirectly very useful for shedding light on obscure periods of political or general history of India. The inscriptions which are sometimes carved on their pedestals contain in many cases the names not only of their donors but also those of the sovereigns during whose reign period these were constructed; on some of them again, we can decipher dates which materially help us in the reconstruction of little known periods of history. These images are very often definitely illustrative of the general cultural level of their makers; they are also at times clear indicators of the social traits of the people who made and worshipped them. The conception underlying them illustrate, too, in a remarkable manner the inner workings of the human mind and a proper and scientific study of their different groups very often acquaints us with the psychological factors which lay at the origin and evolution of these images.

The importance of this branch of study having been emphasised in the previous paragraphs, it is necessary to take stock of the different materials which are required for its prosecution. The first and foremost data to be utilised in this connection are evidently of monumental or archaeological character. The extant images or sculptures themselves are to be closely studied by every student of this subject in order to acquire proficiency in it. By a proper and scientific study of them, it will be possible for us not only to trace the gradual evolution of the art of image making and the practice of worshipping these images, but it will also enable us to classify them in ordered groups and understand the underlying peculiarities of the constituents of each of these groups. Besides the images proper, relievo-representations appearing on sections of religious architecture or extant painted frescoes and such other objects, as it has been mentioned above, are important data in this connection. Two other archaeological data which have been practically ignored by most of the previous writers on Brahmanical Hindu iconography, but which are extremely important for its study, are of epigraphic and numismatic character. Foucher and Coomaraswamy have no doubt utilised these sources in their scholarly works on Indian art and iconography; but few writers on Brahmanical iconography have cared to avail themselves of these materials. Figures of divinities on the coins of particular localities belonging to different periods will indicate the manner of their representation that was in vogue in different times and places. It is very often the case that we do not light upon comparatively early specimens of images in various localities of northern India; in such cases, the coins discovered in those places are sure to help us in a very remarkable manner to determine the early iconographic types of various gods and goddesses worshipped there. It is needless to remark further that these numismatic depiction

of deities is in many cases really based on the actual sculptural representations of them. Where both the early sculptural type and its numismatic counterpart are extant, we do not fail to find the very close parallelism. Thus, the figure of Buddha belonging to the second century A.D. is well represented in plastic form among the Gandhāra sculptures; when we compare it with the numismatic type appearing on the coins of Kanishka and clearly described by the Kushan die-cutter as CAKAYMO BOΔΔO (Śākya-muni Buddha) we are struck by the great similarity between these two. The figure of a Śiva or a Mahāsena has not so far been discovered among the extant Gandhāra sculptures of the second or the third century A.D.; but when we find the devices on certain coins of Kanishka and Huvishka delineating the features of either of these divinities definitely described by the die-cutters as such, it will not at all be presumptuous to conclude that these forms are some of those in which the two abovenamed gods used to be plastically represented during the period. It will then be interesting to compare their early features with the same of the extant iconographic specimens of a later period. We find the figure of an enthroned deity with the figure of an elephant or the forepart of an elephant with its trunk upraised in front of it on some coins of Eukratides, Antialkidas and certain other Indo-Greek rulers; on a particular coin-type of Antialkidas, we find the same deity walking by the side of the elephant striding to right with its trunk upraised. On some coins of Maues the same god seated on throne is shown to place his hand on the head of the personified *vajra* (thunderbolt). It has been proved by me that these coin-devices are nothing but the variant representations of Indra (very easily identified by the Greeks with their Zeus) who was the tutelary deity of Śvetavatālaya or Indrapura, a locality in the neighbourhood of ancient Kapiśā, on the basis of certain

observations of Hiuen Tsang and an explicit statement in the *Mahāmāyūrī*.[1] This point can be substantiated further by a reference to the coin-types of the Greek city-states; these, when they represented particular Hellenic divinities like Zeus, Heracles, Pallas Athene, Artemis, Nike and others, were actually based on their sculptural representations current in those localities. In many cases they were tutelary deities and cult divinities of such city-states and they made their appearance as such on the coins.[2] In an opposite manner, the devices appearing on the earliest indigenous coins of India shed a flood of light on the problem of symbolic representations of gods and goddesses. Coomaraswamy, while referring to the number of symbols (*rūpa*) appearing on the punch-marked coins "in general use from about 600 B.C. up to the beginning of the Kushan period or somewhat later," makes the following interesting observation, ". . . the importance of these symbols, many of which have remained in use to the present day, lies in the fact that they represent a definite early Indian style, amounting to an explicit iconography." [3]

Inscriptions, too, in a remarkable manner, serve as important data for the study of iconography. Many of these not only inform us about the peculiarities of religious cults with which, as we have seen above, our subject is intimately associated, but also record the erection of shrines and construction of images of divinities to be enshrined in them.

[1] *Indian Historical Quarterly*; 1938, Winternitz Number, Vol. I, pp. 95-100.

[2] Not to speak of very well-known examples, we can refer to the coin-types of two inland Cretan cities of Rhaucus and Sybrita. The former state had a cult of Poseidon Hippios. "The god holding a trident stands beside his horse; Dionysus and Hermes were the gods of Sybrita and appeared as obverse and reverse devices of her coins." C. Seltman, *Greek Coins*, p. 178.

[3] Coomaraswamy, *History of Indian and Indonesian Art*, p. 45.

On some rare occasions, they even contain rough description of the iconographic features of the deities, the erection of whose shrines is being recorded in them. The so-called Ghosundi inscription of the second century B.C. refers to the erection of a *pūja-śilā-prākāra* round the shrines of Saṅkarṣaṇa and Vāsudeva, which presumably contained the images of these gods. Many and various are the Gupta epigraphic records which refer to the creation of shrines of such divinities as Bhavānī, Kātyāyanī, Śiva, Swāmi-Mahāsena, Viṣṇu-Śārṅgin, Buddha, Mahāvīra and others; sometimes there are passages or epithets contained in them which give us a fairly accurate description of these gods and goddesses. Again, the seals which were impressed on the copper-plate records of rulers responsible for issuing those charters often contain the representations of various religious objects which were specially used by different sovereigns as their respective royal insignia (*mudrā*). Thus, the imperial Gupta ruler Samudragupta who was a devout worshipper of Viṣṇu (*Parama Bhāgavata*) used Garuḍa as his special *rājāṅka* on his charters as we know from a passage in the Allahabad pillar inscription (*Garutmadaṅka-svaviṣayabhukti-śāsanayāchanādyupāya-sevākṛta*, etc., etc.); we know this garuḍa-emblem being depicted on most of the gold and silver coins of the imperial Guptas. The Pāla rulers of Bengal and Magadha who were *Paramasaugatas, i.e.*, devout worshippers of the Buddha used the symbol representing the preaching of the first sermon by the Master as their royal insignia and we very often find this characteristic scene represented in their various charters. The copper-plate grants of the Sena rulers of Bengal, on the other hand, bear in many cases the figure of the god Sadāśiva who was their patron deity and who was utilised as their royal insignia. Again, on rare occasions, the outlines of the figure of some deity can be found on the uninscribed portion of a particular copper-plate charter; thus, the copper-

plate grant of Mahāsāmanta Śrīmad Dommana-Pāla, who was a local ruler of southern Bengal, contains a very beautiful outline drawing of Nārāyaṇa-Viṣṇu riding on a chariot and his bird Garuḍa on its reverse side; the iconographic details are interesting.[1] Many and various such instances can be cited which will prove how the extant epigraphic records furnish us with interesting and significant materials for the study of our subject.

The second, though hardly less important, class of materials for the study of our subject is of literary character. These data can be subdivided into various groups. Among them mention may first be made of the general literature of the Indians, both of early and late periods. Their earliest extant literature the *Ṛgveda*, as I shall show fully in the next chapter, contains some very interesting details, both of negative as well as positive character, which will help one to elucidate various points connected with the subject. Not only the general problem of the origin and development of the practice of image-worship among the higher section of the Indo-Aryans is to be discussed on the basis of the evidence supplied to us by this and other early Vedic literature, but also the basic similarity of the later iconographic conceptions of many Hindu deities with the anthropomorphic and sometimes theriomorphic details of their Vedic counterparts is to be emphasised with the help of the early and late Vedic texts. A careful handling of this material will show the significant connection between the Vedic anthropomorphism and subsequent iconism. Several passages of the early Vedic literature, when read between the lines, will enable us to know something about the peculiar religious practices of the original settlers of India,

[1] The copper-plate grant is in the collection of the Asutosh Museum, Calcutta University. It was discovered in the Sunderbans, and presented to the Asutosh Museum by Mr. Devaprasad Ghosh, its Curator.

which will throw light on our subject. The Vedic sūtras, the grammatical works of the pre-Christian period and the dharma- and the artha-śāstras of early date incidentally throw interesting sidelights on this topic. Early literary records of the religious systems like Buddhism and Jainism contain incidental references to the religious practices of the Hindus, which will be specially useful for our study. Epic and purāṇic texts of early and late period are of pre-eminent importance in this connection ; the wealth of mythological lore contained in them require to be very carefully studied in order that we may interpret the significance of various carvings, frescoes and such other objects. As a thorough acquaintance with the early and late Buddhist records enables a student of the Buddhist iconography to understand the meaning of various carvings belonging to early and late Buddhist art, so the innumerable legends incorporated in the above class of Brahmanical literature will help us to throw clear light on the Brahmanical art of different periods. In fact, the study of the mythology of a people is essential for the understanding of its religious art and the importance of that class of its literature which is the repository of such mythological materials can never be over-estimated. Again, incidental iconographic descriptions of divine figures contained in many sections of epic and purāṇic literature as also iconographic and iconometric canons appearing in some of the early and late puraṇas are of immense value, nay indispensable, for a proper study of our subject. Another class of literature which throws casual light upon some aspects of our subject is the accounts of foreign travellers who make interesting observations on particular religious practices of the people of India.

But, the foremost place among the literary data for the study of our subject must be given to the iconographic and iconometric texts which have got a direct bearing on it.

This vast mass of literature took centuries to attain their present shape and some idea about their vastness may be hinted by remarking that what is left to us is only a portion of what was actually composed in course of ages. These canons are really the results of the accumulated experience of generations of artists whose business was to construct these images. The Indians of ancient times possessed a common trait of character, which led them to incorporate their own independent achievements into systems and to merge their own individuality into greater corporate wholes in order that their own experiences in particular fields of knowledge would have greater authority and sanctity to rest upon. Thus, to refer to one outstanding example in the domain of literary composition, it is a well-known fact that the whole of the present *Mahābhārata* was not composed in one time period and by one particular individual. Still, as early as the sixth and seventh centuries A.D., it had attained the character of an epic system, the credit for whose elaboration was given to a mythical sage, *viz.*, Vyāsa. True it is, some late purāṇic texts like the *Devībhāgavata* allude to not one but as many as twenty-eight Vyāsas[1]; most of these, however, are mythical figures, and, it is significant to note that the work in its characteristic manner actually refers to a system or institution typified by the mythical sage Vyāsa who, under different names and as different incarnations of Viṣṇu in 28 successive *dvāpara* ages, was responsible for the composition of the Vedas, Mahābhārata, the Purāṇas, etc. In fact, the word *vyāsa* etymologically means explanator or expounder. Similarly, as regards the iconographic and iconometric texts, it must be observed that attempts were made to systematise

[1] *Devībhāgavatam*, Bangavasi Edition, Chapter III, verses 26-33. Some of these names such as Svayambhū, Prajāpati, Uśanas, Bṛhaspati, Savitṛ, Yama, Maghavān, Vaśiṣṭha, Sārasvata and others are significant.

this floating mass of canons which were the direct outcome of the activities of the image-making artists themselves and were passed off in the names of such mythical sages such as some of the seven ṛṣis, like Bhṛgu, Atri and Vaśiṣṭha or legendary artists like Viśvakarmā and Maya.[1] The *Matsyapurāṇa* refers to eighteen expounders of the Vāstuśāstras, among whom mention may be made of Vaśiṣṭha, Viśvakarmā, Maya, Nagnajit, Garga and Bṛhaspati.[2] The *Mānasāra* (to be noticed later) mentions as many as 32 expounders of this subject, the list of which contains additional names such as Manu, Nala, Mānasāra, Mānabodha and others; that the list is a corrupt one can be proved by the fact that in some cases there is difficulty in understanding whether they are names of persons or titles of works, while in others we find a name and its various synonyms are utilised to enlarge it. The *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* (LIII, 1) tells us that the knowledge of the *Vāstuśāstras* came to be imparted through generations of artists from Brahmā, the creator (*Vāstujñānamathātaḥ Kamalabhavānmuniparamparāyātam*), and Utpala while commenting on it says that the word 'sages' refers to Garga and others (*Kamalabhavād Brahmaṇaḥ sakāśānmunīnāṃ Gargādīnāṃ yat pāramparyeṇa yātaṃ prāptamiti.*) The *Mānasāra* further elaborates the tradition and gives a mythical account of the origin of the various kinds of artists (*śilpin*) in its section of *Śilpilakṣaṇa*.

[1] The names of these Sapta Ṛṣis are invoked in various connections. They were the same as the Citra-Śikhaṇḍins who were the earliest and best promulgators of the Bhāgavata lore according to the *Nārāyaṇīya* section of the *Mahābhārata*.

[2] *Matsya-purāṇam*, Bangavasi Edition, Ch. 252, Verses 2-4:—

Bhṛguratrirvaśiṣṭhaśca Viśvakarmā Mayastathā।
Nārado Nagnajiccaiva Viśālākṣaḥ Purandaraḥ॥
Brahmā Kumāro Nandīśaḥ Saunako Garga eva ca।
Vāsudevo'niruddhaśca tathā Śukra-Bṛhaspatī
Aṣṭādaśaite vikhyātā Vāstuśāstropadeśakāḥ॥

Brahmā, the creator by the grace of Śiva, is the Mahāviśvakarmā; his four faces are named Viśvabhū (the eastern), Viśvavid (the southern), Viśvastha (the northern) and Viśvasraṣṭā (the western); from the east face was born Viśvakarmā, from the south Maya, from the north face Tvaṣṭā, and from the west Manu; Viśvakarmā, Maya, Tvaṣṭā and Manu married the respective daughters of Indra, Surendra, Vaiśravaṇa and Nala and became the fathers of Sthapati (architect), Sūtragrāhin (the draughtsman-designer), Varddhakī (well-versed in the law of proportions, the painter) and Takṣaka (the engraver, the stone-mason, etc.), respectively. Of these four, the position of the first, *i.e.*, the Sthapati was the most important and he was the teacher of the other three, the next in point of importance was Sūtragrāhī who was the preceptor of the remaining two, and so on. The first was well-versed in all the śāstras, the Sūtragrāhī in draughtsmanship, the Varddhakī in the rules of proportions (*mānakarmajña*) and the Takṣaka was an adept in chiselling and engraving. The very name Sthapati shows that he was fit for founding everything (*sthāpanāyārhaḥ*) and as he was *sthāpanādhipati*, so he was called Sthapati[1]; Sūtragrāhī and others always worked carefully under his orders and according to rules laid down in the *Vāstuśāstras*. There are four orders of śilpīs, *viz.*, Sthapati and the other three; of these the first is characterised by the signs of an *ācārya*, the second is well-informed about *śruti*, the lines and the śāstras, the third is the possessor of good judgment, versed in the *śrutis* and *citrakarma* (work of painting, etc.), while the last that is Takṣaka is adept in his work, cultured, *balabandhu* and merciful. The *śrutiśāstra* (treatises about *śilpa*, *māna*, etc.) should be full of all details (*sarvalakṣaṇam*) and that cannot be acquired

[1] Acharya, *Mānasāra*, Chapter 68, vv. 5-9; on other occasions the author refers to his predecessors; Ch. I, V. 2; Ch. 70, V. 58.

in this world by anybody without the help of an artist or a preceptor (*vinā śilpi vinā gurum*); as the knowledge of this *śāstra* is unobtainable without the aid of a śilpin, it should be learnt from him. If the knowledge thus acquired is not carried into fruition, (its possessor) does attain neither enjoyment nor salvation. The above, a free translation of *Mānasāra* (Acharya's edition), pp. 3-4, verses 1-19, shows how the author systematises the tradition about the origin and evolution of art through some mythical names, making it contemporaneous with creation itself. The other interesting point to be noted here is the relative importance which is assigned by the writer to the four different orders of artists and the highest position allocated to the architect. Scholars have always observed how the architectural art was the most important branch of all arts in ancient and mediaeval India; thus Grünwedel remarks, "The sculpture of ancient India . . . remained simply decorative and always connected with architecture" (*Buddhist Art*, pp. 1-2). Coomaraswamy says, "In the Gupta period the image has taken its place in architecture; becoming necessary, it loses its importance and enters into the general decorative scheme, and this integration acquires delicacy and repose" (*HIIA*, p. 71). In the above passages from *Mānasāra* we have a textual corroboration of what was known from a careful study of the ancient and mediaeval Indian art forms.

The *Vāstuśāstra* or the science of architecture and allied arts are dwelt upon in the *Matsya-purāṇa* just prior to its treatment of the iconographic and iconometric canons and the names of some expounders are similar to those of a few of the reputed authors of treatises on *Pratimālakṣaṇa* and *Citralakṣaṇa*. Thus, Varāhamihira, in the Chapter 57 of his *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* (Sudhakar Dvivedi's edition), while dealing with the characteristic signs of images and their measurements incidentally refers to a few other writers on this subject like Nagnajit and Vaśiṣṭha, who, as we have

seen above are included among the 18 Vāstuśāstropadeśakas. Nagnajit has been cited by him twice and Vaśiṣṭha once and Bhaṭṭa Utpala, the commentator of the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* actually quotes passages from the works of these two previous writers in support of his author. This proves that, however mythical might be the nature of these names, śilpa treatises were composed and they actually passed current in their names at a comparatively early period; otherwise Utpala who flourished in the tenth century A.D. could not have quoted passages from them. The art treatise, entitled *Citralakṣaṇa*, now to be had only in its Tibetan version—its Sanskrit original not being available—which has been edited by Laufer, is ascribed to this Nagnajit; it, as has been remarked by the learned editor, is sometimes referred to as *Nagnajiccitralakṣaṇam* or simply as *Nagnavratam*. Nagnajit was also the author of a work, probably, *Pratimālakṣaṇa* by name. While commenting on verse 15 of Chapter 57 of the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* the first line of which runs, "*Āsyaṃ sakeśanicayaṃ ṣoḍaśa dairghyeṇa Nagnajitproktaṃ*," Utpala makes this interesting comment, "*Nagnajitproktaṃ Pratimālakṣaṇe āsyaṃ mukhaṃ sakeśanicayaṃ ṣoḍaśāṅgulāni*"; or this *Pratimālakṣaṇa* might have been simply a section of his other work just mentioned. Further, there were other such works passing current in the names of such mythical sages as Kāśyapa and Agastya, or legendary artists like Viśvakarmā and Maya. Utpala quotes extensively from Kāśyapa in his commentary while many iconographic and iconometric texts passing current in the south pass in the names of both these mythical sages. The *śilpaśāstra* ascribed to Kāśyapa is called the *Kāśyapīya*, known also as the *Aṃśumadbheda* (or rather forming a part of the *Aṃśumadbheda*).[1] Agastya is the reputed author of the work entitled *Sakalādhikāra* about which Ram Raz

[1] It has been edited in the Anandasram Sanskrit Series, Poona.

makes this interesting observation "the portion of the work which has as yet come under my own observation, is exclusively on the subject of sculpture as connected with the function of statues; but it is so diffuse that if we suppose the whole work to be written in a similar style it must considerably exceed the volume of *Mānasāra*, the largest at present of my collection." [1] A large volume of texts dealing with architecture and allied arts passing current in the name of Maya and edited not very long ago by T. Ganapati Sastri in the Trivandrum Sanskrit Series fully justifies my remarks made above. Many other texts like *Viśvakarmāvatāraśāstra* contain ample materials for the study of this subject and Gopinath Rao rendered a first rate service to all its students by partially editing relevant portions of these as appendices to his monumental work on Hindu Iconography, when many of them had not been published. Mention may be made here of many other *Śilpa* works, most of which have not yet been edited; while others are known only from quotations in various known *śilpa* treatises. Acharya mentions *Sanatkumāra Vāstuśāstra*, which is known to exist in manuscripts mostly fragmentary. The author of this work owns his indebtedness to *pūrvācāryas* like Candra, Yama, Bhṛgu, Aṅgiras, Vyāsa, Manu and others. A *Sārasvatīya-śilpaśāstra* is referred to in Aufrecht's *Catalogus Catalogourum* (Vol. I, p. 714). Hemādri quotes from one *Aparājita-pṛcchā* which may be the same as *Aparājita-vāstuśāstra* attributed to Viśvakarmā, one of the 18 authors mentioned above.[2]

[1] Ram Raz, *Essay on the Architecture of the Hindus*, p. 8.

[2] *Devatāmūrti-prakaraṇam*, Introduction, pp. 12-15. The writer of the introduction refers to numbers of other texts whose śilpa character cannot be definitely demonstrated. Ram Raz's remarks on the *śilpaśāstras* of the Hindus are worth quoting in this connection, "It is true that the Hindus were in possession of numerous treatises on architecture, sculpture, etc., which collectively are called the *Śilpa-*

Extensive anthological works containing texts on architecture, iconography (dealing with the construction of images belonging not only to Brahmanical Hinduism but also to the rival creeds of Buddhism and Jainism), iconometry, the allied arts of bronze-casting and painting were composed and reference can be made to one such work, *viz.*, *Mānasāra*, already referred to, which has recently been critically edited by P. K. Acharya. The name of another such work, though in a less comprehensive scale can be alluded to here which has recently been edited in the Gaekwad Oriental Series ; this is *Mānasollāsa*, which is itself a part of *Abhilaṣitārthacintāmaṇi*, a bigger anthology dealing with various topics, said to have been compiled by the Cālukya king Someśvaradeva who flourished in the 12th century A.D. King Bhoja of Dhara who flourished a century earlier is the reputed author of the *Samarāṅganasūtradhara*, a work mainly on architecture. Extensive collections of such and other allied texts have been edited by Ganapati Sastri in the Trivandrum Sanskrit Series and they are entitled *Mayamata* of Mayamuni (already mentioned above) and *Śilparatna* of Śrīkumāra which were originally written in Malayalam script.

But, in most cases the original sources of these anthologies on religious art are to be sought in the numbers of Saṃhitās, Āgamas and Tantras, associated with one or other of the principal Brahmanical sects. These religious treatises, belonging to the Pāñcarātra (Vaiṣṇava) and the Śaiva systems, are usually divided into four parts, technically known as pādas, each of which dealt with one or other of

śāstra but unfortunately few traces of them remain. There appears to have been, according to some, 32 and according to others 64, standard treatises on the above-mentioned arts In a series of memorial verses prescribed among the artists are recorded the names of the authors or titles of the above-mentioned 64 treatises. Of these 32 are *mukhya*, the others are *upa* or subordinate."

the topics, *viz.*, Caryā, Kriyā, Yoga and Jñāna. The first part dealt with the rules of conduct to be adopted and actions to be performed by the individual aspirant after salvation, the second one with the varieties of 'making,' which meant everything connected with the construction of temples and images, the third with concentration; all three of which, if properly and systematically worked up, would lead to the attainment of true knowledge, the resultant of which would be salvation. We are here concerned with the second part, *viz.*, *kriyāpāda*, which is admittedly one of the most important and voluminous sections of these sectarian treatises. Schrader rightly remarks, "Very few Saṃhitās (Pāñcarātra) seem to have actually consisted of these four sections. The proportion of interest shown for each of the four branches seems to be well-illustrated by *Pādma Tantra* in the edition, of which the Jñānapāda occupies 45 pages, the Yogapāda 11 pages, the Kriyāpāda 215 pages and the Caryāpāda 376 pages. The practical part, Kriyā and Caryā, is the favourite subject, the rest being treated as a rule by way of introduction or digression."[1] Thus many of the Pāñcarātra and Śaiva Saṃhitās and Āgamas came to contain important sections dealing with the elaborate rules about the construction of temples and images which were regarded as practical guides by numbers of sectarian devotees. This class of literature may conveniently be compared with portions of the Brāhmaṇa literature which were principally conversant with laying down meticulous details for the correct performances of different Vedic sacrifices. Gopinath Rao mainly drew from the Kriyāpāda of the Pāñcarātra *Vaikhānasāgama* in order to explain the various characteristic features of the Vaiṣṇava images in his work and he utilised the relevant sections of such

[1] Schrader, *Introduction to the Pāñcarātra*, p. 22.

Śaiva Āgamas, as *Suprabheda, Kiraṇa, Kāmika* and *Aṃśumadbheda* for throwing light on the Śaiva icons. The hitherto unpublished *Hayaśīrṣa Pañcarātra* contains very elaborate details of this nature which, when critically edited, will throw a flood of light on the different branches of Brahmanical Hindu Iconography.

Reference has already been made to the purāṇic literature, a study of which is essential for proficieney in Brahmanical Iconography. It is not only the mythological lore contained in them which is indispensable for a thorough acquaintance with our subject, but also the multitude of iconographic and iconometric canons which are contained in such Purāṇas and Upapurāṇas of early and late periods as *Matsya, Agni, Padma, Viṣṇudharmottara*, etc. Many of these Purāṇas, though they profess generally to deal with five principal topics of Purāṇic lore, such as *sarga, pratisarga, vaṃśa, manvantara* and *vaṃśānucarita*, associate themselves prominently with one or other of the few principal sects and contain elaborate details about *Pratimālakṣaṇam* (sometimes described as *Devatārccānukīrtanam*), *Pratiṣṭhāvidhi* (the mode of the installation of these images), *Devagṛhanirmāṇam* (construction of temples), etc. Sometimes, a very close similarity is clearly discernible between one or other of such texts and those of the same nature appearing in the relevant sections of particular Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās ; this probably signifies that the former borrowed from the latter or both drew from the same source. Thus, comparison of the chapters on *Bhūparigraha* in connection with the *Pratiṣṭhā* ceremony and the other chapters on *Pātālayoga, Prāsādalakṣaṇam, Pratimālakṣaṇam*, etc., of the *Agnipurāṇa* with the similar chapters in the *Hayaśīrṣa Pañcarātra* fully shows that the compiler of this section of the *Agnipurāṇa* condensed much that was in the latter work. It must be said to his credit that he shows his indebtedness to the Pāñcarātra work by introducing his essay with these

words, '*Hayaśīrṣaḥ pratiṣṭhārthaṃ devānāṃ Brahmaṇe-'bravīt.*' [1] In most cases, these topics are incorporated into the general body of the Purāṇa as replies to the questions of the sages put to the Sūta, as most of the other topics in the same are introduced. But in rare instances, the usual order is changed. Thus, the *Viṣṇudharmottara* which contains the fullest details among the purāṇic literature, not only on iconography and iconometry but also on painting and architecture, introduces these by way of questions and answers between the sage Mārkaṇḍeya and the king Vajra (a *sagotra* of Kṛṣṇa), when the latter is the interlocutor and the former the expounder. This Upa-Purāṇa, occasionally given out as a part of *Garuḍa-Purāṇa*, and quoted repeatedly by Alberuni as the '*Viṣṇudharma*,' is a very useful work of an encyclopaedic character, a great part of Section III of which treats of the canons for the construction of temples and images as also the rules for painting, and other fine arts.

Iconographic and iconometric texts were also allotted some place in some authoritative early Indian works on astronomy and nītiśāstra. Mention has already been made of a particular chapter in the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* of Varāhamihira which deals with iconography and iconometry ; there are two other chapters, one on the installation of these images, and the other on the selection of material for the construction of images (Chap. 58, *Vanasampraveśādhyāya*, and Chap. 59, *Pratiṣṭhāvidhi*, Dvivedi's edition) which have got an important bearing on studies in Indian Iconology and which will be discussed in their proper place. All these chapters, with Bhaṭṭa Utpala's valuable commentary on them, are very important for our purpose, because in them we light upon iconographic data which can be dated with some

[1] This fact has not been noticed by the editor of *Devatāmūrti-prakaraṇam* (Calcutta Sanskrit Series).

amount of certainty. As regards the iconographic matter in the nītiśāstras, we may refer to the *Śukranītisāra*, Chap. IV, section IV of which is of immense use to all students of religious art of India.

Of the many and various omnibus works, generally belonging to the category of Smṛtis compiled at a much later date, mention may be made of the *Caturvarga-cintāmaṇi* from the pen of the great compiler Hemādri. The Vratakhaṇḍa of this monumental work contains innumerable extracts dealing with the iconographic features of a really formidable host of gods and goddesses belonging to the pantheon of different Brahmanical sectaries. Hemādri's compilation is extremely interesting and helpful not only from the point of view of its supplying us with such details about less known members of the Hindu pantheon, but also on account of his almost invariably mentioning the source from which he has quoted. This last fact enables us to compare the extracts with the same in their original setting, wherever the original source is extant. Gopāla Bhaṭṭa, in his *Haribhaktivilāsa*, followed in the lines of Hemādri; but as he was pre-eminently a Vaiṣṇava, the divinities whose iconographic details he incorporated in his work were chiefly connected with Vaiṣṇavism. The last three vilāsas (18-20) of his book deal with the construction of images, the installation of the same, various rituals connected with them, the building of temples, etc. Like Hemādri he not only quotes from such previous works as the *Matsya, Agni, Viṣṇudharmottara* and other Purāṇas, but he also very frequently utilises the Pāñcarātra text *Hayaśīrṣapañcarātra*. As the last has not yet been critically edited, extensive quotations from this unpublished work furnish us with materials of an authoritative character and we can check the readings of the manuscripts of this Pāñcarātra text with the help of these extracts. Another work of such a character is *Tantrasāra* of Kṛṣṇānanda Āgamvāgīśa, which contains extensive quotations from

various Tantras like *Rudrayāmala, Brahmayāmala, Kubjikā-mata, Śāradātilaka* and others; many of these contain the *dhyānas* of Tantric gods and goddesses, which help to explain their iconographic features.

Several works attributed to Maṇḍana, the son of Śrī-kṣetra, both of whom flourished in Mewar during the reign of Mahārāṇā Kumbha, are of great importance in this respect. Maṇḍana, a reputed artist of his age, had his own statue as well as those of his two sons Jaita and Saita carved in relief inside the dhvaja-stambha raised under the orders of the said Mahārāṇā, his patron, in honour of the great god Samiddheśvara Śiva whose temple was erected by Rāṇā Mokal near by at Chitorgaḍh. Maṇḍana is said to have composed or compiled several works on art and architecture, two of which are specially connected with our subject. These are *Devatāmūrti-prakaraṇa* and *Rūpamaṇḍana* both of which have been recently edited in the Calcutta Sanskrit Series (No. XII). These two texts are evident compilations, the first one mainly drawing from South Indian works like *Mayamata* and *Śilparatna* referred to above; the author of the introduction to this edition has carefully noted the borrowals not only from these but also from such Purāṇas as *Matsya, Brahma, Padma, Skanda* and *Viṣṇudharmottara* and others, in Chapter V of the Introduction. Another interesting fact to be noted in this connection is that, of these two works, *Rūpamaṇḍana* seems to be the more authoritative one, materials from which were freely utilised in the other text.

Our account of the textual data for the study of religious art of India will be incomplete, if we fail to refer to the *dhyāna-mantras* of numerous deities, which are incorporated in the works on rituals connected with the well-known sects. Here, a clear distinction can be made between the *dhyānas* of different deities belonging to various Brahmanical sects and the same (*sādhanas*) of the deities belonging to the

Vajrayāna Buddhism. The difference lay in the manner of meditating on the deity and in fixing the relationship between him and the individual. In the Brahmanical sectarian systems where love and adoration (*bhakti*) of a personal god was the outstanding feature, an element of duality was constantly present. But a strictly philosophical Vajrayānist emphasised the eternal unity between the god to be meditated upon and the individual meditating on, and thus an element of spiritual monism is to be clearly perceived there. This observation can be substantiated by referring to two typical *dhyāna-mantras*, one belonging to sectarian Brahmanism and the other to Vajrayāna Buddhism. One such well-known *mantra* outlines the conception of Śiva, thus :— *Dhyāyennityaṃ maheśaṃ rajatagirinibhaṃ cārucandrāvataṃsaṃ ratnākalpojjvalāṅgaṃ paraśumṛgavarābhītihastaṃ prasannam | padmāsīnaṃ samantāt stutamamaraganairvyāghra-kṛttiṃ vasānaṃ viśvādyaṃ viśvavījaṃ nikhilabhayaharaṃ pañcavaktraṃ trinetram ||* We do not fail to find in these lines a clear-cut concept of the god in which his main iconographic features are fully delineated ; it will be needless to add that these followed principally the already established iconographic type of the deity and the whole *mantra* was a sort of a handy formula for the convenience of the worshipper. Now, if we compare this with a *sādhana* of any one of the Vajrayāna divinities, we find the difference noticed above. The *sādhana* of Siṃhanāda Lokeśvara, one of the varieties of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara runs thus :—" *Ātmānaṃ Siṃhanāda-Lokeśvararūpaṃ bhāvayet, śvetavarṇaṃ trinetraṃ jaṭāmukuṭinaṃ nirbhūṣaṇaṃ vyāghracarmaprāvṛtaṃ siṃhāsanastham mahārājalīlaṃ candrāsanaṃ candraprabham bhāvayet. Dakṣiṇe sitaphaṇiveṣṭitaṃ triśūlaṃ śvetaṃ, vāme nānā sugandhikusumaparipūritapadmabhājanaṃ vāmahastāt utthapadmopari jvalatkhaḍgam*" (*Sādhanamālā*, Vol. I, p. 63). We can certainly pick out details of an iconographic character from the above extract, which

give a clear-cut outline of the deity (evidently based principally on the Brahmanical god Śiva, *cf.* the *śūla* entwined with snake by his side, the matted locks, the half-moon among them, the tiger skin garment, white colour, the absence of ornaments, etc.); but the distinctive feature lies in the fact that the *sādhaka* meditates on himself as the deity, the portion in the *mantra—ātmānaṃ bhāvayet*, etc., being significant. Sometimes, the *praṇāma-mantra* of particular deities also contains their iconographic descriptions, in broader out-lines which are helpful. Thus, one such in honour of the goddess Śītalā (*Namāmi śītalāṃ devīṃ rāsabhasthāṃ digambarīm । Mārjjanīkalasopetāṃ sūrpālaṅkṛtamastakām ॥*) leaves little to be added to her iconographic description in her *dhyāna mantra*. The *stavas*—elocutory verses sung in honour of respective divinities—also incorporated in them such outlines. But, in all such types of texts, we seldom light upon any new detail which is not already known from earlier real iconographic texts noticed previously, and thus the importance of the former is of a secondary character in the study of Brahmanical Hindu iconography. It is not so in the case of the Vajrayāna Buddhist iconography and the standard works on it by Foucher or Bhattacharya prove how much beholden its study is to these *dhyāna-* or *sādhana-mālās*.

It is not an easy task to ascertain the respective dates of the bulk of the iconographic literature referred to above. One can find little difficulty, however, in dating some among them—especially those collected in the works of authors whose dates are otherwise known. Thus, the age of the texts of an iconographic and iconometric character appearing in the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* can be definitely fixed in the 6th century A.D., as Kern has very effectively settled the age of the work at that period. Similarly, we can ascertain the dates of the compilations of Hemādri, Maṇḍana and Gopāla

Bhaṭṭa. Hemādri flourished in the 13th century A.D. and the other two in the 15th century (Gopāla Bhaṭṭa was a contemporary of Śrī-Caitanya, while Maṇḍana, as we have seen above, was the court architect and sculptor of Mahārāṇā Kumbha of Mewar). But we find ourselves in difficulty when we take up the question of the age of those texts which originally formed part of the Pāñcarātra Saṁhitās, the Śaiva Āgamas, the Śākta Tantras and some Purāṇic literature which were the sources of these late compilations. The dates of most of these works are not definitely known and it is likely that many of them were composed at different periods, being added to from time to time. Schrader has fixed the age, the 2nd century A.D. to the 8th century A.D., as the period during which some of the most authoritative Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās were composed ; he, however, enumerated only a few, about 14 or 15 in number, which belonged to this category.[1] But the few Pāñcarātra texts which contain iconographic and allied matter, for example the *Hayaśīrṣa* and the *Vaikhānasa* are impossible to be dated with certainty. Gopinath Rao remarks, on what authority we do not know, that the prose recension of the *Vaikhānasāgama* is perhaps the oldest among the Āgamas of the Vaiṣṇavas, assigning a much later date to the metrical form of the same work. It must be observed, here, that the descriptions of Viṣṇuite images given in the former tally in a remarkable manner with the extant Vaiṣṇava images of southern India of the 6th to 8th centuries A.D. The latter, *i.e.*, the metrical version of the same work as it refers to the Drāviḍa-vedas, *i.e.*, the *Prabandhas* of the Āḻvārs, cannot certainly be older than the 9th century A.D. But if we compare the

[1] Schrader, *Introduction to the Pāñcarātra*, p. 20. He distinguishes between the two types of Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās, *viz.*, northern and southern.

iconographic portion of the prose version of the *Vaikhānasāgama* with the same of the *Hayaśīrṣa Pañcarātra*, we are struck by the fact that the latter lays down the general outlines of the various images of Viṣṇu in a much less stereotyped manner than is done by the author of the former. Stereotyped divisions and subdivisions, as many as thirty-six in number, of the *Dhruva-beras* or the immovable images of Viṣṇu are scrupulously described in the *Vaikhānasāgama*.[1] This would suggest probably a later date for it than the *Hayaśīrṣa*, but this alone would not justify us in making a definite assertion. As for the Śaivāgamas, Gopinath Rao is of opinion that the *Kāmikāgama* is the oldest among them ; and as in many of the other ones, including the *Kāraṇāgama*, reference to the *Devāram* hymns composed by the Nāyānmārs or the Śivabhaktas is to be found, they are to be dated later than the 9th century A.D.[2] The Śākta Tantra works, as we have them at present and which contain iconographic and iconometric data, are mostly much later in date than the 9th or 10th century A.D. None can at all be certain about the respective dates of the Purāṇas, when their heterogeneous character is taken into consideration. We can ascertain, however, their relative age from internal evidence ; it will be touched in a subsequent chapter. But a comparison of some of the iconographic texts given in several of the Purāṇas with those given in some of the Pāñcarātra literature will fully prove the indebtedness of the former to the latter (*cf.* my remarks about

[1] *Yoga bhoga*, *vīra* and *abhicārika*, according to the particular kind of result desired by the worshipper; *sthānaka*, *āsana* and *śayana* —this division being based on the different modes in which the principal figure is shown; lastly, *uttama*, *madhyama* and *adhama*, according as the number of accessory figures in the composition cluster round the central figure. T. A. G. Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Vol. I, Pt. I, pp. 78-80.

[2] T.A.G. Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, Pt. I, pp. 55-57.

the borrowal of iconographic matter by the author of the *Agnipurāṇa* from the *Hayaśīrṣa* text).

A general remark, however, can very justifiably be made with regard to the earlier age limit of most of these canonical texts. If we fix the earlier limit of the oldest among them in the 2nd to the 4th century of the Christian era, we may not be far wrong; but then it is impossible for us to determine which among them are such, and it is a fact that some at least of the iconographic features of many of the Brahmanical divinities were based on the partially defined anthropomorphism or theriomorphism of their Vedic counterparts. This limit did not go further back than the early Gupta period. In a subsequent part of this book, it will be shown that the image-making activities attained a great impetus in the early centuries of the Christian era due to various causes, and images belonging to different creeds came to be made in large numbers. Different groups of artists entrusted with this task put their experiences in black and white not only for their own convenience, but also for the convenience of the generations of artists to follow them, and in this way grew up a vast mass of such texts which were being added to from time to time. Thus, images were first constructed according to the specific needs of the varieties of expanding creeds and then the rules for their making were gradually stereotyped; it is just like the evolution of a language and the various grammatical rules appertaining to it. The analogy can be drawn further; as in the case of the grammatical literature of a particular language, development of different schools can be noticed as the language progressed, so here also, with the growth of iconoplastic art in India, different schools of artists came to lay down variant rules for the making of icons. I have already referred to the 18 Vāstuśāstropadeśakas mentioned in the *Matsyapurāṇa* and have also shown how this information is partially corroborated by the *Bṛhat-*

saṃhitā of Varāhamihira. I shall here show further, how this differentiation can first be noticed by proceeding on iconometric lines and how the name of at least one such school can be ascertained from Utpala's commentary on a passage of Varāhamihira. Thus, Varāhamihira writes with regard to the measurement of the length and breadth of the face of an image in this manner—

Svairaṅgulapramāṇairdvādaśa vistīrṇamāyataṃ ca mukham ।
Nagnajitā tu caturdaśa dairghyeṇa drāviḍaṃ kathitam ॥

Now, Utpala actually quotes from the work of Nagnajit, which is not available now, the following passage on which the above observation of Varāhamihira was based :—

Vistīrṇaṃ dvādaśa mukhaṃ dairghyeṇa ca caturdaśa ।
Aṅgulāni tathā kāryaṃ tanmānaṃ drāviḍaṃ smṛtam ॥

Nagnajit, here, clearly refers to a school of measurement followed in the making of icons in the Drāviḍa country and we have seen that Varāhamihira speaks of another school of measurement probably followed in the northern country. Gopinath Rao is quite correct when he says, "The author, Nagnajit, quoted by Varāhamihira, must certainly be older than the middle of the sixth century A.D.; the quotation . . . indicates the existence of a school of sculpture in south India then." But the other remark of his, in this connection, that " the quotation also incidentally informs us that Nagnajit was possibly a Dravidian author on *śilpaśāstra* " does not bear scrutiny.[1] Had Nagnajit been really a Dravidian author, it is presumable that he would not have referred to this school particularly as Dravidian, in his *Pratimāl akṣaṇa*. We have no means, now, of associating Nagnajit with a particular locality, though Vedic, Epic and Purāṇic tradition refers to one

[1] T. A. G. Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, Part I, Introduction, p. 59.

Nagnajit as a king in the Gandhāra region; but this king Nagnajit might have been quite a different person from Nagnajit, the author of works on *Citralakṣaṇa* and *Pratimālakṣaṇa*.

It is necessary here to discuss briefly the question of the universal or regional character of the texts in relation to the images discovered in various localities of India. Gopinath Rao, while discussing this question, makes this general observation, " From the uniformity observable everywhere throughout India in the arrangement, say, of the individual figures belonging to a subject, it is clear that the rules laid down in the Āgamas and Tantras have had a very general application."[1] He further remarks, " The same rules having been obeyed everywhere in the matter of making images, it is no wonder that the same results have been produced by artists belonging to all parts of the country in so far as the art is apt to be bound down by rules." But, are the rules same everywhere and are the results obtained by the artists of different parts of India always the same? No doubt Rao notes some difference in the images belonging to the various parts of the country; but this, according to him, is " only observable in the outline of the feature and the details of ornamentation." The quotation, '*Deśānurūpabhūṣaṇaveśālaṅkāramūrtibhiḥ kāryā | Pratimā lakṣaṇayuktā sannihitā vṛddhidā bhavati ||*' from the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* of Varāhamihira in his support is apt. But in many cases difference lay deeper than that. The treatment of the same type of an image of a divinity can be shown to differ in essential features in widely different regions of India and variant iconographic texts can be utilised to explain them. I have already shown how the *Vaikhānasāgama* description of the *Dhruva-beras* of Viṣṇu closely tallies with the fairly early Viṣṇuite images of the South.

[1] T. A. G. Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, Part I, p. 47.

But few are the Viṣṇu images of northern India which can be explained by the same text. In the south Indian images of Viṣṇu, his two invariable attendant consorts (except in the Yoga varieties) are Śrī and Bhūdevī holding, beside a fly-whisk, a lotus and a blue-lotus respectively; this characteristic has its textual basis in the *Vaikhānasa*. But the north Indian varieties of Viṣṇu images, on the other hand, has almost invariably Śrī and Puṣṭi or Sarasvatī holding a lotus and a lute in their respective hands; this particular feature of theirs corresponds to the descriptions of such images given in the *Matsya*, *Agni* and *Kālikā Purāṇas*. The *Matsya* text lays down that Śrī and Puṣṭi holding lotuses should be made by the side of Viṣṇu (*Śrīśca puṣṭiśca karttabye pārśvayoḥ padmasaṃyute*; *Matsya*, 258. 15); the *Kālikāpurāṇa* says that Śrī should be made to appear on his right while Sarasvatī on his left (*dadhānaṃ dakṣiṇe devīṃ Śriyaṃ pārśve tu bibhratam। Sarasvatīṃ vāmapārśve.....*); the *Agnipurāṇa* text, however, closely fits with the actual images when it definitely lays down *Śrīpuṣṭī cāpi karttavye padmavīṇākarānvite। Urumātrocchritāyāme...*|, *i.e.*, Śrī and Puṣṭi holding a lotus flower and a lute respectively in their hands and shown up to the thigh of the main image in their height should be carved on either side of the figure of Viṣṇu (*Agnipurāṇa*, Ch. 44). There can be no doubt that the application of the respective texts mentioned above was regional in character, the three latter texts being followed in the north, while the one former in the south. We can further substantiate our point by referring to the two varieties of the images of the Sungod—north Indian and south Indian—and the different iconographic texts describing the Sūrya image. The most important characteristics of a north Indian Sūrya are its *udīcyaveśa* (consisting of the close covering of the body and topboots of the legs—gradually these features were subdued) and its waist-girdle, the *vyaṅga* or *avyaṅga*;

these are conspicuous by their absence in the south Indian reliefs of Sūrya. Now, if we study some relevant iconographic texts descriptive of the sun icons we find that they also can be classified into two well defined groups on the basis of the mention or non-mention of the particular iconic features noted above. Of the various texts collected by Gopinath Rao to describe the icons of Sūrya, the *Aṃśumadbhedāgama*, the *Suprabhedāgama* and the *Śilparatna* do not at all record the features to be found in the Sūrya images of northern India, while the others, *viz.*, the *Bṛhatsaṁhitā*, *Viśvakarmāvatāra-śāstra*, *Viṣṇudharmottara*, *Matsyapurāṇa*, *Agnipurāṇa*, etc., do so. We can with a great deal of plausibility assign on this basis the former groups of texts to the southern region and the latter group to the northern. The *Pūrvakāraṇāgama*, which is also presumably a southern text, contains passages such as *Kañcukāñcitavigraham* and *pādau sakaṭakau tasya* reminiscent of the northern feature and thus seems to be influenced by the latter group of texts. Thus as a broad division can be made between the Brahmanical images of India into north Indian and south Indian on the basis of important iconographic features, so, the texts also can be generally classified into two groups, those followed in the north and the others in the south. But there can be no denying the fact that sometimes texts belonging to one group showed traces of their contact with those belonging to the other, as undoubtedly varieties of images usually current in one region are occasionally to be found in the other. I have already referred to the *Pūrvakāraṇāgama* having been influenced by the iconographic texts of the north; similarly, examples can be cited where north Indian texts can be shown to bear south Indian characteristics. This is especially noticeable in the late compilations. Maṇḍana, an artist of Rajputana, in his works draws copiously from both the sources and in many instances his descriptions of particular images are given in the approved

south Indian manner. Thus, the following description of the image of the sun in his *Rūpamaṇḍana—Sarvalakṣaṇa-saṃyuktaṃ sarvābharaṇabhūṣitam | Ādityasya tvidaṃ rūpaṃ kuryāt pāpa-praṇāśanam* ||—does not contain the well-known iconographic traits of the Sūrya images of the north.[1] Kṛṣṇānanda Āgamavāgīśa, a great Tāntric pandit of Bengal and a contemporary of Śrī-Caitanya, refers to two *dhyānamantras* of Sūrya, none of which contains any of the same.[2] The omission of these details in the north Indian compilations may have also another explanation in this particular case; as these were late works, most of the traits which had their basis in the non-Indian motifs were purposefully omitted—a reason which might also have actuated in the omission of the same in their earlier prototypes (*sic*) of the south.

While discussing the problem of the correlation between the texts available at present and extant images, a note of caution needs be laid down. Many indeed are the early and late mediaeval Brahmanical images the iconographic features of which completely tally with the descriptions of the same types of the divinities in particular texts; but there are numerous other images whose features sometimes can only be partially explained or at other times cannot at all be accounted for with the help of known iconographic literature. Similarly, many and various are the textual descriptions of less known members of the fully-developed pantheon, which now seem to have had no sculptural basis at all. This

[1] *Cf.* the details of the Āditya images as given in the *Aṃśumadbheda* and *Suprabheda āgamas* as quoted by Gopinath Rao, *Pratimālakṣaṇāni*, pp. 83-84; details of the chariots and seven horses, which are given in these, are omitted in the *Rūpamaṇḍana* description.

[2] Both these *dhyānas* contain descriptions of the four-handed images of Sūrya; two hands hold lotus flowers while the other two are shown in the *abhaya* and *varada* poses. Four-handed Sūrya images, though rare, are not absolutely unknown.

seemingly anomalous fact can be explained by saying that our knowledge both of the actual images and of the extant texts can on no account be said to be complete and perfect. I have mentioned above that the iconographic literature now obtainable, enormous though it is, is only a portion of its original bulk and some new sections of it may yet be discovered in course of time. It is also a matter of common knowledge that Brahmanical images which have so far been discovered are comparatively few when we take into account the numbers of images carved in various materials through many centuries of the flourishing period of the icon-maker's art in India. Untold numbers of images, many of which were probably priceless works of religious art, were destroyed by the vandalism of iconoclasts and thus irretrievably lost to us. The fault of destroying ancient works of art is not always to be laid at the door of the image breakers of alien faith actuated by fanatical zeal; persons belonging to the same faith caused intentional damage to them actuated by utilitarian motive. Numerous are the ruins of ancient and mediaeval India which have been exploited through ages by various classes of people for their own building and other purposes. Beautiful works of art in marble, statuaries and architectural pieces from Amarāvatī were burnt down to supply them with lime to be utilised for their paltry ends. Sometimes, responsible public officials used them in constructions. Innumerable sculptural and architectural pieces from Sarnáth, belonging to Brahmanical and Buddhist shrines, were carted away from the site and thrown into the Ganges as mere ballast when the Dufferin Bridge was being built over the river at Benares.[1]

[1] The river has since restored some of them. A few of the sculptures in the collection of the Bhārat Kalā Bhavan, Benares, were retrieved from the bed of the river near the bridge. Some sculptures of great iconographic interest were found by me in the river bed, not very far from the site of the bridge.

Again, innumerable images were in ancient times made of wood which is extremely perishable in this country; they did not survive for a pretty long period after their construction. All these facts will have to be taken into consideration for explaining apparent discrepancies between the images and the texts. Occasional discoveries of new types of images, sometimes, throw interesting light on this point. Gopinath Rao quotes this description of Śivadūtī, one of the numerous forms of the Devī, from the *Matsyapurāṇa* :—

Tathaivārtamukhī śuṣkā śuṣkakāyaviśeṣataḥ ।
Bahubāhuyutā devī bhujagaiḥ pariveṣṭitā ॥
Kapālamālinī bhīmā tathā khaṭvāṅgadhāriṇī ।
Śivadūtī ca kartavyā śṛgālavadārā śubhā ॥
Ālīḍhāsanasaṃsthānā tathā rājaṃścaturbhujā ।
Asṛkpātradharā devī khaḍgaśūladharā tathā ॥
Caturthastu karastasyāstathā kāryastu sāmiṣaḥ । [1]

But he could not illustrate this description of the goddess with the aid of any extant relief. Now, it was Natesa Aiyar who first drew the attention of scholars to a sculpture in the collection of Nagpur Museum, which in a remarkable manner coincides with this Purāṇic description. It may be noted here that this sculpture does not conform to the other mode of representing the goddess given in the *Śrītattvanidhi*, where her name is shortened into Dūtī.[2] Among the numerous Devī icons in the Chauṇṣaṭ Yoginī temple at Bheraghat, many of which are in an extremely mutilated condition, this particular aspect of the Devī cannot at present be recognised. But one interesting fact concerning these, which has special bearing on the topic under discussion, ought to be noted here. Most of these images bear identificatory inscriptions on their pedestals; in a few cases,

[1] T. A. G. Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Vol. I, Part II, *Pratimālakṣaṇāni*, p. 125.

[2] Natesa Aiyar, *Catalogue of Archaeological Exhibits in the Nagpur Museum.*

it is possible to show that the latter (the *pīṭhikā*) did not originally belong to the figure which is placed upon it at present. But in the majority of instances they form an organic whole; and many are the names to be read in the pedestal inscriptions which can not be recognised among the authorised lists of such goddesses in numbers of available texts. No doubt the names of such well-known aspects of the goddess, as Brahmāṇī Māheśvarī, Vārāhī, Vaiṣṇavī, Caṇḍikā, Ḍākinī, Jāhnavī, Yamunā and others are to be found among them. But, we are yet to get hold of iconographic texts which will give us the descriptions of such figures as Deddarī, Lampaṭā, Ṭhānī, Ṭakārī Riḍhalī, Ṣaṇḍinī, Auḍārā, Khemakhī and a host of others. Again, it is interesting to note that some figures among them, easily recognisable from their iconography, such as Mahiṣāsuramarddinī and Gaṇeśānī (Śakti of Gaṇeśa) are respectively labelled as Terambā and Aiṅginī.[1] Evidently, the sculptors of these images were following the texts current in this region (which are not now available) to meet the requirements of the Śākta devotee who was the original builder of this temple rebuilt by Queen Alhaṇādevī during the reign of her son Narasiṃhadeva in the Kalachuri-Chedi year 907 (1155 A.D.).

[1] For a detailed description of these goddesses with or without inscriptions, refer to R. D. Banerjee's *The Haihayas of Tripuri and their Monuments*, pp. 79-90. The Ranod inscription (Gwalior State) of the 10th or 11th century A.D. mentions the name of Terambipāla, a Śaiva ascetic of the Mattamayūra clan; it means literally "the protector of Terambi." Terambā and Terambi both seem to signify the Goddess Durgā in one of her aspects.

CHAPTER II

The Antiquity of Image-Worship in India

Image proper of a god—its character : not merely an anthropomorphic or theriomorphic representation of a particular deity, but also an object of worship *(pūjā)* by its devotees—iconography deals with the latter class of images—some of the objects found in the prehistoric sites in the Indus valley and a few of the neolithic finds in South India possibly cult objects—their nature cannot be determined with certainty—whether images of gods and goddesses were known in the early Vedic period—different views regarding this question. Vedic religion, its nature—Vedic divinities, the extent of their anthropomorphism and theriomorphism—these gods, not necessarily represented by images proper—thus, the religious practice prevalent among the higher section of the Vedic Indo-Aryans not characterised by the worship of images—references to sensible representations of some Vedic divinities in early and late Vedic texts—our knowledge, however, insufficient for the determination of the religious practices of the lower section of the people and those of the original settlers of India—certain terms such as *mūradeva* and *śiśnadeva* occurring in the *Ṛgveda*, of interest in this connection—gradual changes in the Vedic religion—the Upaniṣadic conception of the Vedic divinities not conducive to the growth of iconism—references to temples and images in the *sūtra* literature.

It has already been pointed out in the introductory chapter that the term *icon* (derived from Greek *eikon*) signifies an object of worship or something which is associated with the rituals relating to the cults of different divinities. The English word 'image,' derived from old French and Latin 'imago,' on the other hand, has got the basic connotation of 'likeness' ; from this it came to be used in the sense underlying the Greek word mentioned above. Image in its primary sense has its close parallel in such Indian words, as *pratikṛti, pratimā, vimba*, etc., which again like their English counterpart came to acquire the secondary significance. The word *vimba* means reflection and it is very frequently used in the sense of the images of divinities. There is a common custom adhered to in Bengal in the time of the annual autumnal worship of the clay

images of the goddess Durgā; it consists of placing a mirror on a brass or copper bowl in front of the deity in such a manner as the image is reflected in the mirror. The water for bathing the deity (*snāna-jala*) is poured on the reflection there and thus the bathing of the image is done. This practice thus emphasises the true significance of the word *vimba*; it is also necessary from the practical point of view.[1] Even when such words as *vimba*, *pratikṛti*, etc., came to be used in their secondary sense, they retained their former usage in comparatively late texts. In the *Pratimā-nāṭaka* of Bhāsa, mention is made of the statues (*pratimā*) of the departed royalties which, though objects of respect, were not certainly meant for regular worship. The iron figure of Bhīma, which was crushed by the blind old Kuru king Dhṛtarāṣṭra by being hugged close to his body, is described by Kṛṣṇa as '*āyasī pratimā.*'[2] The golden image of Sītā served as her substitute during the performance of the Aśvamedha sacrifice by Rāma, when she herself was in exile in Vālmīki's hermitage.[3] The word *pratikṛti* meaning 'likeness'

[1] Water cannot be poured on the clay image with its coating of paint and other tinsel ornaments without damaging the whole object of worship. In southern India, substitute images, known as *snapana-beras* (*i.e.*, images meant for bathing), are made, usually of bronze, and regularly bathed in place of the principal image in the sanctum. But in the case of the Śiva-liṅgas, no such intermediary is usually needed, for they are not generally coated with daubs of paint and decorated with ornaments. They are, only occasionally (once at night), endowed with various ornaments and garlands (*śṛṅgāraveśa*) and this is done long after the bathing is over. Sometimes, gold leaves in the shape of a crescent (*śaśāṅka*), three eyes or the third eye (*trinetra*), etc., are permanently inset into the *pūjābhāga* of the Liṅga.

[2] '*Mā śucō Dhṛtarāṣṭra tvaṃ naiṣa Bhīmastvayā hataḥ* |
Āyasī pratimā hyeṣā tvayā rājannipātitā ! ||
Mahābhārata Strīparva, Ch. 12 v. 23.

[3] Rāma: *Kāñcanīṃ mama patnīṃ ca dīkṣāyajñāṃśca karmāṇi* |
Agrato Bharataḥ kṛtvā gacchatvagre mahāyaśāḥ ||

occurs in the *Sūtra* (v. 3.96) of Pāṇini, which reads *ive pratikṛtau* and which can be explained thus,—the affix *kan* means also 'like this,' 'in imitation of this,' when imitation or likeness of a person or thing is meant. That images of human beings were made in ancient India is fully proved by many other texts, one of which may be referred to here. The *Śukranītisāra* says that "images of divinities even if they are without the characteristic signs are beneficial to men; those of mortals, on the other hand, even if they are endowed with them are never so."[1] The free-standing sculptures discovered in Patna and Parkham were identified by K. P. Jayaswal as royal statuaries of the Śaiśunāga dynasty; few scholars, if any, accepts this suggestion now, and they are almost unanimously described as Yakṣa figures. But numerous references to images of kings and great men are to be found in Indian literature, which, though of special veneration, were certainly not objects of worship. The red sandstone sculptures representing some of the Kushan kings like Wema Kadphises and Kanishka and the Saka satrap Caṣṭana discovered near Mathura are a few of the extant relics testifying to the prevailing practice in those remote times. The Kushan emperors no doubt assumed some amount of divine character as is borne out by their adoption of the title *devaputra* (in imitation of the Chinese royal custom), by such features as 'a halo round the head,' flames issuing from the shoulders, 'the royal bust rising from the clouds, etc., characterising their portraits appearing on coins and by the glorious title such as *Īśvara* used by one of

Rāmāyaṇa, Uttarakāṇḍa, Ch. 91, v. 25.

Some such word like *pratimā*, *pratikṛti* or *vimba* is to be understood here, though none of them is expressly mentioned.

[1] IV. 4, 86: *Api śreyaskaraṃ nṛṇāṃ devavimbamalakṣaṇam |*
Salakṣaṇaṃ martyavimbaṃ na hi śreyaskaraṃ sadā ||

The use of the word *vimba* should be noted.

them, *viz.*, Wema Kadphises in his coin legends.[1] Still it must be wrong to suppose that their figures commanded the same amount of religious fervour culminating in their ritualistic worship with deep devotion as was roused by the images of the cult-deities which had much earlier made their appearance in India. These royal images were in all probability housed in structures of funerary character and regarded by their living relations and subjects with great veneration, just as pictorial representations and statues of mediaeval and modern Rajput kings and potentates used to be enshrined in *chatris* or funerary monuments and highly venerated; but, the service and attention offered to them must have been done through the media of divine images which were the objects of proper veneration, as was the custom and is still the custom with the Rajput kings. In the case of the latter, the phallic emblems of Śiva usually served this purpose. Under no circumstances, however, they could have enjoyed the same position as was done by the images of cult deities, some of whom, as we shall see later on, were apotheosised human beings.

Words like *sandṛś, pratimā,* etc., might have signified from a comparatively early date symbolical representations of divinities which were not associated with particular cults; such use, in fact, can be found in texts assignable to a period when the cult gods and goddesses had either not made their

[1] Antiochus IV, the Seleucid king of Syria, describes himself in some of his coin legends as *Theou Epiphanous* (*Basileos Antiochou Theou Epiphanous, i.e.*, 'Of king Antiochus the God Manifest'). He identified himself with the great Greek god Olympian Zeus, and on some of his coins, the head of Zeus shows his own features. He went much further than Alexander, the Great, who regarded himself as the son of Zeus; he even married Atargatis, the great Goddess of northern Syria. For all these ostentatious claims to divinity, however, he was regarded by the subsequent historians as vain, silly and theatrical.

appearance or, even if they had done so, had not been assigned any important position in the religious lives of the higher sections of the Indo-Aryans. Thus, the word *sandṛś* occurs in the *Kāṭhaka Upaniṣad*, II. 3, 9—"he has no form visible to the eye ; no one sees him with the eye."[1] The word '*Sandṛśe*' has been explained by Saṁkarācārya as '*sandarśanaviṣaye*', *i.e.*, 'objects visible to the eye.' It has been interpreted as 'images' proper by some scholars ; but the utmost that it can signify is some sort of sensible representation which could symbolise the god. The same sense is possibly recorded by the word *pratimā* in the verse 19, Chapter IV of the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* which says that "there is no image of him whose name is great glory."[2] The word *pratimā* occurs in a verse of the tenth *maṇḍala* of the *Ṛgveda* in which the hymnist asks about the measure and the image of the sacrifice ; he answers his own question in the next verse that the symbol of the sacrifice was the sacrificial fire itself. There is very little justification of taking it here in the sense of the image proper of gods [3]

The words *pratikṛti*, *pratimā*, etc., came to denote *arccā i.e.*, objects of regular worship in course of time. It appears that the former has attained the significance as early as the time of Pāṇini. *Pratikṛti*, in the sense of likeness, has already been noticed in one of his *sūtras* in the fifth *adhyāya* (v. 3, 96) ; another *sūtra* under it, *viz.*, v. 3, 99—*jīvikārthe cāpaṇye*, refers to certain *pratikṛtis* which are *jīvikārtha* as well as *apaṇya*. On the authority of the later commentaries like the *Mahābhāṣya* and the

[1] *Na sandṛśe tiṣṭhati rūpamasya na cakṣuṣā paśyati kaścanainam* | This part is retained without any alteration in the first half of the verse, 20, in the fourth chapter of the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*.

[2] *Na tasya pratimā asti yasya nāma mahadyaśaḥ*; but the word here more probably means 'comparison.'

[3] *R. V.*, x, 180, 3.

Kāśikā we can assume that these objects which were meant for livelihood but at the same time were not for sale were really the images of gods which were highly venerated by some people of his time. The *sūtra* has been explained thus, in the latter, " That which is bought and sold is called *paṇya*; that which is not so dealt with is *apaṇya*. The rule applies to the images of gods which are made means of subsistence by a low order of Brāhmaṇas, not by selling them but by exhibiting them from door to door."[1] These images were undoubtedly important as objects of worship, otherwise people would not give alms to their bearers and exhibitors. It will be proved in a subsequent section of this book that the practice of worshipping some divinities has already made its appearance in the time of Pāṇini. Patañjali uses the very word *arccā* in his *Mahābhāṣya* while commenting on the above-mentioned *sūtra* of Pāṇini. He says that the Mauryas had images of gods (*arccā*) made for obtaining gold (*Mauryairhiraṇyārthibhiḥ arccā prakalpitā*). In the sectarian literature of later times, this word is very frequently used along with the earlier ones noticed above as well as such terms as *vapuḥ*, *tanu*, *vigraha*, *rūpa*, *bera*, etc., which denoted that these objects of worship were not mere symbolical representations of the particular gods and goddesses, but were their very bodies and forms.

The above discussion shows that some of the Indian words for image had different connotations according to their appearance in texts of early or late dates and to their use in particular contexts. Iconography as a subject for study is chiefly concerned with images or icons having the third significance just delineated, and their accessories. It has very little to do with mere symbols or symbolic representations of gods, whether they are anthropomorphic

[1] *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, Srischandra Vasu's Edition, p. 975.

or theriomorphic. This point will have to be particularly borne in mind while determining the question of the antiquity of image-worship in India in connection with the preliminary considerations regarding our subject. This discussion has gained some new orientation since the discovery of many objects—seals with representations of human and animal figures and pictographs on them, numerous terracotta figurines and a few fragmentary stone sculptures—in course of the excavations of the pre-historic sites in the Indus Valley. Marshall has discussed the nature of many aniconic objects, usually of stone, more or less realistically modelled as phalli, a large number of which have been discovered there; he is of opinion that their ostensible use seems to have been as cult objects. Further notice of these will be taken in connection with the interpretation of the Ṛgvedic epithet *Śiśnadeva* and the evolution of phallicism in India. The three-headed horned figure, represented as seated in a particular yogic *āsana* (it exactly corresponds to the *kūrmāsana* of later times in which the heels are placed crosswise under the gluteals), surrounded by such animals as a rhinoceros, a water-buffalo, an elephant and a tiger and crude representations of men, appearing on a seal, has been described by Marshall as the prototype of Śiva-Paśupati of subsequent days. Another seal bears on it a seated human figure having on either side a half-kneeling figure in respectful attitude, above whom a snake is shown with its hood spread; the attitude of the flanking figurines in this seal, even though their hands may not be in the *añjali* pose, distinctly reminds us of the same in which the attendants of the cult deities are depicted in the later sectarian art of India. "Three more seals bear on them representations of nude tree gods standing erect with arms hanging on sides like the images of the Jinas in the *kāyotsarga* posture and each attended by a half-kneeling votary above whom a serpent spreads its head.'

On the basis of the above data, R. P. Chanda observes, "The excavations at Harappa and Mohenjodaro have brought to light ample evidence to show that the worship of images of human and superhuman beings in Yoga postures, both seated and standing, prevailed in the Indus Valley in the Chalcolithic period." [1] But whether these and such others appearing on a few more seals of this type can be regarded as definite representations of cult-objects cannot be determined with certainty so long as we are unable to unravel the mystery of the script and language of the highly cultured people of the Indus Valley. Similarly, many of the numerous terracotta figurines unearthed there in course of excavations and tentatively described by Mackay as images of household gods are very difficult of correct interpretation at the present state of our knowledge.[2] Similar difficulty confronts us with regard to the definite explanation of the character of a few of the neolithic finds in India which have been described by some scholars as cult objects. The metal mannikin of crude design in the collection of the pre-historic objects in the Indian Museum may or may not represent such a specimen.[3]

The nature of the pre-historic remains just discussed cannot be determined with certainty on account of the absence of any literary data throwing clear light on them; but with the help of certain passages occurring in the *Ṛgveda*, the earliest extant literature of the Indo-Aryans, it is possible to offer a tentative explanation about some

[1] R. P. Chanda, *Mediaeval Indian Sculpture in the British Museum*, p. 9.

[2] For the stone phalli read Marshall, *Mohenjo-Daro and Indus Valley Civilisation*, Vol. I, p. 59. For two figures on the seals noticed above, *cf.* Marshall, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 52; Pl. XII, Figs. 18-14, 18-19, 22. For Mackay's interpretation of the terracotta figurines, *cf.* Mackay, *Further Excavations at Mohenjo-Daro*, Vol. I, p 258-59.

[3] *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. I, p. 614, Pl. X, Fig. 17.

of them. It may be observed, however, that in India, prior to the advent of the Aryans, image-worship might have been practised by her original settlers. But it is still a matter of doubt and controversy when this was first introduced among the Aryans who migrated into India. From the beginning of the scientific method of the Vedic studies in India this question engaged the attention of scholars. The question 'did the Vedic Indians make images of their gods' was answered in the negative by Max Müller. He said, "The religion of the Vedas knows no idols. The worship of idols in India is a secondary formation, a later degradation of the more primitive worship of ideal gods."[1] H. H. Wilson, in his preface to *Viṣṇupurāṇa* (p. ii), remarks that "the worship of the Vedas is for the most part domestic worship, consisting of prayers and oblations offered, in their own houses, not in temples, by individuals for individual good and addressed to unreal presences, not to visible types. In a word, the religion of the Vedas was not idolatry." Macdonell has discussed the question further and opined that image-worship was not known to the Indians of the early Vedic period. He observes, "The physical appearance of the gods is anthropomorphic, though only in a shadowy manner, for it often represents only aspects of their natural bases figuratively described to illustrate their activities . . . The arms of the sun are simply his rays and his eye is intended to represent his physical aspect. The tongue and limbs of Agni merely denote his flames. The fingers of Trita are referred to only in order to illustrate his character as a preparer of Soma, and the belly of Indra only to emphasise his powers of drinking Soma. Two or three gods are spoken of as having or assuming all forms. It is easy to understand that in the case of deities whose outward

[1] Max Müller, *Chips from a German Workshop*, Vol. I, p. 38.

shape was so vaguely conceived and whose connection with natural phenomena was, in many instances, still clear, no mention of either images or temples is found in the *Ṛgveda*."[1] This long extract very accurately sums up the view-point of those scholars who would answer the question under discussion in the negative.

But, quite an opposite view is expressed by others who, on the basis of certain passages in the *Ṛgveda*, suggested that the practice of making images was well-known among the early Vedic Indo-Aryans. The descriptions of many of the divinities given in various hymns, which have been explained away as cases of vague and uncertain anthropomorphism by Macdonell and others, have been made much of by their opponents who find in them definite allusion to images. Bollensen says, from the common appellation of the gods as '*divo naras*', *i.e.* men of the sky or simply as *naras*, *i.e.*, men, and from the epithet '*nṛpeśas*', *i.e*, 'having the form of men' (*R. V.*, III. 4, 5,), we may conclude that the Indians did not merely in imagination assign human forms to their gods, but also represented them in a sensible manner. The passage in the *Ṛgveda* (II, 33, 9) describes a painted image of Rudra in this manner, 'with strong limbs, many-formed, awful brown, he is painted with shining golden colours' (*Sthirebhiraṅgaiḥ pururūpa ugro babhruḥ śukrebhiḥ pipiśe hiraṇyaiḥ*); an image of Varuṇa is described thus, "wearing a golden coat of mail, he veils himself in his radiance; spies sit arround him" (*R. V.*, I. 25, 13 : *vibhraddrāpiṃ hiraṇyayaṃ varuṇo vasta nirṇijam* । *pari spaśo niṣedire* ॥); the Maruts appear to be distinguished from their 'gods' *i.e.*, images, in the *Ṛgveda* (V. 52, 15), where the hymnist says, "we now pray to the gods of these (Maruts) so as to get to them (*nu manvānaḥ eṣāṃ devān*

[1] Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology*, pp. 17-18. Refer also for his views, to *J.R.S.A.*, LVII, 1909, p. 817,

acchā) ; then such commonly found expressions as *vapuḥ, tanu, rūpa,* etc., used in connection with some of the Vedic gods, have particular reference to their images : the word *sandṛś* referred to in a preceding paragraph, is one of the oldest expressions most probably denoting an image. Thus argued Bollensen in support of his contention that the images played a very prominent part in the religious practice of the early Vedic Indo-Aryans.[1] S. V. Venkateswara, another exponent of this view, went still further and adduced more textual evidence in its support. While he was engaged in a controversy with Macdonell about the development of early Hindu iconography, carried on in the pages of the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society,* 1916, 1917 and 1918, he mentioned, among others, the following passages which contained according to him definite reference to the images of the gods : *R.V.*,I. 21, 3—*Indrāgnī śumbhatā naraḥ* (men decorate Indra and Agni) ; *R. V.*, VIII. 69, 12—*sūrmyaṃ suṣirāmiva* (like a hollow tube ; Ballantyne has rendered this passage as 'a beautiful perforated iron image,' *cf.* his *Mahābhāṣya*) ; Indra is referred to in many Ṛgvedic passages as *suśipra* (having beautiful cheeks and jaws , Rudra as *kapardin* (wearing braided coil of hair), Vāyu as *darśata* (striking to the eye, beautiful); *R.V.*, IV. 58, 3—*catvāri śṛṅgā trayo asya pādā dve śīrṣe sapta hastāso asya* (he has four horns, three feet, two heads and seven hands).[2] But after a long controversy with Macdonell on this as well as other matters relating to the subject, Venkateswara was

[1] Muir, *Original Sanskrit Texts*, Vol. V, pp. 453-54.

[2] Venkateswara says that this is a description of Agni; for a late sculpture of a deity corresponding to it, now to be found in the east gate of the Chidambaram temple, see H. Krishna Sastri's *South Indian Gods and Goddesses*, Fig. 147; Krishna Sastri describes it as Agni, but it should more accurately be described as Yajñapuruṣa one of the minor manifestations of Viṣṇu; *cf.* T. A. G. Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Vol. I, Part 1, pp. 248-50.

then of opinion that the Vedic evidence was not at all sufficient for deciding whether gods were iconically represented in the early Vedic period or not. In a later contribution to *Rūpam*, Nos. 42-4, 1930, he was more definite, and he collected numerous additional passages from the *Ṛgveda* and other Vedas in support of his view; he even used the term iconography in relation to the representation of the Vedic deities. He assigned the foremost place to the well-known verse in the *Ṛgveda*, IV, 24, 10, which was also noticed by Macdonell and others. The latter thought that it was a late passage probably containing an allusion to some concrete symbol of Indra. It is *Ka imaṃ daśabhirmameṃdraṃ krīṇāti dhenubhiḥ। Yadā vṛtrāṇi jaṃghanadathainaṃ me punardadat॥* ('Who will buy this my Indra for ten cows? When he has slain his foes, he may give him back to me'). Venkateswara remarks about the passage, thus 'The context shows that there were permanent images of Indra made and hired for what was in probability an Indra festival, and there were apparently images of Vṛtra made for each occasion whence the plural Vṛtrāṇi to be slain by Indra." With regard to *R.V.*, V. 52, 15 noticed above, Venkateswara makes this significant observation, "'This passage is also interesting in that it shows that there was no idol worship, but that images were used as concrete representations of gods whose real form and existence were conceived as different." The existence of two forms of each god, one the concrete and finite and the other the abstract and infinite is clear according to him in a *Yajurveda* passage (*T.S.*, I. 7. 12; also *A.V.*, VII. 31) which reads *svayā tanvā tanumairayata* ('with your own, *i.e.*, real, body enter this concrete body'). In his opinion, the image is regarded in the *Ṛgveda* merely as a physical tenement of the real form of the god, while in these texts we have two forms of the god mentioned—that in the image being only an apparent and evanescent form, and that in the universe being the real

and permanent form (*svā tanuḥ*). He finds reference to the relationship of these forms, the finite and the infinite, of the god even in the *Ṛgveda* (VII. 100, 6) which speaks of Viṣṇu's assumption of another—the finite form in the battle with Vṛtra where he was a worthy companion of Indra (*Yadanyarūpaḥ samithe babhūtha*); Indra who used Viṣṇu as his vehicle (*Viṣṇvanuṣṭhitaḥ*) asked him to expand into the infinite space (*sakhe Viṣṇo vitarāṃ vikramasva*) elbowing Vṛtra out of existence till the latter begged to be received into the body of Indra himself. From this Venkateswara concluded that the belief was that the finite cabined in a particular form was not cribbed or confined by this fact but was capable of infinite expansion. He finds distinct references to the fashioning of images in such passages as *R.V.*, VI. 28. 6 (*aśrīraṃ cit kṛṇuta supratīkaṃ i.e.*, 'make that which was an ugly mass a beautiful image'); *R.V.*, IV. 17, 4 (*Indrasya kartā svapastamo bhūt, i.e.*, 'the maker of Indra was a most stalwart being, a most skilful workman'); casting of metal images is also referred to in the *Ṛgveda* and other Vedas in such passages as *R.V.*, VIII. 69, 12 (*sūrmyām suṣiram iva, i.e.*, 'like a hollow tube'), *R.V.*, X. 184, 1 (*Viṣṇuryoniṃ kalpayatu tvaṣṭā rūpāṇi piṃśatu | Ā siṃcatu prajāpatirdhātā garbhaṃ dadhātu te ॥ i.e.*, 'May Viṣṇu make the female organ fit; may Tvaṣṭā fix the limbs; may Prajāpati sprinkle and may Dhātā hold your embryo'), *R.V.*, I. 32. 2 (*Tvaṣṭāsmai vajraṃ svaṃrya tatakṣa i.e.*, 'Tvaṣṭā made the thunderbolt for Indra, which could be far flung'), etc. He further finds references to temples (*devagṛhas*) in such passages as *R.V.*, VII. 56, 14 (*Sahasriyaṃ damyaṃ bhāgametaṃ gṛhamedhīyaṃ maruto juṣadhvaṃ, i.e.*, 'Oh! Maruts accept this your portion offered at the temple'), *R.V.*, VII. 59. 10 (*Gṛhamedhāsa, i.e.*, the Maruts in the houses are munificent), etc. Venkateswara thinks that this inference from the passages is supported by the finds of images of the storm-gods in Babylonia. He even

finds allusion to processions of images in *R.V.*, I. 10, 1 and III. 53, 5-6. "In the la test (*Khila*) Vedic texts, the goddess Śrī is represented as a golden antelope adorned with garlands of silver and gold" (but he does not supply us with the exact reference).

The arguments of the two sets of scholars holding opposite views about the problem under discussion had to be given at some length, in order to assess their proper worth. The whole question, however, revolves upon the correct understanding of the nature of the religion which was in vogue among the higher section of the Indo-Aryans in the Vedic period. The early and late Vedic texts mostly throw light on the customs and practices of this class of people and whatever hypothesis we make is mainly concerned about them; there are certain passages in the texts, however, which may incidentally throw some light on the beliefs and practices of the pre-Aryan settlers of India. The former believed in the divine character of many and various forces of nature which inspired their awe and imagination. Not only these were duly personified and venerated by them, but also various abstract principles were raised by them to the same august position and respected. The ostensible mode of the expression of their regard for these multifarious divinities was by means of the ritualistic performances of various types of sacrifices in which a certain spirit of contract prevailed. The god or gods in whose honour particular sacrifices were to be performed by a king or a nobleman with the help of his priests, really the mediators, were required to fulfil the desires of the sacrificer. He sought to propitiate the divine powers by the process of offering gifts to them, realising fully his comparative weakness and inability to exist satisfactorily without their constant aid. Again, such was the efficacy of these sacrificial offerings, accompanied by regular prayers in the shape of hymns recited and sung with due intonation and emphasis, that

the whole act used to cast a spell as it were on the deities who then condescended to grant his desires. There was no one particular god who was venerated by the hymnist or his client for all times and places, and the same man who was extolling the greatness of a certain god in one hymn and subordinating the other divinities to him might in the the next hymn make another the most exalted. Thus, the main trend of the religion as practised by the higher section of the early Vedic Indo-Aryans was polytheistic and henotheistic or katheno theistic, in which sacrifice played the most important part; in fact, it was the religious practice, *par excellence*, which was full of ritualistic acts (*kriyāviśeṣabahula*) and which had for its objective the attainment of wealth and enjoyment in this world (*bhogaiśvaryagatiṃprati*). The other-worldliness was conspicuous by its absence in the thought of the early Vedic Indo-Aryan who felt a real pleasure in living a prosperous and joyful life. There was very little or practically no place for deep meditation in his early rituals, his deities being never to him objects of his *dhyānayoga*. In such religious practice as briefly outlined above, what conceivable place could be assigned to the images of the Vedic gods? Those scholars who advocate their existence in this period would have us believe that all these sacrificial acts were performed in the presence of these sensible representations. But, in most of the early authoritative Brāhmaṇas which lay down with meticulous details the mode of performing the various sacrifices, there is practically no reference to the idols of the gods which would certainly have been explicitly mentioned if they were found necessary. In the subsequent period of the history of India, when the divine images had come to play a requisite part in the religious lives of her people, they are clearly described as such in the contemporary literature.

Scholars like Bollensen and Venkateswara mainly utilise the anthropomorphic descriptions of many of the Vedic

divinities as contained in the hymns of the *Ṛgveda* in support of their theory. But what is the extent of this anthropomorphism ? Keith correctly remarks, "Though it would be wrong to ignore the anthropomorphic character of the gods, the Vedic pantheon has none of the clear-cut figures of the Greek, and unlike the Greek deities it is seldom difficult to doubt that the anthropomorphic forms but faintly veil the phenomena of nature." [1] The degree of this anthropomorphism, again, was extremely variable. Such deities like Sūrya, Uṣas, Agni, etc., for example, were intimately connected with their natural bases and thus they could have very little of this element in their character ; whereas Indra, Varuṇa and some other Vedic gods, who were considerably freed from their connexion with the phenomena which produced their conception, could possess it to a very great extent. The endowment of the Vedic gods with particular forms in the imagination of the seers has been discussed at length by Yāska in his *Nirukta*, a work to be dated as early as 500 B.C. This interesting discussion requires to be fully quoted here, as it throws a flood of light on the problem at issue. Yāska writes, "Now follows discussion of the form of the gods (*ākāra-cintanaṃ devatānām*). Some say, they resemble human beings in form (*puruṣavidhāḥ*), for their panegyrics and their appellations are like those of sentient beings ; and their human limbs are referred to in the hymns.....They are also (associated in their hymns of praise) with objects with which men are usually associated.....Moreover they are associated with the sort of actions with which men are usually associated. Others say, the gods do not resemble human beings in form (*apuruṣavidhāḥ*), because those gods that are (actually) seen do not resemble human beings in

[1] A. B. Keith, *Religion and Philosophy of the Vedas and Upanishads*, Vol. I, p. 58.

form ; as, for instance, Agni (fire-god), Vāyu (wind-god), Āditya (sun-god), Pṛthivī (earth-goddess), Candramas (moon-god), etc. As to the view that panegyrics of the gods are like those of sentient beings, (they reply) that inanimate objects, beginning from dice and ending with herbs, are likewise praised. As to the view that the human limbs of the gods are referred to in the hymns, (they reply) that this (treatment) is accorded to inanimate objects....As to the view (that in their hymns of praise the gods are associated) with objects with which men are associated, (they reply) that it is just the same(in the case of inanimate objects)..... Or the gods may both resemble human beings in form as well as may not resemble human beings in form. Or the gods who do not resemble human beings in form exist in the form of Karman (sacrifice) ; as for instance the sacrifice performed by the Yajamāna (sacrificer). This is the opinion of those who know the legends." [1] This long quotation fully illustrates the attitude of a person of the 6th century B.C., well-versed in the Vedic lore, to the whole question of anthropomorphism of the Vedic divinities. To this anthropomorphisation, will have to be added the characteristic manner of presenting many of the gods in theriomorphic forms, the latter again in some instances being ideologically connected with the particular deities. Thus, the sun traversing through the wide firmament of the sky could be easily conceived as a mythical bird having beautiful wings (*suparṇo garutman*) ; the fleet-footed horse might also symbolise the sun as a Ṛgvedic verse indicates

[1] Laksbman Sarup, *The Nighaṃṭu* and *The Nirukta*, English Translation and Notes, pp. 116-17. R. P. Chanda first noted the importance of this passage in his work '*The Beginnings of Art in Eastern India*, *M.A.S.I.*, No. 30, pp. 1-2. Gopinath Rao, on the basis of this passage in the *Nirukta*, wrongly inferred that image worship seems to have become common in the time of Yāska; T. A. G. Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Vol. I, Introduction, p. 5.

(VII. 77, 3; here the goddess dawn is said to lead a white steed). Sometimes, this connection cannot be easily established. Thus, Agni is very often likened to various animals, "in most cases doubtless with a view to indicating his functions rather than representing his personal form." He is endowed with various animal and other forms such as those of a bull, a calf, a steed, an eagle, a swan and many other things. Two deities which are conceived invariably in animal form are the one-footed goat (Aja Ekapād) and the serpent of the deep (Ahir Budhnya). The former may be the lightning flash coming down to earth in a single streak while the latter would seem to be an atmospheric deity dwelling in the atmospheric ocean. But these and many other such concepts are pure and simple no imageries having actual concrete bases. These theriomorphic and anthropomorphic descriptions, however, played an important part in the evolution of some of the sectarian gods in the subsequent religious history of India. Thus, it will be interesting to refer to two typical cases Rudra, the Vedic base of the cult god Śiva, is very often mythologically connected with Agni in the Epic and Purāṇic literature. Agni has been likened frequently with a bull in the Vedic texts and Rudra himself is called a bull in some Vedic verses (*cf. R.V.*, II. 33, 8—*Pra babhrave vṛṣabhāya śvitīce* etc. or II. 33, 6—*Unmā mamaṃda vṛṣabho marutvān* etc.); now, on the basis of this very fact, Rudra-Śiva is sometimes primarily conceived in the form of a bull and there are definite numismatic data in support of the representation of Śiva as a bull. But, by a converted mental process of thinking on the part of his worshipper, the theriomorphic form of the deity is assigned the position of a mount of the same god conceived anthropomorphically. Again, in some much later representations, this so-called animal mount of Rudra-Śiva is made to assume the pure human form of the deity himself, with this difference only that its front hands are

shown in the *añjali* pose. Similarly, the Vedic Viṣṇu, one of the constituent elements of the composite sectarian god Vāsudeva-Nārāyaṇa-Viṣṇu of the Epic and Purāṇic age is undoubtedly one of the aspects of the sun-god in the Vedic period. The sun-bird, Garutman referred to above, is invariably assigned the position of the mount or vehicle to the above-named cult deity and is represented in the later art as a hybrid creature, part man and part bird (though in the early Buddhist monument of Sanchi, Garuḍa is represented as a mythical bird with *kuṇḍalas* in its ear). But the concrete representations of these anthropomorphic, theriomorphic and hybrid forms make their appearance in the sectarian art of a much later date, and there can be no question of finding any reference whatsoever to such figures in the multifarious descriptions of the early Vedic divinities.

It will be useful, now, to consider in their proper perspective some of the early Vedic texts, already referred to, which are utilised by Bollensen and Venkateswara in support of their views. The whole of the 33rd hymn of the second *maṇḍala* of the *Ṛgveda*, the first line of the 9th verse of which is taken by the former to allude to a painted image of Rudra, contains the praises of the god in which he is described in various ways; thus in verse 3, he is addressed as Vajrabāhu (with thunderbolt-like arms); in verse 5 he is characterised as soft-bellied, of good hailing voice, brown and possessing a beautiful nose (*Ṛdudaraḥ suhavo...babhruḥ suśipro...*); in verse 8, he is brown and white at the same time (*babhrave... śvitīce*); in verse 10, he is addressed as the worthy god holding bow and arrow, wearing a beautiful and multiformed *niṣka* garland (*i.e.*, a garland made of *niṣkas* covered with many forms—*Arhanbibharṣi sāyakāni dhanvārhanniṣkaṃ yajataṃ viśvarūpaṃ*); above all, in the line quoted by Bollensen the word *puṟurūpaḥ* (having multifarious

forms) shows that the god Rudra was endowed with various forms according to the imagination of the hymnist Gṛtsamada, and there is not the least justification for assuming that these were based on actual concrete figures. Similarly, the allusion to a probable image of Varuṇa wearing a golden coat of mail with spies sitting around him, in *R. V.*, I. 25, 13, is not at all convincing. Varuṇa, the moral god, sung by the hymnist in various ways, is conceived as covered by a coat of mail and veiled in his radiance, thus being impervious to prying eyes, but himself looking into the secret virtues and vices of the mortals ; the hymnist's idea about his spies is a necessary corollary of this conception about him, for the god sends them to look into the actions of mankind and report to him all about them. As regards *R. V.*, V. 52, 15, Max Müller has translated the whole verse in this way, "If he, after perceiving them, has approached them as gods with an offering, then may he for a gift remain united with the brilliant (Maruts) who by their ornaments are glorious on their march." He further remarks, "This verse, as Roth says, is very obscure ; ... whatever the verse may mean, *eṣāṃ devān* cannot mean the gods of the Maruts or prove the existence of idols, as Bollensen and even Muir imagined."[1] This verse is undoubtedly difficult of correct interpretation ; it is extremely uncertain whether the particular extract in it at all means the images of the Maruts and one cannot support a theory with the help of this enigmatic passage. The eleventh verse in the same hymn, however, may throw some light on it ; there we are told that the Maruts might assume different forms according to their different functions (*iti citrā rūpāṇi darśyā*) such as protecting the world or collectively supporting it or sustaining from afar (the

[1] *S.B.E.*, XXXII, pp. 313, 317-18.

planets, stars and others). The devas in the passage under question may mean these various imaginary forms. In any case, if we read the whole hymn in which it occurs, we cannot but hesitate in accepting the interpretation put upon it by the above-mentioned scholars. *Śumbhatā* in the passage in *R. V.*, I. 21, 3 explained by Sāyaṇa as '*nānā-vidhairalaṅkāraiḥ śobhitau kuruta*' actually 'means adorned with various praises,' which are figuratively taken by Sāyaṇa to mean ornaments. The words *sūrmyaṃ suṣiram iva* in *R. V.*, VIII. 69, 12 cannot unquestionably refer to an image of Varuṇa in that particular context; Ballantyne's rendering of this passage is based on the similar description of a perforated iron image in later works, which was heated and employed as a sort of punishment for wrongdoers who were compelled to embrace it. But that sense can hardly be applied here. Not much importance can be assigned to the descriptive epithets as *suśipra*, *kapardin*, *daṙśata* and such others which merely emphasise the anthropomorphic conception of the deities to whom they are applied. The Ṛgvedic verse, *Catvāri śṛṅgā* etc. (IV. 58, 3), merely presents to us in a metaphorical manner the Vedic sacrifice. Yāska explains the imagery, thus, "The four horns stand for the four Vedas, three legs for the three *savanas*, *viz.*, the *prātaḥ-*, *mādhyandina-* and the *tṛtīya-savanas*, the two heads for the *iṣṭis*, *viz.*, the *prāyaṇīya* and the *udayanīya* and the seven hands for *sapta chandas* or the *mantras*. Here sacrifice is likened to a bull bellowing, tied in three ways; this threefold binding is explained by Yāska as referring to its association with the *mantras*, *brāhmaṇas* and the *kalpasūtras*; the bellowing of the bull stands for the praising of the gods in sacrifices with *Ṛg-mantras*, offering oblations to them with *Yajus* ones and praying to the gods with *Sāman* songs. The god sacrifice is said to have entered into human beings for

the purpose of making them offer sacrifices.[1] Such passages as *R. V.*, VI. 28, 6 or IV. 17, 4, which according to Venkateswara contain distinct references to the fashioning of images do not admit of the interpretations which have been put upon them, if they are read along with their contexts. What is the full meaning of the two verses in which the above occur? In the first, cows, probably the clouds alluded to in a metaphorical manner, are exhorted by the hymnist, Bharadvāja, the son of Bṛhaspati, to nourish him and his people, to make lean and thus ugly-looking bodies beautiful, and to make his and his friends' houses prosperous ; the cows are described as emitting auspicious sounds, the gifts of which are so well sung in the sacrificial assemblies (*Yūyaṃ gāvo medayathā kṛśaṃ cidaśrīraṃ citkṛnuthā supratīkam | Bhadraṃ gṛhaṃ kṛṇutha bhadravāco bṛhadvo vaya ucyate sabhāsu* ||). In the second, on the other hand, Vāmadeva Ṛṣi describes Dyaus who was the progenitor of Indra, copiously praised, wielder of good thunderbolt and not fallen from heaven, as being possessed of a valiant son by bringing whom forth Dyaus became a most skilful workman" (*Suvīraste janitā manyata dyauriṃdrasya kartā svapastamo bhūt | Ya īṃ jajāna svaryaṃ suvajramanapacyutaṃ sadaso na*

[1] Yāska, *Nirukta*, XIII. 1, 7—*Catvāri śṛṅgā itivedā vā etā uktāstrayo asya pādā iti svarāṇi trīṇi dve śirṣe prāyaṇīyodayanīye saptahastāsaḥ sapta chandāṃsi tridhābaddhaḥ tredhā baddho mantrabrāhmaṇakalpairvṛṣabho roravīti roravaṇamasya savanakrameṇa ṛgbhiryajurbhissāmabhiryadenamṛgbhiśśaṃsanti yajurbhiryajanti sāmabhisstuvanti mahodeva ityeṣa hi mahān devo yadyajño martyo āviveśetyeṣa hi manuṣyānāviśati yajanāya tasyottarā bhūyase nirvacanāya* | Reference has already been made to a late sculpture corresponding partly to this description (the figure is human, its mount being the bull) in the east Gopura of the Chidambaram temple. It is Viṣṇu in one of his minor manifestations ; in the Brāhmaṇa literature (*cf. Satapatha Brāhmaṇa*, XIV. 1, 1, 6), Viṣṇu is identical with sacrifice and here we see the imagery is carried further and given a concrete shape.

bhūma ‖). So, there cannot be the least justification for our taking any portion of these *Ṛk* verses to refer to the practice of image-making. *Pratīka* in the first passage should not be made much of, because the sense of a symbol or an image became attached to it in later texts ; as *vigraha* meant primarily a body and secondarily it also came to denote an image, so was the case with this word. Very little also can be said in support of the above-named scholar's method of finding a reference to the practice of casting metal images in the particular passages quoted by him from the *Ṛgveda*. The late hymn of the same (*R. V.*, X. 184, 1) is really a *mantra* uttered in the time of impregnation (*garbhādhāna*) and there are clear enough indications of the real meaning of the three verses constituting the hymn. As regards the particular passages in such *Ṛg* verses as VII. 56, 14 or VII. 59, 10, if these are taken to allude to the temples of the Maruts, numerous others may be collected from the same work which can be assumed to denote them. But the fact is that there is practically no support for the assumption that words like *gṛhamedhīyaṃ* or *gṛhamedhāsa* even distantly allude to the temples or shrines of such Vedic gods as the Maruts. The characteristic terms, however, used in the *gṛhyasūtras*, as we shall presently see, are *devagṛha*, *devāgāra*, *devakula*, *devāyatana*, etc., which in all probability denote the shrines of the gods ; but, by the time the latest section of the Vedic literature was composed, images and temples had already been accepted by the higher sections of the Vedic Indo-Aryans. In the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, description is given of a structure of post and thatch with mat walls, which was discussed by Simpson as denoting a temple ; but Coomaraswamy has rightly pointed out that " this was a building for the performance of sacrifices, not a temple in the later sense." This, again, was a very simple shed of the primitive type and was called *prācīnavaṃśa* or *prāgvaṃśa* (also described as *śālā*) on account of the top beams which were bamboo ones extending

from west to east; on a different mode of laying these again, the fire chapel was differently designated. In the *udīcīna-vaṃśa* type of structure, also named *vimata* by Hiranyakeśin (*Śrautasūtra*, 3, 2 and 7, 1) the beams were laid from south to north. In more pompous types of sacrifices performed by kings, also, these types of buildings served as fire chapels. In the Brāhmaṇa literature, again, ' many precise and elaborate details are given regarding the building of altars, generally fire-altars ' of various shapes; and it is noteworthy that the rules for the construction of these sacrificial altars, given in the *Śulva Sūtras*, make use of dynamic symmetry, of which no trace can be recognised at a later period.[1] But nowhere in such literature is to be found any reference, however slight, to the mode of construction of temples or shrines, which must have found some place if the images and temples had played some part in the sacrificial religion of the early Vedic Indo-Aryans. The supposed allusion to the processions of the images of Indra in *Ṛgveda*, I. 10, 1 and III. 53, 5-6, if carefully scrutinised, will be found to rest on no better data.

It has been found necessary to discuss the views of Bollensen and Venkateswara at some length in the above paragraphs, because their hypothesis was adumbrated with great skill and confidence as well as with the support of elaborate textual data, their presentation of the case being by far the ablest one. Brindavan Ch. Bhattacharya, in the long introduction to his work on *Indian Images*, Part I, was also an exponent of the view sponsored by the above scholars; but the premises laid down by him in support of his conclusion were more or less the same as have been critically estimated and need not be discussed here in detail. Recently, use has been made by T. N. Ray, of the Ṛgvedic verse, X. 130, 3, already referred to in a previous paragraph, in order to prove the existence of the worship of images in

[1] Coomaraswamy, *History of Indian and Indonesian Art*, p. 42.

early Vedic religion; but as has been pointed out above that the verse, if it is read along with the succeeding ones and if the commentary of Sāyaṇa is properly understood, does not at all justify us in finding in it an allusion to the making of images of the early Vedic gods and worshipping them.[1] The mere use of the word *pratimā* or *pratīka* as referred to above without the proper context will not be sufficient to demonstrate anything. Venkateswara, as has been pointed above, expressly remarks with reference to *R. V.*, V. 52, 15, "that it shows that there was no idol worship." In this connection, the interesting remark of Bloomfield requires to be quoted at length, "The mind of the Vedic poet is the rationalistic mind of the ruminating philosopher, rather than the artistic mind which reproduces the finished product. It is engaged too much in reasoning about and constantly altering the wavering shapes of the gods, so that these remain to the end of Vedic time too uncertain in outline, too fluid in substance for the modelling hand of the artist. On a pinch we could imagine a statue of the most material of the Vedic god Indra; but it is hard to imagine a statue of the god Varuṇa. As a matter of fact there is no record of Vedic ikons, or Vedic temples. In all these senses there is no Vedic Pantheon."[2] The long extract from Yāska's *Nirukta*, already referred to on pp. 59-60, *ante*, dealing with the anthropomorphism of the Vedic gods, should be noted again in this connection. R. P. Chanda rightly remarks, in regard to it, "This discussion clearly shows that up to the time of Yāska which synchronises with the last phase of the Vedic period the Vedic gods had not been invested with the forms in which they appear in the Epics and the Purāṇas."[3] Non-existence of images and

[1] T. N. Ray, *Baṅgaśrī*, 1344 B.S., p. 319.

[2] Bloomfield, *Religion of the Veda*, p. 89.

[3] R. P. Chanda, *M.A.S.I.*, No. 30, p. 2. The *Gṛhyasūtras* which refer to shrines of gods are collectively to be placed much later than Yāska.

temples or the absence of the practice of image-worship among the higher section of the Vedic Indo-Aryans was not the characteristic of this only old people of the world. Many other nations of the ancient world can be shown to have been aniconists in practice. It is late in the religious history of China and Japan, that any tangible traces of image-worship are to be found. Many of the nomadic tribes of the Semites did not practise it. "Among the Jews, it appeared only in exceptional cases (*viz.*, those of the Golden Calf and Brazen Serpent). Caesar and Tacitus assert that there were neither temples nor images among the Teutons. In Rome, according to Varro, the Romans lived 170 years without representing their gods by images. Even among the Greeks we find scarcely any traces of idolatry in the time of the Pelasgi."[1]

When Bloomfield very guardedly wrote that one could imagine 'on a pinch' a statue of Indra as he was the most material of the Vedic gods, he had in his mind the verses (*R. V.*, IV. 24, 10 and VII. 1, 5) which had already been noted. Macdonell thus observes in his *Vedic Mythology* (p. 155), "Material objects are occasionally mentioned in the later Vedic literature as symbols representing deities. Something of this kind (possibly an *image*) must be meant even in a passage of the *Ṛgveda*, in which the poet asks, 'Who will buy this, etc.'' Again, in *R. V.*, VIII. 1, 5, reference to some form of an idol is seen by him. The hymnist says, 'O thunderbolt bearing Indra! We do not sell you even at a large price; o Vajra-bearer, not even for thousands or ten thousands of riches; o possessor of many treasures, not even in exchange of untold wealth'' (*Mahe cana tvāmadrivaḥ parā śulkāya deyām | Na sahasrāya, nāyutāya vajrivo na śatāya śatāmagha ||*). Hopkins remarks about these two passages in his *Religions of India* (p. 150), thus, "That images of

[1] *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. VII., p. 113.

the gods were supposed to be powerful may be inferred from the late verses (*R. V.*, IV. 24, 10)—' Who will buy my Indra, etc.,' but allusions to idolatry are elsewhere extremely doubtful." There can be no gainsaying the fact that in these two passages, very likely references to some sensible representations of Indra are made, for these are actually offered for hire by the hymnist. But, even here, if we read these verses along with the context, we feel grave doubt about accepting them as referring to actual images of Indra. As Coomaraswamy remarks, "Just as the Bodhi-tree and *pādukā* at Bharhut are called ' Buddha ' (*bhagavato*), so here a symbol may have been referred to as ' Indra ' H.I.I.A., p. 12). But, here also the analogy is not complete. In the case of the various symbols aniconically representing the Master in the early Buddhist art of Central India, there cannot be the least hesitation in accepting them as regular objects of worship (*pūjā*); the use of the word ' *bhagavat* ' in the Bharhut labels, the attitude of the accessory human and animal figures clustering round the central symbol in the bas-reliefs and the very nature of the monuments in which they appear leave no doubt as regards their character. These Indra fetishes, on the other hand, were they mere symbols or images, were certainly not so many objects of worship. Reference has already been made to Venkateswara's remark about accepting these ' permanent images of Indra ' used in an Indra festival. But the very context in the former passage and the term ' *vṛtrāṇi* ' used in it definitely give to my mind the clue regarding their character. These were in all probability meant for *abhicāra* purposes, for inflicting harm and injury on the enemies of the hirer by performing some sacrificial rituals in which they were principally utilised ; if this interpretation of their original character is accepted, there remains no ground for Venkateswara's supposition that *vṛtrāṇi* in the passage

means ' apparently images of Vṛtra made for each occasion, whence the plural *vṛtrāṇi* to be slain by Indra.' As Vṛtra was the arch enemy of Indra, the plural of the word in this passage figuratively refers to the enemies of the hirer who were to be harmed or slain through the agency of these Indra fetishes. This is fully borne out by Sāyaṇa in this manner; the commentator says, *Tadānīṃ he kretāro yuṣmākaṃ madhya evamapi samayaḥ kriyate | Yadāyamiṃdro vṛtrāṇi tvadīyān śatrūn jaṃghanat*, etc., *i.e.*, the hymnist says that this Indra of mine when it had killed your Vṛtras, *i.e.*, enemies, etc. References to *abhicāra* performances, though implicit here, are explicit in many other Vedic, specially Brāhmaṇa, passages and a substantial portion of the *Atharva Veda* is devoted to it. Thus, there can be no question of placing the above on the same footing with the images of the sectarian gods of the subsequent period, though we shall see afterwards that particular varieties of some of the latter were used also for *abhicāra* purposes (the rites associated with these acts unquestionably differed in the two periods). The above-mentioned sensible representations of Indra again remind us of various other objects which are mentioned in the Brāhmaṇas as symbolising several Vedic divinities, all these symbols being necessarily intimately connected with the rituals of sacrifice. Thus, " the wheel is in various ritual performances employed as a symbol of the sun as representing both its shape and its motion. It is thus used in the Vājapeya sacrifice, in the ceremony of laying the sacrificial fire, and at the solstitial festival. Gold or a fire-brand was employed as a symbol of the sun, when drawing water after sunset instead of before, and in piling the fire altar, a disc of gold was placed on it to represent the sun."[1]

[1] Macdonell, Vedic Mythology, p. 155. With regard to the wheel and thegolden disc symbolising the sun, Coomaraswamy's remarks are

But the clearest mention of a sensible representation is in association with the *Agnicayana* ceremony in sacrifice. This ceremony deals with the building of the fire-altar, independently of the ordinary *Agnyādheya* and *Punarādheya* ceremonies (the installation and the re-installation of the sacrificial fires). The *Taittirīya Saṃhitā* (V. 2, 6, 9) lays down that the objects named below are to be deposited in the foundation of the altar in this particular rite—a lotus leaf, a gold disc, a golden man (*hiraṇmaya puruṣa*), two wooden ladles, a perforated brick, a brick or *dūrvā* grass, a living tortoise, the heads of dead animals including those of a horse and a bull, a mortar, a pan in the middle of which the head of the man is put and the head of a snake. R. P. Chanda surmises that "in such a company the golden man probably represents the human victim originally immolated and buried at the foundation of a sacred edifice." It may be mentioned here *in passim* that in the foundation ceremonies of buildings in many parts of India, one rite consists of drawing in outline with vermillion paint the figure of a man on a full-sized brick which is then placed in the lowermost depth of the foundation trench, it being understood that the particular brick with the outline drawing must not be disturbed in any way during the construction; this figure is described in the ritual texts dealing with *vāstuyāga* as *vāstupuruṣa* to whom flowers, sandalpaste, five jewels (*pañcaratna*) are offered. The partially sacred character of the golden man, also, has rightly been emphasised by Chanda by referring to a *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* passage (VII. 4, 1, 15) which identifies it with Prajāpati, Agni and even the sacri-

worth quoting, "The wheel which later on becomes the mark of a Chakravartin, the discus of Viṣṇu and the Buddhist Wheel of the Law, originally represented the sun. The disc of gold placed behind the fire-altar to represent the sun may well be the origin of the later *prabhāmaṇḍala* or *śiraścakra* (nimbus)." *H.I.I.A.*, p. 41.

ficer himself in turn. With regard to the mode of representation, the following extract from the same text (VII, 4, 1, 15) deserves careful notice, "As to this they say 'Let him make no arms to this golden man, lest he should cause him to be redundant; for these two spoons are (in lieu of) his arms.' Let him nevertheless make (him with arms)."[1] Coomaraswamy offers an apposite comparison of this crude figure which must have been a plaque in human form with the 'little plaque supposed to represent Pṛthivī found in a burial mound, regarded as Vedic, at Lauriya Nandangarh' (H.I.I.A., p. 42). This may also be compared with the tiny gold-leaf female figure which was found among many other precious and semi-precious objects in the inscribed relic casket at Piprawa, the relics, as the inscription informs us, being associated with Buddha. After a critical consideration of all these data, it can be confidently observed that, even when some reference to symbols or sensible representations are found in the Vedic and Brāhmaṇic texts, this does not necessarily mean that they were the images proper of the respective divinities.

It has already been pointed out that the Vedic and Brāhmaṇic texts mostly furnish us with material evidence concerning the beliefs and practices of the higher section of the Indo-Aryans. Thus, the view here presented to us is palpably one-sided and our knowledge about the same of the vast mass of the people and the original settlers of India is necessarily scanty. Eliot's remark that "We cannot assume that ideas or usages not mentioned in the *Ṛgveda* did not exist at the time when it was composed" (*Hinduism and Buddhism*, Vol. I., p. 53) is partially true. The informa-

[1] For the *Taittiriya Saṃhitā* passage, *cf.* Keith, *The Veda of the Black Yajus*, Harvard Oriental Series, Vol. 19, pp. 409-14. For the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* reference, *cf.* Eggeling, *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XLI, p. 326. R. P. Chanda first noticed the importance of these passages in his *Memoir* (No. 30), p. 2, and rightly observed that there was no room for images of gods in the Vedic form of worship (*Yajña*).

tion supplied to us by data gleaned from it and the subsequent allied literature, is not merely negative, but also positive with regard to the customs of a certain section of the people; the practice of making images of their gods and worshipping them is not only not mentioned in them, but there is positive evidence, as we have seen above, that, in the type of religion sanctioned by them there could have been no place for it. But was it in vogue among the other vast section of Indian population on whose customs and faith only occasional and fitful light is thrown by the above texts? We cannot be definitely sure in our answer to this question. But in the *Ṛgveda*, there are one or two passages which seem to have a direct bearing on it. Certain classes of people are referred to in a deprecatory manner by the hymnists in two of the *Ṛk* verses, one in *R. V.*, VII. 21, 5 and the other in X. 99, 3. In the first verse Indra is prayed to in order that the Rākṣasas may not harm the hymnist and he may kill the ferocious animals; the god is also besought not to let the Śiśnadevas approach the sacrifice (*Na yātava Iṃdra jūjuvurno na vaṃdanā śaviṣṭha vedyābhiḥ | Sa śardhadaryo viṣuṇasya jaṃtormā śiśnadevā api gurṛtaṃ naḥ ||*); in the second one, Indra is described as having slain the Śiśnadeva, when he won the treasure of the hundred-gated fort (*Anarvā yacchatadurasya vedo ghnañchiśnadevā abhi varpasā bhūt*). These Śiśnadevas, as they are mentioned along with the Rākṣasas (*yātava*) in the first, and as they are looked down upon and deprecated, have been taken by many European and Indian scholars to denote the original settlers of India, the word meaning, according to them, those that have the phallus for their deity (*śiśnadevaḥ yeṣāṃ te*). It must be said, however, that Sāyaṇa offered quite a different explanation of the term. He took it to mean those people that are addicted to sensual pleasures. The exact words used by Sāyaṇa in his commentary are—*Śiśnena divyaṃti krīḍaṃta iti śiśnadevāḥ | Abrahmacaryā ityarthaḥ*—which means that Śiśnadevas are

those who play with their organs of generation, *i.e.*, those that have fallen from the vow of a Brahmacārī. He quotes Yāska in his support in this manner—*Tathā ca Yāskaḥ | Sa utsahatāṃ yo viṣuṇasya jaṃtorviṣamasya mā śiśnadevā abrahmacaryāḥ | Śiśnaṃ snathateḥ | Api gurṛtaṃ naḥ satyaṃ vā yajñaṃ vā |* (*Nirukta*, IV., 19). While commenting on the second passage (X. 99, 3), he uses the same explanation (*Śiśnadevān abrahmacaryān*) ; but, incidental reference may be made to his commentary on *R. V.*, X. 27, 19, where the word *śiśna* occurs The last part of the above *Ṛk* is—*sadyaḥ śiśnā praminānо navīyān* ; Sāyana comments on it thus—*Sadyastadānīmeva śiśnā śiśnāni | śiśnaṃ snathateriti nirvacanāt snathitṛṇi tāḍayitṛṇi rākṣasādivṛṃdāni praminānaḥ prakarṣeṇa hiṃsan* etc. Here in this word he finds an allusion to Rākṣasas, presumably the original settlers of India deprecatingly mentioned. It is just possible that *śiśna* in this passage and *Śiṣnadeva* in the two other passages quoted above denoted the same people. If this view is accepted, we find here an incidental reference to a particular religious practice of a certain section of the Indian population of the remote times. It can very well be presumed that this consisted of making sensible representations of the human phallus which was conceived as symbolising principally the potent force at the root of creation and worshipping them. The numerous phalli which have been discovered in the Indus Valley and which have been interpreted as the cult-objects of a people who were culturally different from the early Vedic Indo-Aryans go a great length in supporting the above conclusion. This peculiar custom of using the phalli for cult-purposes was not liked by the latter. Even when phallicism came to be inseparably associated with the worship of Rudra-Śiva, the orthodox Indo-Aryans who upheld the original Vedic tradition were at first tardy in its recognition. Hopkins remarks with regard to the above Vedic passages, " Phallic worship may be alluded to in that

of the 'tail gods,' as Garbe thinks, but is deprecated.'' He is quite correct in this cautious acceptance of an hypothesis put forward by various other scholars ; but the other part of his remark, *viz.*, ' One verse, however, which seems to have crept in by mistake is apparently due to phallic influence (*R.V.*, VIII. 1, 34), though such a cult was not openly acknowledged till Śiva worship began, and is no part of Brāhmaṇism ' is open to criticism (*Religions of India*, p. 251). In the *Ṛg.* verse to which he refers, there is not the least allusion to anything in support of phallicism ; it merely refers to the joy which was expressed by Śaśvatī, the wife of Asaṅga, in seeing her husband restored to full sexual powers as a result of the austerities practised by her. She merely describes her husband's organ in the verse, incidentally referring to her own feelings : *'Anvasya sthūraṃ dadṛśe purastādanastha uruvaraṃvamāṇaḥ | Śaśvatī nāryabhicakṣyāha subhadramārya bhojanaṃ vibharṣi ||* '

Another epithet which is also deprecatingly used in the *Ṛgveda* to denote certain classes of beings by the hymnists, is *Mūradeva*. It occurs as many as three times, *viz.*, in VII. 104, 24, X. 87, 2 and X. 87, 14 ; in the first of these verses Indra is entreated to kill these Mūradevas while in the last two, Agni, the killer of the Rākṣasas (*Rakṣahā*) is asked to do the same. It will be necessary to quote portions of these with Sāyana's commentary on them in order to estimate the importance of this term. *RV.* VII, 104, 24 runs—*Iṃdra jahi pumāṃsaṃ yātudhānamuta striyaṃ māyayā śāśadānām | Vigrīvāso mūradeva ṛdaṃtu mā te dṛśaṃtsūryamuccaraṃtam |* It has been commented on by Sāyaṇa in this manner : *He Iṃdra pumāṃsaṃ pumrūpadhāriṇaṃ yātudhānaṃ rākṣasaṃ jahi | māraya | Utāpi ca māyayā vaṃcanayā śāśadānāṃ hiṃsaṃtīṃ striyaṃ rākṣasīṃ ca jātu | Api ca mūradevā māraṇakrīḍā rākṣasā vigrīvāso vicchinnagrīvāḥ saṃta ṛdaṃtu |* etc. In the two others *mūradevān* is once explained as *mūḍhadevān mārakavyāpārān-*

rākṣasān and at the other place as simply *māravyāpārān rākṣasān*. So, this term has been consistently explained by Sāyaṇa as Rākṣasas who are destructive; but presumably on the basis of his commentary on the second of the verses referred to above, Wilson translated it as 'those who believe in vain gods.' A. C. Das, however, observed on this, "it seems to me that the word 'vain' is not the correct rendering of *mūra*, which may mean 'senseless' like stocks and stones. The word, therefore, may refer to persons who believed in and worshipped 'images' which were lifeless and senseless objects." Das is cautious in this statement; but shortly after, he is definitely of opinion 'that there were images of gods in Ṛgvedic times, though their worship was condemned by some of the advanced Aryan tribes.'[1] We cannot be certain, however, on the basis of the data before us that the word in question definitely meant 'image-worshippers,' and we cannot endorse the view upheld by Das in this connection that the Vedic gods were iconically represented.[2] But, if the first part of Das's view is

[1] A. C. Das, *Rigvedic Culture*, p. 145. A. P. Banerjee Sastri notes the importance of the term in his article on 'Iconism in India' in *I.H.Q.*, Vol. XII, 1936, pp. 335-41. He suggests that *Mūradeva*, like the term *Ārya* may denote ethnic entity; that the Mauryas in the *Mahābhāṣya* passage (already noted by me) does not refer to the royal Mauryas, but to a tribe of long standing (*cf.* the Pāli Moriya); that *mūrti* is derived from *Mūra*, worshipped by the earliest pre-Vedic people, the Mūradevas, with whom may be affiliated the Yakṣas and the Mauryas.

[2] A. C. Das, *op. cit.*, p. 146. He cites *R.V.*, VIII. 69, 15-16, as referring to the mounting of an image of Indra on a golden chariot; according to him, the epithets *arbhako na kumārakaḥ* (like a small limbed boy) applied to Indra can only have reference to the small image of the god placed on the car; the word *dampate* (householder) also in the same hymn, applied to Indra, probably refers, in his opinion, to the household image of the God worshipped by the Ṛṣi. But all this is based on data of a very uncertain character.

accepted then we find here a probable reference to a section of the original settlers of India who followed this particular custom.

The character of the early Vedic religion, in which, as we have seen, there was no place for image-worship, gradually changed and it will behove us to consider whether it could find a place in its later phases. The age of the *Ṛgveda* was succeeded by that of the Brāhmaṇas or sacrificial treatises which were really practical guidances for the correct performance of various types of sacrifices. The *Yajus* and the *Sāma Vedas* form a sort of connecting link between these two periods; in the latter period the ceremonious *yajña* came to be increasingly complicated and was left more and more in the hands of the initiated who had to complete a difficult course of studies in order to take any important part in it. It has already been pointed out that these elaborate ritual literature nowhere makes any mention of the image proper of the gods and the utmost that can be said about it is that they at best refer to some symbols of a few deities (mostly sun) to be utilised in times of particular sacrifices. The speculative section among the Indo-Aryans, however, were not long to remain satisfied with the mere performance of these sacrifices and they tried to assign special mystical significance to them. This was mostly the work of the Vānaprasthas, *i.e.*, those sages that had gone into the forest after completing their lives as householders, and the results of their speculations were incorporated into the Āraṇyakas, the name assigned to this kind of literature being significant. As this body of literature, or rather the earlier and more authoritative part of it (we should always be careful to exclude the *khilas* or supplements, for therein we find some materials concerning the later sectarian gods), is closely associated with the sacrifices—it unfolds before us their meaning (*arthavāda*),—there is no

chance of our ever finding in it any allusion to divine images and their worship. These works set a high value, however, on the performance of ascetic practices as acts of practical piety and religion, salvation being attainable by this austere asceticism. The natural sequence of the age of these speculative efforts and ascetic practices was that of the early authoritative Upaniṣads where the pursuit of higher knowledge—the true knowledge about the Brahman, Ātman and the Universe—was the chief desideratum. The teaching incorporated in these works was usually regarded as something secret or esoteric. Deussen has correctly shown that the word *Upaniṣad* means 'sitting down at the feet of a teacher to receive secret instruction: hence a secret conversation or doctrine'; this element of secrecy is further emphasised by the fact that the word is used in the Upaniṣadic literature with three distinct meanings, such as, (1) Secret word (as '*satyasya satyam*', '*tadvanam*' or '*tajjalān*'—these words variously describing the Brahman), (2) Secret text (in the Taittiriyaka school a section often ends with the words,—'*iti upaniṣad*'), and (3) Secret import ('secret allegorical meaning of some ritual conception or practice'—*e.g.*, *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, 1. 1. 10—'for that which is executed with knowledge, with faith, with the *Upaniṣad*, *i.e.*, the secret import of *udgītha* as *om*, that is more effective'). In such esoteric literature where the true nature of the Brahman and Ātman is being deeply cogitated, it will be futile to seek for references to concrete representations of deities; the Vedic gods no doubt make their occasional appearances there, but they do so as mere accessories either to illustrate some parable or to stand as a symbol for Brahman-Ātman (as Indra in the *Kauṣītakī Upaniṣad*). The anthropomorphism which was present to a certain extent in their conception had no need to be emphasised in their present environments and as for Brahman it would be sheer folly to even think of him in terms

of other concrete objects, much less to sensibly represent him (*Na sandṛśe tiṣṭhati rūpamasya, na cakṣuṣā paśyati kaścanainam ; na tasya pratimā asti yasya nāma mahadyaśaḥ*). At best, various symbols, all abstract principles such as *prāṇāḥ* (vital breaths), *prajñā* (intellect), *ānanda* (bliss) or *ananta* (eternity), etc., were utilised by the thinkers in their attempts to realise the true nature of the Brahman ; even such terms with intimate associations with sacrifice as *uktha* and the *udgītha*, and the sacrificial horse were thus used in the Upaniṣads of the respective schools of the *Ṛgveda*, *Sāmaveda* and the *Yajurveda*.[1] The fundamentally speculative character of this literature, confined mostly to the domain of the intellectual, was certainly not conducive to the origin and growth of iconism.

But, the word of caution previously sounded is worth reiterating. The peculiar mystico-philosophical beliefs which are expressed in this class of literature only confine themselves to undoubtedly a smaller section of the people, obviously the higher intellectuals. Scholars are often prone to generalise and assume that what can be said about these few is applicable to all the Indians of a particular period. Grünwedel makes this observation about the general artistic activities of the Indians of the period to which the Vedas and Upaniṣads belong : 'Though a religio-mystical element may serve as a scanty foil for fully perfected or decadent artistic efforts, the philosophical-scientific tendency, especially with the practical side which it had in ancient India, is an altogether barren soil for art.'[2] We

[1] Such was the august position to which this literature was raised and such was the respect which was paid to it that even after the evolution of the various cult-deities, treatises were composed in imitation of it, whose main interest and purpose was to glorify one or other of the various cult-deities.

[2] Grünwedel, *Buddhist Art*, p. 12.

have practically no means of ascertaining from this class of literature the religious practices of the other larger section, though we shall see later on that the religious texts of the later heterodox sects like Buddhism and Jainism throw a flood of light on this subject. But, in the latest section of the Vedic literature, the *Khilas* (supplements) to the earlier authoritative Brāhmaṇas and Āraṇyakas, and the Gṛhya-sūtras we have clear and unmistakable evidence about the recognition of the images of the gods and their shrines by the orthodox Vedic Brāhmaṇas (Snātakas and Gṛhasthas). The *Ṣaḍviṃśa Brāhmaṇa* is a comparatively late addition to the *Tāṇḍya* or *Pañcaviṃśa Mahābrāhmaṇa*, one of the oldest Brāhmaṇas. In that part of the former which is known as '*Adbhuta Brāhmaṇa*,' really a Vedāṅga text dealing with miracles and omens, we find reference to the performance of various rites for removing the evil effects of certain omens such as the trembling of the temples, the laughing, weeping, dancing, splitting, perspiring, the opening and closing of the eyes of the divine images.[1] This passage certainly presupposes the partial recognition of the practice of image worship. In the Sūtra literature, the Gṛhyasūtras (not the Śrautasūtras which are conversant about the rituals connected with sacrifice) which deal with the rites to be performed by the householders, we find this recognition more thorough. The *Pāraskara Gṛhyasūtra* (III. 14.8) tells us that the student (*snātaka*) when going in his chariot towards the images of gods (*daivatāni*), should descend from the chariot before he has reached them; if towards Brāhmaṇas, just before reaching them; if towards cows, when amid them; if towards fathers, when he has

[1] *Ṣaḍviṃśa Brāhmaṇa*, X. 5. *Devāyatanaṃ kampante daiva-pratimā hasanti rudanti nṛtyanti sphuṭanti svidyanti unmīlanti.* Brindaban Chandra Bhattacharyya cites this as an evidence in support of his theory that image worship was practised by the early Vedic Indo-Aryans. *Cf. Indian Images*, Part I, p. xxix.

reached them.' The *daivatas*, Brāhmaṇas, cows and fathers are mentioned in such a manner that the first one appears to be the most honoured among them. References also are to be found in this kind of literature to the shrines of the gods and the terms used to denote them are '*devagṛha*', '*devāyatana*', '*devakula*' (its Prākrit form is '*deul*'). But even here it is doubtful whether these images and shrines were in any way associated with the well known members of the Vedic hierarchy like Indra, Agni, Mitra, Varuṇa, Uṣas, Aditi and others. The connection in which these gods are mentioned in the above texts does not mean that their images are referred to and many are the new names such as Īśāna, Kṣetrapati, Mīḍhuṣī, Jayanta, Śrī, Dhanapati, Bhadrakālī and others, most of which it is presumable had their icons and shrines. The whole of the *Āpastamba Gṛhyasūtra*, VII. 20 deals with the carrying about of the images of the bucolic deities like Īśāna, Mīḍhuṣī and Jayanta by the householder and placing them in huts built for them and offering to them boiled rice from the *sthālipaka*. More about this change of outlook in religion among the Vedic initiates will be discussed in the next chapter.[1]

[1] *Āpastamba Gṛhyasūtra*, VII. 19, 13; *Hiraṇyakeśin Gr. S.*, II. 3, 8, 2-4; *Śāṅkhāyana Gr. S.*, II, 14, 14, 17, etc., *Pāraskara Gr. S.*, I. 16, 23 furnishes us with a list of the demons and goblins such as Ṣaṇḍa, Marka, Upavīra, Sauṇḍikeya, Ulūkhala, Malimluca, Animisa, Hantṛmukha, Sarṣapāruṇa, Kumāra and many others who are propitiated with offerings of mustard seeds mixed with rice-chaff.

CHAPTER III

The Origin and Development of Image-worship in India

Remarkable changes introduced in the religious outlook of the Vedic Aryans—due to culture contact—gradual emergence of the element of *Bhakti*—its constituent factors—the appearance of some of these in late Vedic literature—clear references in post-Vedic works—sectarianism, the natural corollary of the development of *Bhakti*—growth and development of the *Bhakti* cults centering round Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa, Śiva, the Yakṣas like Maṇibhadra and others, and the Devī—references to some of these in indigenous and foreign accounts of the pre-Christian period—necessity for some sensible objects of representation for the cult-deities and their accessories—the purpose served by them—their character—these objects not always iconic—iconism and aniconism existing in India side by side.

Evidence with regard to the prevalence of images in post-Vedic India : Literary (indigenous and foreign) and archaeological (epigraphic, monumental and numismatic).

It has already been alluded to in the preceding chapter that the later sections of the Vedic literature distinctly point out to remarkable changes that were being introduced in the religious outlook of the Indo-Aryans. It is true that they did not relinquish the practices which were performed with so much zest by their forefathers, but there cannot be the least doubt that all these were having more re-orientation due to various factors that were in operation from the very beginning of the period when they first set their feet on Indian soil. The most important among these was undoubtedly the close contact which they had to come in with the previous settlers of India. However much they could revile the children of the Indian soil whom they were driving from the more covetable lands into the hills and jungles, with such deprecatory epithets as *dāsas*, *anāsas* (noseless ones), *yātus* or *yātudhānas*, *rākṣasas*, *śiśnadevas*, *mūradevas*, etc., it cannot be denied that these latter people possessed a sort of material culture which was much superior to that of their

victors. It is a pity that we have not before us any literary record of what these people were like, what they believed and practised, what they thought of their conquerors, presented from their point of view; but the remains that have been unearthed in course of systematic excavations in the Indus Valley have brought to light immense evidence regarding the high and developed state of material civilisation with which their forefathers were endowed. The commingling of cultures of the immigrants and the former inhabitants was greatly responsible for the gradual introduction of various elements which are either not traceable or traceable only in faint outlines in the earliest literary works of the Indo-Aryans. *Ṛgveda*, or for the matter of that the other Vedas and the early Brāhmaṇas, had practically nothing to say on such topics as the law of *Karma*, the transmigration of souls and their necessary concomitant—the somewhat pessimistic view of life; but these were gradually being more and more discussed in the different Upaniṣads. The wholesale pessimism of the Buddhists might not have been the characteristic of the latter but 'there cannot be any doubt that the genius of the Upaniṣads is different from that of the *Ṛgveda*, however, many ties may connect the two periods.'[1] Again, the pantheism of the former can very well be compared with the belief in the multifarious nature gods of the Aryans as portrayed in the latter. All these new elements can be presumed to have grown in the Indian soil, in the inception of which the earlier settlers in India did not play a mean part. Keith has very cautiously presented the problem in these sentences: 'The Upaniṣads, as in some degree all earlier thought in India, represent the outcome of the reflections of a people whose blood was mixed. We may, if we desire, call the Upaniṣads the product of Aryo-Dravidian thought; but if we do so, we must remember that

[1] Keith, *op. cit.*, p. 481.

the effect of the intermixture must be regarded in the light of chemical fusion, in which both elements are transformed.' [1]

The one important element, however, which has got special bearing on our subject and the name of which is to be found in at least one of the major Upaniṣads is *Bhakti*, primarily the loving adoration of some persons by others but secondarily the deep affectionate and mystic devotion for some personal deity who is the object of worship (in the developed sense of the term, *i.e.*, *pūjā*). If we briefly trace the history of the gradual emergence of *Bhakti* in the religious lives of the Indo-Aryans, we cannot but endorse the view just quoted. Among the several constituent factors which make up this element in its secondary aspect, the most important ones are ' belief in one personal god as spiritual being, the faith that his power is sufficient to secure that at the last the good will conquer, and lastly a conception of the nexus that binds together God and his worshippers as mainly moral.' [2] In the later stratum of the *Ṛgveda*, we find the struggling appearance of one supreme entity into which all the separately conceived Vedic divinities are merged.[3] Some faint traces of the belief in one moral god who looks after the consciences and works of men are certainly present in some of the Ṛgvedic characterisations of Varuṇa to whom prayers for forgiveness are offered by the hymnists.[4] Keith has observed, ' The thought of India started from a religion which had in Varuṇa a god of decidedly moral character and the simple worship of that deity with its consciousness of sin and trust

[1] Keith, *op. cit.*, p. 497.

[2] N Macnicol, *Indian Theism*, p. 7.

[3] *Cf.*, *R. V.*, I., 164, 46: *Iṃdraṃ Mitraṃ Varuṇamagnimāhuratho divyaḥ sa suparṇo garutmān | Ekaṃ sadviprā bahudhā vadantyagniṃ yamaṃ mātariśvānamāhuḥ ||*

[4] *Cf.*, *R. V.*, I., 25, 1 and 2, and similar other verses.

in the divine forgiveness is doubtless one of the first roots of Bhakti.'[1] But this kind of worship dedicated to such a god was arrested in its growth and the prominence given to the other gods like Indra, Agni, Soma, and others intimately associated with sacrifice, adversely affected it. Even then in one of the late hymns of the *Ṛgveda* (X. 125), the goddess Vāc is made to say, 'I give wealth unto him who gives sacrifice;...I am that through which one eats, breathes, sees and hears;...him that I love I make strong, to be a priest, a seer, a sage.' Eliot remarks about this passage, 'This reads like an ancient preliminary study for the *Bhagavadgītā*. Like Kṛṣṇa, the deity claims to be in all and like him to reward her votaries.'[2] In the Upaniṣads, on the other hand, the mental attitude of the thinkers to the one supreme entity, *viz.*, Brahman-Ātman gets a character which is, in no very uncertain manner, reminiscent of *Bhakti*. The growth and development of monotheism, a direct result of the pantheistic conception of the earlier Upaniṣads, was the certain background on which *Bhakti* was to develop among the intellectual section of the composite population of India. The impersonal-personal Brahman was no doubt ill-suited to play the rôle of the one god of devotion and the strictly monistic character of some of the earlier Upaniṣadic passages was logically inimical to the ideas of loving faith, still there are many passages in some of them, which are significant. We are told in one of them, 'That Ātman cannot be gained by the Veda, nor by understanding nor by much learning; he whom Ātman chooses, by him the Ātman can be gained; the

[1] *J. R. A. S.*, 1915, p. 834.

[2] Eliot, *Hinduism and Buddhism*, Vol. II, p. 181. He says further, "It is true that the 'Come unto me' (*māmekaṃ śaraṇaṃ vraja*) is not distinctly expressed, but it is surely struggling for expression."

Ātman chooses him as his own.' Here, even though the idea of faith or love is not distinctly present, yet the positive assertion that Ātman selects his own and he cannot be gained by proficiency in the Vedic lore and other things does forcibly remind us of the free grace of the personal god. [1] This again seems to be clear in the *Kāṭhaka* passage (II. 20) which speaks of the ability of a person to see the glory of the Ātman if he is graced by the creator (if the word *dhātuḥ prasādāt* in this verse is taken to mean ' by the grace of the creator ' and not as Śaṅkara explains it). The *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (III. 20) which contains much that is theistic in nature contains the same passage with an alteration which, though slight, is material.[2] It is in this Upaniṣad among the major ones, that we find for the first time the mention of the word *Bhakti* which occurs in the last verse of the work. [3] From this time onward references to it become clearer and clearer and Pāṇini in the several sūtras of his *Aṣṭādhyāyī* lays down rules for various word-formations in which the etymological sense of the word *bhakti*, *viz.*, ' resorting to and then loving the thing resorted to with faith and devotion ' is the central idea. [4]

[1] Indra says to Pratardana who had asked him for a boon " Know me only; that is what I deem most beneficial to man, that he should know me....He who meditates on me as life and immortality gains his full life in this world and in heaven immortality." Eliot remarks about this passage, ' Though the relation of the devotee to the deity here is purely intellectual and not emotional, still the idea that intellectual devotion directed to a particular deity will be rewarded is clearly present '; Eliot, *op. cit.*, p. 181. But he forgets that Indra here symbolises the highest principle discussed in the early Upaniṣads.

[2] The last *caraṇa* of this verse, *viz.*, *dhātuḥ prasādānmahimānamātmanaḥ* is changed into *dhātuḥ prasādānmahimānamīśam*.

[3] *Śvet. Up.*, VI, 23—*Yasya deve parā bhaktiryathā deve tathā gurau | Tasyaite kathitā hyarthāḥ prakāśante mahātmanaḥ ||*

[4] IV, 95 ff.

The Upaniṣadic Brahman-Ātman when conceived in personal aspect, especially in the theistic Upaniṣads, is usually called not Deva (god), but Īśa, Īśāna, Īśvara and latterly Parameśvara. But even then, *Śvetāśvatara* found it necessary to refer to some personal divine entity like Rudra (also mentioned under other names such as Eka deva, Mahān deva, Maheśvara, Māyī and once even Śiva—' *jñātvā śivaṃ sarvabhūteṣu gūdham* ') who was the recipient of the homage of his devotees. In this work which has not cut itself asunder from the general body of the scheme of the early Upaniṣads ('beneath the characters of theism are discerned, half obliterated, those of pantheism and under the latter, again, those of idealism.' Deussen), we are told that the knowledge alone of this one god will break up the fetters of death and nothing will be gained by him by the learning of the Ṛg verses who does not know him (*Yastanna veda kimṛcā kariṣyati*). But evidently such mental attitude of the thinkers, though no doubt it bespeaks a great deal of progress towards the development of cult-religions and sectarianism, was not at all truly sectarian in character. Its natural corollary, however, was the growth of the latter in which the element of *Bhakti* was the main guiding principle. The gods, centering round whom these cults developed, were not recruited from the orthodox Vedic Pantheon, but from quite a different source. Indra, Prajāpati, Mitra, Varuṇa, Yama, Agni and others could never actually serve the purpose as cult deities, though some attempts were possibly made by those of the Vedic way of thinking to foist one or other of them as rivals to the recognised sectarian gods. But these, if they were ever seriously made, were destined to failure, and in the developed sectarianism of the Epic and Purāṇic periods we find several of the more important Vedic deities such as Indra, Varuṇa, Agni, Vāyu, Yama and one of the less important ones like Nirṛiti relegated to

the comparatively insignificant position of the guardians of quarters (Dikpālas), where the highest purpose they could serve was of a mere accessory character. Some of the Vedic gods, again, like Viṣṇu, Rudra and Sūrya came to be merged in the composite sectarian deities at a subsequent period, and this merger was so complete and so important for the sects themselves, that some of the latter came to be designated, optionally at first, but more constantly at a later period, by the names of the Vedic counterparts of their cult-pictures (*cf.* the part played by Viṣṇu in the Bhāgavata or Pāñcarātra cult which came to be described as Vaiṣṇava at a later date). But the originals of the sectarian gods were the actual human heroes like Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa, the son of Devakī (*cf.* Kṛṣṇa Devakīputra of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, III, 17), Śākyamuni Gotama and Mahāvīra, or mythological beings like Śiva (Rudra-Śiva), the Yakṣas like Maṇibhadra, Pūrṇabhadra and others, and the goddess Umā-Durgā-Pārvatī-Vindhyavāsinī.[1] Pāṇini in his *sūtra Vāsudevārjunābhyāṃ vuñ* (IV. 3. 98) most probably refers to two sectaries who were the exclusive worshippers of the apotheosised human heroes like Vāsudeva and Arjuna of whom the former was the more honoured and more important. Patañjali's commentary on this *sūtra* fully endorses the view ; but what is also very interesting that Patañjali refers to a sect called the '*Śivabhāgavatas*' or devotees of Śiva, the Holy One, who carried in their hands an iron lance as an emblem of Śiva whom they worshipped'.[2] The early Buddhist works on many occasions refer to the various kinds of worship that prevailed in India especially in Central

[1] In my book on the icons of these syncretic gods, I shall show what elaborate use was made of the descriptions of their Vedic counterparts thus, fully substantiating the hypothesis already referred to regarding the composite culture of the post-Vedic period.

[2] *Mahābhāṣya*, under Pāṇini, V. 2. 76.

and Eastern India at a time when Buddha preached his doctrine. R. G. Bhandarkar quotes a very interesting passage from the *Niddesa*, which furnishes us with a curious record of the various religious systems and superstitions that prevailed at the period: 'The deity of the lay followers of the Ājīvakas is the Ājīvakas, of those of the Niganthas is the Niganthas, of those of the Jaṭilas is the Jaṭilas, of those of the Paribbājakas is the Paribbājakas, of those of the Avaruddhakas is the Avaruddhakas, and the deity of those who are devoted to an elephant, a horse, a cow, a dog, a crow, Vāsudeva, Baladeva, Punnabhadda, Manibhadda, Aggi, Nāgas, Supannas, Yakkhas, Asuras, Gandhabbas, Mahārājas, Chanda, Suriya, Inda, Brahmā, Deva, Diśa is the elephant, the horse, the cow, the dog, the crow, Vāsudeva, Baladeva, Punnabhadda, Manibhadda, etc., respectively.'[1] It will be wrong to suppose that this curious jumble of worshippers of particular objects indicates all of them as separate sectaries; what is worth noting, however, is that here is an authentic presentation of a medley in which the sects of Vāsudeva, Ājīvakas and the Nirgranthas are mixed up with the believers not only in the Vedic gods like Indra, Agni, Candra, Sūrya and others, or with those putting their faith in the efficacy of austerities and asceticism (*cf.* the Paribbājakas and the Jaṭilas) but also with the superstitious animists. The last group, however, much they might be deprecated by the polished intellectuals of the day, played no mean a part to mould the beliefs and practices of their more advanced contemporaries. Megasthenes, as quoted by Arrian mentions that Herakles was the special object of worship of the Sourasenoi, an Indian tribe in whose land were the great cities of Methora and Kleisobora (Mathurā and Kṛṣṇapura) and through which flowed

[1] R. G. Bhandarkar, *Vaiṣṇavism, Saivism and Minor Religious Systems*, p. 3.

the river Jobares (Jamunā); this is a confirmation from a foreign source regarding the existence of at least one sectary among the several named above in the fourth century B. C. in the Yamunā region.[1] We shall see later on that archaeological data from the 2nd century B. C. onwards substantially corroborate the above facts.

A somewhat elaborate discussion about the origin and growth of the idea of *Bhakti* has been found necessary because the solution of the whole problem of the origin of image-worship itself principally depends on it. Some sensible objects were found to be indispensable by the various sectarians who required them as so many visible symbols for the various personal gods to whom they rendered their exclusive homage. The symbols and images in their case analogically did the same sort of service as was done by Fire (Agni) in the Vedic ritualism. Fire was specially sacred to the Vedic priests, because it was the carrier of the sacrificers' oblations to the respective gods; in the case of a sectary, the image or icon or any such visible symbol of his deity was the handy medium through which he could transfer his one-souled devotion (*ekātmikā bhakti*) to his god. That was the primary purpose for which they were usually intended, though there is textual evidence regarding their being used secondarily for such purposes as *abhicāra*, etc. (*cf.* the *ābhicārika mūrtis* as described in the *Vaikhānasāgama*). The rendering of one's homage was done by various acts of *pūjā* in which images were absolutely necessary; these were *abhigamana* or going to the temple of the deity with the speech, the body and the mind centred

[1] McCrindle, *Ancient India as described by Megasthenes and Arrian*, p. 201. R. G. Bhandarkar was the first to identify the tribe of the Sourasenoi with the Sātvatas and Herakles with Vāsudeva. The Greek writers appositely designated Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa as Herakles, for both these deities were very probably apotheosised human beings.

on him, *upādāna* or collecting the materials of worship such as flowers, incense, sandal paste, offerings (*naivedya*), etc., *ijyā* or the very act of worshipping the Śri Vigraha (the auspicious body of the lord), *svādhyāya* or the muttering of the *mantra* usual to particular cult divinities and lastly *yoga* or meditation.[1] The last constituent of the act of *pūjā* has got special bearing on the history of the evolution of the icons. One author tells us that the image-maker should fashion images in such a manner that they would conduce to the success of the *dhyāna-yoga*.[2] Many images are known where the deity himself is shown in the pose of a Yogī immersed in deep meditation (*cf.* the images of Jina, Buddha, Yogāsana Viṣṇu, Yogadakṣiṇāmūrti of Śiva and others). A notice of a very interesting passage in the *Mahābhārata* which refers to Nārada's visit to the Badarikāśrama to see Nara and Nārāyaṇa will not be out of place here. Nārada finds the latter engaged in the act of worshipping; bewildered at this (because Nārāyaṇa was himself an object of worship) Nārada asks him about the latter's object of devotion. Then the Lord tells him that he is worshipping his original Prakṛti, the source of all that is and that is to be.[3] Here we have a textual evidence in support of deities themselves being conceived in

[1] Some of the Mantras special to particular deities are (1) the twelve-syllabled Bhāgavata mantra: *Oṃ namo bhāgavate Vāsudevāya*, (2) the five-syllabled Śaiva one—*Namaḥ Śivāya* and (3) the seven-syllabled Śakti mantra—*Parameśvarī svāhā*.

[2] *Śukranītisāra*, Ch. IV., section 4:

Dhyānayogasya saṃsiddhaiḥ pratimālakṣaṇaṃ smṛtam |
Pratimākārako martlyo yathā dhyānarato bhavet ||

[3] *Mahābhārata*, Baṅgavāsī Edition, Śānti Parva, Nārāyaṇīya Parvādhyāya, ch. 334, verses, 14-45. This passage is a curious amalgam of the Sāṅkhya and Yoga. The entity who is the object of Nara's and Nārāyaṇa's devotion is described thus: *Yattat sūkṣmamavigñeyamavyaktamacalaṃ dhruvaṃ* | *Indriyairindriyārthaiśca sarvabhūtaiśca*

the *dhyāna-yoga* and their images depicted in the very pose had the practical utility of aiding the devotee to concentrate the mind on his god. The importance of such images as well as their connection with the ones that were discovered in the Indus-valley has been elaborately discussed by R. P. Chanda in some of his writings.[1] The true significance and purpose of the image proper of the god must be understood in this light and this is fully emphasised by the passages appearing in such late works as *Rāmatāpanīya* and *Jābāla Upaniṣads* and *Mahānirvāṇa Tantra*, even though some of them deprecate the practice of the persons who offer their *bhakti* to their gods through these media.[2] But these works are mainly written from the position of those who firmly believed in worshipping the highest principle without the aid of any media (*nirākāropāsanā*) and the attitude of some of them was strictly non-dualist (*Śivamātmani paśyanti*).

varjitam ‖ *Sa hyantarātmā bhūtānāṃ kṣetrajñaśceti kathyate* | *Trl-guṇavyatirikto vai puruṣaśceti kalpitaḥ* ‖ *Tasmādavyaktamutpannaṃ triguṇaṃ dvijasattama* | *Avyakta vyaktabhāvastha yā sā prakṛtiravyayā* ‖ *Tām yonimāvayorviddhi yo'sau sadasadātmakaḥ* | *Ābābhyāṃ pūjyate so'hi daive pitrye ca kalpate* ‖ This original Prakṛti, we are told further on, was none other than Hari.

[1] This is ably recounted in one of his latest works, *viz.*, *Mediæval Indian Sculptures in the British Museum*, Ch. I, pp. 6-10. He suggests that the 'sudden rise of the cult of the images of the Yogī in north-western India (Gandhāra and Mathurā) is only a revival of an old cult of the image of the Yogī once prevalent in that region.'

[2] *Ciṇmayasyādvitīyasya niskalasyāśarīriṇaḥ* | *Upāsakānāṃ kāryārthaṃ Brahmaṇo rūpakalpanā* (*Rāmatāpanīya Upaniṣad*); *Śivamātmani paśyanti pratimāsu na yoginaḥ* | *Ajñānāṃ bhāvanārthāya pratimā parikalpitā* ‖ (*Jābāla Upaniṣad*) ; *Evaṃ guṇānnusārena rūpāṇi vividhāni ca* | *Kalpitāni hitārthāya bhaktānāmalpamedhasām* (*Mahānirvāṇa Tantra*). The last-named work, thus, derides the efforts of those who want to attain salvation through this method: *'Manasā kalpitā mūrti nṛiṇāṃ cenmokṣasādhanī* | *Svapnalabdhena rājyena rājāno mānavāstathā* ‖ *Mṛcchilāḍhātudārvādi-mūrtāvīśvarabuddhayaḥ* | *Kliśyantastapasā jñānaṃ vinā mokṣaṃ na yānti te* ‖ . . .

It will be profitable to compare this view-point about the usefulness of the images with that presented in the works of the Bhāgavatas or the Pāñcarātras. We have already mentioned the significance of such words as *vigraha, bera, tanu, rūpa,* etc. ; these are mostly utilised in such literature replete with sentiments of deep loving faith for the lord Vāsudeva and his principal aspects. This manner of describing euphemistically the images after due consecration as the very bodies or forms of the god is fully emphasised therein by the prescription that the cult picture of the deity was one of his five-fold forms, *viz.*, *Para*, the highest, the *Vyūhas,* concerned with the emanatory forms, *Vibhava*, relating to the incarnatory forms, *Antaryāmin*, the lord as the inner controller of the individual, and lastly the *Arcā*, the duly consecrated images. This concept of the image is based on its unique sublimation to the very position of the god-head, the object of deep loving adoration to the devotee. The process presupposes a mental preparation, a studied effort on the part of the worshipper which culminates in the attainment of that frame of mind in which an object fashioned by human hands reaches such an august level. A concept similar to the above is essentially one of the characteristic features of most of the religious cults of India in which the *Bhakti* element was the main guiding principle. The Āḻvārs or the Nāyanārs in the south and the Viṣṇuite or Śivaite saints of the north and the Ācāryas of many of the sectarian religious systems of the early and mediæval periods throughout India were no doubt highly cultured people. But their approach to the deity was different and in it the divine image played a very important part. So, T. A. G. Rao's observation, "the Hindu śāstras prescribe image worship to weak unevolved persons in particular" should have to be modified before acceptance. It is true that the root idea of image-worship can be traced to animism—but so also can the idea of the immanence of the godhead be traced, yet in its

rationalised and developed form there is very little place for crudity or savagery. It has been remarked that, "In dealing with savage ideas of the inanimate, it must be kept in mind that non-living things are worshipped or feared *not in any symbolical sense, which is altogether foreign to the lower intelligence, but as supposed home of a spirit, or as in some sense a vehicle of power.*"[1] This symbolism is further expressed and emphasised by the very characteristic of endowing the mediæval Indian images with many hands, which has been dubbed as a monstrosity by some scholars. Different explanations have been suggested by different scholars with regard to this feature. Macdonell, for example, suggested that it was the direct outcome of the iconographers' necessity to distinguish the image of one deity from the other, when the earlier mode of doing so by the placing of mounts below them was found inadequate due to the gradual increase of the pantheon. He wanted to substantiate his view by referring to one universal feature of the multi-handed images;—their natural hands are invariably to be found in such action-poses as *abhaya, varada*, etc., whereas the added hands carried different implements which were, according to him, nothing but differentiating marks.[2] But this statement is not universally applicable. The alternative suggestion that the hands and the *āyudhas* or implements in them portray the attempts to symbolise, however ineffectively, the multifarious activities of the god, is acceptable. T. A. G. Rao says, ' the images of the Hindu gods and goddesses are representations of the various conceptions

[1] Edward Clodd, *Animism*, p. 78. *Italics are mine.*

[2] *J.R.A.S.*, 1916, pp. 127-8. Refer to A. M. Hocart's article on 'Many-armed Gods' in *Acta Orientalia*, Vol. VII, 1929, pp. 91 ff. Hocart remarks, 'Evidently theological considerations were paramount in deciding the number of arms, and this is far more in accord with what we know of the Indian mind, than Prof. Macdonell's theory.'

of divine attributes. Sculpturally it may be said, the number of hands in an image represents the number of attributes belonging to the deity, and their nature is denoted by the *āyudha* held in the hand or by the pose maintained by it.' [1]

A well executed image, if it follows the rules of proportions laid down in the Śilpaśāstras and is pleasing to the eye, invites the deity to reside in it and is particularly auspicious to its worshipper. [2] But deities were not always iconically represented; over and above their concrete representations, anthropomorphic and rarely theriomorphic, they could also be figured in aniconic manner. The latter mode is undoubtedly reminiscent of an earlier practice. In India, iconism and aniconism existed side by side from a very early period, and these are also present even in modern times. Buddha could be represented by means of such symbols as the Bodhi tree with Vajrāsana beneath it, his foot prints, the *stūpa*, etc., which are directly associated with him; in the Amarāvatī and Nāgārjunīkoṇḍā sculptures of the 2nd and 3rd centuries A.D., we find him being depicted iconically and aniconically at the same time, though in the earlier Buddhist art of Central India he used to be represented in the latter manner. Similarly, Brāhmaṇical sectarian deities could as well be worshipped in the Śālagrāmas, the Bāṇa-liṅgas and the Yantras, as in images; but here, however, their association with the symbols was not so direct. Attempts were not wanting to account for this connection by

[1] T. A. G. Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, Part I, Introduction, p. 27. The weapons or attributes in the case of some at least of the Brahmanical images, have also their bases in the anthropomorphic descriptions of their Vedic counterprats.

[2] *Abhirūpyācca vimbānāṃ devaḥ sānnidhyamṛcchati* (*Hayaśīrṣa pañcarātra*). *Śukranītisāra*, IV. 78 *Yathoktāvayavaiḥ pūrṇāh punyadā sumonoharā* | *Anyathāyurdhanaharā nityaṃ duḥkhavivarddhinī*

the creation of mythological stories.[1] The Śālagrāmas, Bāṇa-liṅgas and Yantras are primarily associated with the Vaiṣṇava, Śaiva and Śākta sects respectively. Then, there are various sacred stones scattered over different parts of India which are taken to stand for one or other of the sectarian divinities. It has been shown that rude stone monuments consisting of menhirs, dolmens, cairns, and cromlechs distributed over parts of Europe, Western Asia and India are essentially sepulchral in character.[2] The Indian phalli, especially their early specimens, portray this feature to a very great extent. Many instances are known, in India of ancient and modern times, of stones regarded as aniconic representations of the sectarian divinities. The well known Śākta tradition about the severed limbs of Satī falling in different parts of India and about the latter being regarded as so many *pīṭhasthānas*, particularly sacred to the Śakti-worshippers, should be noted in this connection. In modern times, the most important objects of worship in many of these shrines are usually stone blocks covered over with red cloth, which are described as this and that limb of the goddess. It is interesting to observe here that Hiuen Thsang records in his *Si-yu-ki* some useful details about a great mountain in ancient Gandhāra 'which had a likeness (or image) of Maheśvara's spouse Bhīmādevī of dark-blue stone. According to local accounts this was a natural image of the goddess; it was a great resort of devotees from all parts of India. At the foot of the mountain was a temple to Maheśvara-deva in which the ash-smearing Tīrthikas performed much worship.' Watters remarks, 'The image or likeness of Bhīmā-devī here mentioned was apparently a dark-blue rock in the mountain supposed to

[1] *Cf.* T. A. G. Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, Part I, Introduction, pp. 8 ff. Rao gives us an elaborate account of these aniconic symbols.

[2] Grant Allan, The *Evolution of the Idea of God*, pp. 68 ff.

have a resemblance to that goddess.'[1] Watters' observation about the resemblance is immaterial; but, what is of importance here is that we find in it an authentic reference to a *svayambhūmūrti* of the goddess in the 7th century A.D. Now, these images are principally aniconic stones, and numerous textual references to the self-wrought phalli (*Svayambhūliṅga*) have been quoted by Gopinath Rao in his work (section on Liṅgas). It seems that sometimes, these aniconic objects were held in more veneration than the images fashioned by human hands, for the list supplied by Rao proves that claims were set forth on behalf of man-made Śiva-liṅgas to be regarded as *Svayambhū* ones. Then there are sacred trees and other objects which were also held in high respect on account of their association with certain spiritual entities, and in the subsequent religious history of India, these were specially associated with one or other of the sectarian divinities. Reference may be made to the high esteem in which the *bael* and *tulasī* trees were held by the devotees of Śiva and Viṣṇu respectively and also to the *sthala-vṛkṣas* associated with particular shrines; numismatic data, as I shall show afterwards, seem to prove that more or less similar was the case in much earlier times. The association of the Aśvattha (Ficus Religiosa) with Śākyamuni

[1] Watters, '*On Yuan Chwang*,' Vol. I, pp. 221-22. The Bhīmādevī shrine is evidently identical with the Bhīmāsthāna beyond Pañcanada mentioned in the *Mahābhārata*, Vanaparva, Ch. 82, verses 84-85, and probably also with Bhīṣaṇā of the *Mahāmāyūrī* text. According to the *Mahābhārata*, there was a Yoni tīrtha, a dip into whose *kuṇḍa* was regarded as highly auspicious in character. These details are important for the religious history of India, the Yonipīṭha is now at Kāmākhyā, near Gauhati, Assam, and the particular Bhairava of the Devī is Umānanda on a rock in the midst of the Brahmaputra near by. In the 7th century A. D. there was a similar shrine in the heart of Gandhāra with the adjacent shrine of the Bhairava (Śiva). For detailed discussions about these *cf.* my article in *Indian Historical Quarterly*, Vol. XIV, 1938, pp. 751-3.

Buddha and that of the various other trees like Puṇḍarīka, Sirīṣa, Pāṭali, Nyagrodha and others with his predecessors were not particular to the Buddhist creed alone; these Bodhi trees were the direct descendants of the *Caitya Vṛkṣas* (*rukkhacetiyāni*) of more primitive times. The trees and branches appearing so frequently in the numerous seals discovered in the Indus Valley had most probably some cult significance of this nature.

It is time now to discuss some of the literary data with regard to the prevalence of images in the post-Vedic period. Incidental reference has already been made to one or two among them in the first few pages of the second chapter of this work. But, a collected presentation of some of those as well as several others will be necessary for the better understanding of the theme being discussed here. Pāṇini's *Sūtra, Jīvikārthe Cāpaṇye* (V. 3. 99) as explained by the later commentators is interesting; it gives us positive information about the concrete representations of deities in the 5th century B.C.[1] But from this cryptic *sūtra*, we have no idea about the kind of deities whose *pratikṛtis* were made means of livelihood by a certain class of people. It can justifiably be presumed, however, that these were not the orthodox Vedic gods, but were popular objects of worship like the Yakṣas and the Nāgas; they could also be even of Vāsudeva, Arjuna and the Mahārājas (Kubera, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Viḍūdhaka and Virūpākṣa, the guardian deities of the Northern, Eastern, Southern and Western quarters respectively—this is A. C. Coomaraswamy's interpretation and it seems to be the correct one), because Pāṇini under IV. 3. 95 (*Yeṣāṃ bhaktir yap*) lays down rules for the word formations denoting the *bhaktas* or the

[1] *Cf.* H. C. Raychaudhuri's discussion about Pāṇini's date in his *Materials for the Study of the Early History of the Vaiṣṇava Sect*, Second Edition, pp. 24-30.

worshippers of Vāsudeva, Arjuna and the Mahārājas (IV. 3. 98—*Vāsudevārjunābhyāṃ vuñ* and IV. 3. 99—*Mahārājāṭṭhañ*). But Patañjali is much more informative on this matter in his comment on Pāṇini's above *sūtra* (V. 3. 99). His *bhāṣya* reads :—*apaṇya iti ucyati tatredaṃ na sidhyati | Śivaḥ Skandaḥ Viśākhaḥ iti kiṃ kāraṇaṃ—Mauryairhiraṇyārthibhirccāḥ prakalpitāḥ | bhavet tāsu na syāt | Yāstu ketāḥ sampratipūjārthāsu bhaviṣyati ||* This passage is highly important, because it throws a flood of light on our problem. He mentions a few of the gods, *viz.*, Śiva, Skanda, Viśākha whose images were being made for worship at his time (*sampratipūjārthā*); again, his assertion that the Mauryas devised the expedient of replenishing their royal coffer by the selling of images (it seems from this that they themselves were not worshippers of images) shows that images were in great demand among their subjects; lastly, it is significant that none of the three gods mentioned above can be described as Vedic in character. Such texts as the *Arthaśāstra* and the *Manusaṃhitā* also supply to us some valuable data about the subject. Kautilya, in his chapter on *Dūrganiveśa* (Buildings within the Fort) says 'In the centre of the city, the apartments of gods such as Aparājita, Apratihata, Jayanta, Vaijayanta, Śiva, Vaiśravaṇa, Aśvī, and the abode of the goddess Madirā shall be made. In the corners the guardian deities of the ground shall be appropriately set up.'[1] These are evident allusions to the shrines of the above-named gods and it is presumable that the images of the latter were enshrined in them; an analysis of the names shows that only one among

[1] *Arthaśāstra*, translation by R. Shama Sastri, 2nd edition, p. 69. The translator notes that 'the worship of the Aśvins and Vaiśravaṇa seems to have been prevalent at the time of this work.' The original text reads :—*Aparājitāpratihatojayantavaijayantakoṣṭhakān Śivavaiśravaṇāśvī śrīmadirāgṛhaṃ ca puramadhye kārayet | Koṣṭhakālayeṣu yathoddeśaṃ vāstudevatāḥ sthāpayet ||*

them (or possibly two, if Vaijayanta be taken to be a synonym of Indra), *viz.*, Aśvī (the twin gods Aśvins) is distinctively Vedic in character. Vaiśravaṇa is the same as Kuvera, the lord of the Yakṣas, Jayanta is most probably the same as mentioned in the *Āpastamba Gṛhyasūtra* (VII. 20. 3—Jayanta in this passage had no need to be translated as 'the conqueror' as had been done by Max Müller in the S. B. E. series) already noted in the second chapter; the image of Śiva is referred to in the *Mahābhāṣya*, here, and probably also in the *Āpastamba Gṛ. Sūtra* noted above (Īśāna's image is mentioned there and Īśāna is the name of one of the aspects of Śiva); the goddess Madirā may be the same as Mīḍhūṣī mentioned in the latter work and in the same context and translated by Max Müller as 'the bountiful one.'[1] Kauṭilya also refers to the figures of the "goddesses and altars which were to be carved on wooden door frames of the royal underground chamber" (*Vāsagṛhaṃ bhūmigṛhaṃ vasannakāṣṭhacaityadevatāvidhānam*, etc., Kauṭilya on *Niśāntapraṇidhiḥ*); these figures had most probably protective utility and acted as sorts of charms, and were not meant for worship. In the chapter on *Apasarpapraṇidhiḥ* Kauṭilya refers to the images and flags

[1] In the *Ap. Gr. S.*, these three deities, *viz.*, Īśāna, Mīḍhūsī and Jayanta are mentioned together; Haradatta explained them as images of the three gods. *Hiranyakeśin, Gr. S.*, II. 3, 8. in connection with the Śūlagava sacrifice meant for Rudra for averting cattle diseases, furnishes us with the interesting fact that the cow (the consort) of the spit-ox (*i.e.*, the ox to be symbolically sacrificed) and their calf are euphemistically described as Mīḍhūṣī and Jayanta respectively; the sacrificer then prays to the three gods, *viz.*, Īśāna, Mīḍhūṣī and Jayanta to touch the three beasts. If Mīḍhūṣī and Madirā be identical then they both are to be regarded as the consort of Śiva; one of the names of Śiva is Mīḍhūṣa and Madirā is one of the synonyms of Durgā-Ambikā.

of the gods (*devadhvajapratimābhirvā*) in the guise of which weapons will be supplied by the spies outside to the spies inside the enemy's fort; in the same section we are told about the procession of gods (*i.e.*, the images of them—*daivatapretakāryotsavasamājeṣu*), etc., which would be taken advantage of by the spies in harming the enemy. Very great importance is assigned to the images of the gods in *Manusmṛti* and these various passages in the work which lay down that *daivatam* (images of gods) are to be circumambulated (IV, 139), that one should not voluntarily step over the shadow of the gods (IV, 130), at the *parvans* one should go to the images for protection (IV, 153); again 'he who destroys a bridge, the flag of a temple (really the votive column in front of it), a pole (really a pillar) or images (*saṃkramadhvajayaṣṭināṃ pratimānāṃ ca bhedaka*) shall repair the whole (damages) and pay 500 paṇas as fine (IX, 285). Manu gives us another interesting information that though images were highly venerated by the people in general, temple-priests, whose duty was to minister to these idols, were greatly deprecated and they are placed in the same class with the Brāhmaṇas who earned their livelihood by medical practice, selling of meat and trading (*Cikitsakāndevalakānmāṃsavikrayiṇastathā | Vipaṇena ca jīvanti varjyāḥ syurhavyakavyayoḥ ॥*, III, 152). The same social stigma attaches to the temple-priests in modern times also; it can be explained by the suggestion that it was so because these people prostituted their *bhakti* by making it a means of their livelihood. The two texts, *viz.*, *Arthaśāstra* and *Manusmṛti*, thus furnish us with some important data regarding the prevalence of image-worship in India of the 1st and 2nd centuries A. D., if not of an earliar period. The *Mahābhārata*, in like manner, refers often to the images of the gods, especially in connection with various Tīrthas (sacred places). There

was an image of Viṣṇu named Śālagrāma in the Puṇḍarīka tīrtha (*Śālagrāma iti khyāto Viṣṇuradbhutakarmakaḥ*, III, 84, 124); in the Jyeṣṭhila tīrtha were the images of Viśveśvara and his consort (*Tatra Viśveśvaraṃ dṛṣṭvā devyā saha mahādyutim | Mitrāvaruṇayor lokānāpnoti puruṣarṣabha* || III, 84, 134); these, however, might have been aniconic—the former, a Śālagrāma, and the latter, the phallic emblem of Śiva, in which Śiva and Umā are symbolically represented. Reference to the image of Nandīśvara is to be found in XIII, 25, 21 (*Nandīśvarasya mūrtiṃ tu dṛṣṭvā mucyate kilviṣaiḥ*); in the Mataṅgāśrama near Dharmaprastha was an image of Dharma, touching whom one would attain spiritual rewards, equivalent to those of an aśvamedha-sacrifice (*Dharmaṃ tatrābhisaṃspṛśya vājīmedhamavāpnuyāt*, III, 84, 102); an image of Bramhā is probably being referred to in III, 84, 103 (*Tato gaccheta rājendra Brahmasthānamanuttamaṃ | Tatrābhigamya rājendra Brahmāṇaṃ puruṣarṣabha | Rājasūyāśvamedhābhyāṃ phalāṃ vindati mānavaḥ* ||). Numerous such instances can be quoted from other sections also of the epic literature, but what is of special significance, in this connection, is that the results to be attained by a pious person visiting these tīrthas or worshipping the images therein are often estimated in terms of the fruits attainable by the performance of such Vedic sacrifices as Agniṣṭoma, Jyotiṣṭoma, Aśvamedha, Rājasūya, etc. A careful search among the early literature of the Buddhists and Jainas, also sectaries heterodox from the point of view of a Vedic initiate, throws much light on the form of worship prevalent in this period—in which both iconic as well as aniconic symbols played a great part.

It is interesting to note that Quintus Curtius records that an image of ' Hercules ' was carried in front of the army of Porus as he advanced against Alexander. Coomaraswamy thinks that this may have been an image of Śiva or of a

Yakṣa.[1] The Greek author Stobaeus, flourishing in *Circa* 500 A.D., quotes a passage from Bardasanes who reports the account of an Indian visiting Syria in the time of Antoninus of Emesa (218-222 A.D.). It contains a striking reference to an image of Arddhanārīśvara (the androgynous composite image of Śiva and Dūrgā; Fergusson, *H. I. E. A.*, p. 54). Hiuen Thsang frequently refers to Brāhmanical shrines and sometimes also the images worshipped there by the sectaries, in his *Si-yu-ki*.

It has been shown above how some of the post-Vedic literature of India furnish us with valuable data regarding the prevalence of concrete representations of gods as the objects of worship in India during a few centuries before and after the Christian era. It may be argued that all these passages do not definitely prove that actual images were being worshipped, but they only refer to the aniconic symbols that might have served the purpose as well. Archæological data now will help us to throw fresh light on this question, and a careful study of these, divisible into three groups, *viz.*, epigraphic, monumental and numismatic, will show that in India of the pre-Christian and early post-Christian period, worship was being conducted by the various sectaries among her people, through the media both iconic and aniconic in character. In some cases, the data supply us with direct evidence while in others with indirect. Before a reference is made to a few inscriptions associated with one particular sect, it will be of interest to refer to the interpretation of one or two passages of Aśoka's edicts, which have been taken by some scholars as alluding to the representations of divine figures. In the first part of the

[1] A. C. Coomaraswamy, *op. cit.*, p. 42, fn. 5. But 'Hercules' in this passage may also have meant Kṛṣṇa; we have seen above that Heracles' name is mentioned in connection with the Saurasenas and Mathura by Megasthenes. Dionysios is the Greek counterpart of Śiva.

Fourth Rock Edict of Aśoka, occurs a passage which has been translated by Hultzsch as follows:—'showing the people representations of aerial chariots, representations of elephants, masses of fire and other divine figures' (*Vimāna-darsaṇā ca hastidasaṇā ca agikhaṃdhāni ca añāni ca divyāni rūpāni dasayitpā janaṃ*). He suggests that the figures of elephants stood for the celestial elephants, the usual vehicles of the four Mahārājas or Lokapālas, mentioned above; *agikhaṃdhāni*, according to him, may be taken in the sense of radiant beings of another world and *divyāni rūpāni* (identical in sense with *deva* in the Rupnath edict, E) means the gods in effigie (*i.e.*, the images of the gods). By exhibition of these objects in large gatherings of his subjects (these *samājas* were considered meritorious by Aśoka), Aśoka desired to remind them of the gods whose abodes they would be able to reach by the zealous practice of *dhamma*.[1] These divine images and other representations had merely edificatory value and were not objects of regular worship in shrines.

Certain pre-Christian epigraphic records, however, like the Ghosuṇḍi and the Besnagar ones refer to Bhāgavata shrines. The former discovered on the wall of a *bāoli* (deep masonry well) in the village of Ghosuṇḍi, originally hailed from Nāgarī, 4 miles to the S. W. of it, in the Udaypur State, in Rajputana; Nāgarī has been correctly identified with ancient Madhyamikā on the basis of numismatic evidence. Further discoveries of two other copies of the same record (the last made as recently as 1934-35 by the Government Epigraphist) have enabled D. R. Bhandarkar to present to us a complete reading of the three line inscription which runs thus:—

(1) *Kāritoyaṃ rājñā Bhāgavatena Gājāyanena Pārāśarī putreṇas-Sa*

[1] Hultzsch, *Asoka Inscription*, Girnar Rock Edict, p. 7, fn. 7_2

(2) *rvatātena Aśvamedha-yājiṅā bhagava (d) bhyāṃ Saṃkarṣaṇa-Vāsūdevābhyāṃ*

(3) *anihatābhyāṃ sarveśvarābhyaṃ pūjāśilāprākāro Nārāyaṇavāṭikā.* It has been translated by him as follows :—

'(*This*) enclosing wall round the stone (*object*) of worship, called Nārāyaṇa-vāṭikā (compound) for the divinities Saṃkarṣaṇa-Vāsudeva who are unconquered and are lords of all (has been caused to be made) by (the king) Sarvatāta, a Gājāyana and son of (a lady) of the Parāśara-gotra, who is a devotee of Bhagavat (Viṣṇu) and has performed an Aśvamedha sacrifice.' [1] Here is an undoubted reference to a shrine of the two gods round which a stone enclosure was built in the 1st century B.C. (that is the date assigned by Bhandarkar to the records, though previous opinion was to place them somewhat earlier); but we are not certain about the nature of the objects which were enshrined there. J. C. Ghosh suggested that these were two *śālagrāma* stones (*pūjā-śilā*) corresponding to the varieties of Saṃkarṣaṇa and Vāsudeva as laid down in the *Agni Purāṇa*. Bhandarkar is justified in criticising this view and in his interpretation of *pūjā-śilā-prākāra*; but his own suggestion that the objects enshrined were 'the footprints of the two brother gods carved in stone' on the basis of his discovery in the western part of the wall at Hāthibāḍā (Nāgarī) of the inscription *Śrī-Viṣṇu-pādābhyāṃ* in characters of the 7th century A.D. is also not very convincing. In course of his excavations at Nāgarī, he found in the western half of the Hāthi-bāḍā enclosure the remains of a brick platform which ran from east to west; he says there is no evidence of any superstructure on it, which fact also led him to arrive at the above conclusion. The superstructure may have been a wooden one, as he himself suggests, or even made of brick, all traces of which may have disappeared in course of time.

[1] *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. XXII, p. 204.

A shrine was thus most presumably on the spot and it is extremely probable that the objects of worship there were the two images of the gods. We shall presently see that there were other archaeological data which conclusively prove the existence of figure sculptures of the gods in this period. The above inscription also incidentally shows the composite character of the religious practice of the higher section of the Indians; the king Sarvatāta, belonging to the Bhāgavata creed and erecting the enclosure round the shrine of his chosen gods, had already performed the Vedic Aśvamedha sacrifice (*cf.* the practice of the imperial Guptas). The well-known Khambaba pillar inscription at Besnagar of the 2nd century B.C. records the erection of a Garuḍa-dhvaja in honour of *devadeva* Vāsudeva by 'Bhāgavata Heliodora (Heliodoros), son of Diya (Dion) and an inhabitant of Taxila, who came as an ambassador from the Greek king Antialkidas to king Kāsīputra Bhāgabhadra of Vidiśā.' It can very well be presumed that this Garuḍa column was erected in front of the shrine of Vāsudeva who was to this Greek convert to Bhāgavatism, the God of the gods, the chosen one; the name Garuḍa also shows that by this time, the association of the sectarian god Vāsudeva with the Vedic Viṣṇu (*cf.* my previous observations about Sun conceived as the bird Garutman and Viṣṇu as one of the Ādityas) had already been established. That there was a shrine (or were shrines) of Vāsudeva at Besnagar is proved by the other fragmentary inscription on the shaft of another octagonal Garuḍa column found in a narrow street of Bhilsa, evidently hailing from Besnagar; it records that 'this Garuḍa column of the excellent temple of the Bhagavat was erected by Gautamiputra..., a Bhāgavata, in the 12th year after the installation of Mahārāja Bhāgavata' (*Gotamiputena bhāgavatena...Bhagavato prāsādottamasa Garuḍadhvaja kārito dvādaśavasābhiṣite....Bhāgavate ma*). So, there cannot be any doubt with regard to the existence of the shrines

of Bhagavat before which these votive columns were erected (this was also a common custom in the mediaeval period and is still pursued). In these excellent temples (*uttama prāsāda*) must have been enshrined objects of worship which were most presumably images. A few of the seven Brāhmī inscriptions from Mathura and its vicinity, recently edited by H. Lüders in the *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. XXIV, have special bearing on the subject at issue (some of these inscriptions were previously edited, but Lüders has suggested improved readings for them). The Mora Well Inscription of the time of Mahākṣatrapa Rajuvula's son Swami (Mahākṣatrapa Śoḍāsa) records the establishment of the images of the holy pañcavīras of the Vṛṣṇis in the stone shrine...; these images are called 'five objects of adoration made of stone radiant, as it were, with highest beauty...' The part of the original, translated here, reads—'(*i*) *Mahākṣatrapasa Rājuvulasa putrasa svāmi...(ii) bhagavatāṃ vṛiṣṇīnāṃ pañcavīrānāṃ pratimāḥ śailadevagri...(iv) ārcādeśāṃ śailaṃ paṃca jvalata iva paramavapuṣā.....*'. Here, we find the use of the words *pratimā* and *arcā* used to denote the stone images of the five Vṛṣṇi heroes, who have been tentatively identified by Lüders with the 'five great heroes' (*Baladevapāmokkhā pañca mahāvīrā*) of the Jain canonical list, *viz.*, Baladeva, Akrūra, Anādhṛṣṭi, Sāraṇa and Viduratha.' Lüders even suggests that the images of three male persons actually found at Mora, probably of a considerably earlier date than the Kushan period are three of the five statues whose installation is recorded in the inscription.[1] The second inscrip-

[1] *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. XXIV, pp. 194 ff. Reading the second line as *Bhagavato Vrishṇeḥ paṃcavīrāṇāṃ pratimāḥ*, R. P. Chanda understood 'the line as referring not only to the images of the five Pāṇḍavas but also to an image of the blessed or divine Vṛṣṇi, *i.e.*, of Kṛishna-Vāsudeva, who belonged to the Vrishni branch of the Yādava tribe.' The inscribed stone slab was, according to him, 'one of the pavement slabs of a big temple in which the images of Kṛishṇa

tion of a very fragmentary character, which has been edited by Lüders in this series, belong to the time of Kanishka; it contains the only legible words in the third line *Toṣāye patimā* interpreted by him as an image of Toṣā, perhaps the same as Toṣā of the other record just referred to (line three of which reads—*yas-Toṣāyāḥ śailaṃ śrīmadgṛhamatulam-udadhasamadhāra*); he tentatively suggests that this image of Toṣā which is certainly about a century later than the first inscription, was erected by some one of her descendants at her shrine (*cf.* line 3 of the 1st inscription just quoted) as an act of posthumous honour, about a hundred years after her death.[1] If Lüders' interpretation of the inscribed statue is accepted, then we have here a further epigraphic as well as a monumental evidence regarding the erection of secular statues which were objects of honour ; reference has already been made by me to the Mat statue of the Kushan king Vima Kadphises in a previous chapter. Inscriptions Nos. V and VI, edited by Lüders, further strengthen the view that the custom of erecting portrait statues was much in vogue among the foreign chiefs at Mathura during the Kushan period ; the former incised on the pedestal of an image from Ganeshra refers to the image of the great general Ulāna (*Mahadaṃḍanāyakasya.....Ulānasya paṭimā*) while the latter alludes to...*rṇasya pratimā*. The last inscription in this list, found incised on the door-jamb from Mathura and at first edited by R. P. Chanda in the *M.A.S.I.*, No. 5, pp. 168-73 and plates XXV-XXVI, also fragmentary in character, records the gift of a *toraṇa, vedikā* (railing) and a third object (restored by Chanda as *Catuḥśālam*; Lüders, however, suggests *devakulaṃ* or *śailam*) in the

and the five Pāṇḍava brothers were enshrined.' R. P. Chanda, *Archaeology and Vaishnava Tradition*, *M.A.S.I.*, No. 5, pp. 166-67.

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 200-02. He has recourse to this explanation for there is absolutely nothing to show that the statue was meant for a goddess or a Yakṣī or a Nāga woman.

Mahāsthāna (a large temple or sanctuary, Lüders) of Bhagavat Vāsudeva, during the time of Mahākṣatrapa Śoḍāsa. Lüders suggests the possibility of this inscribed door-jamb originally belonging to the Bhāgavata sanctuary referred to in the Mora well inscription ; if we assume with him that the temple mentioned in the Mathura door-jamb record was enlarged or embellished during the reign of Śoḍāsa by a person, a Hindu high official in the service of the Mahākṣatrapa (the treasurer of Śoḍāsa mentioned in the inscription No. 82 in Lüders' list of Brāhmi inscriptions was a Brāhmaṇa), then it further increases the age of the Vāsudeva shrine in the locality. The Mora well record also, as we have seen above, refers to the Vāsudeva shrine there having been adorned with the images of the Pañcavīras of the Vṛṣṇis. It will be needless to collect further epigraphic data at this stage to prove convincingly the existence of shrines, erected by various sectaries not only Brāhmaṇical but also Buddhist and Jain in the centuries just preceding the Christian era and succeeding it and it is not presumptuous to contend that many, if not all, had divine images enshrined in them. Thus, here we find a remarkable corroboration from this branch of archaeology about the nature of the far-reaching changes which were being introduced in the religious practice of the Indians.

Several monuments of the pre-Christian and early post-Christian periods furnish us with valuable data regarding our subject. From the so-called Vedic Śmaśāna mound at Lauriya Nandangarh excavated by T. Bloch long ago, was found among other objects a very small gold-leaf with the figure of a female carved on it. Bloch described it as a representation of the Vedic Earth goddess (Pṛthivī) to whose care were assigned the remains of the dead by his relations. He ascribed a great antiquity to these remains ; but recent criticism as well as excavations conducted by the archaeological department at the locality have disproved

certain conclusions of the earlier archaeologist. I have already referred to the interpretation of the gold plaque by Coomaraswamy and if we accept his suggestion, then it seems to have been some sort of a cult object. Reference may also be made here to the unique gold plaque in the collection of R. K. Jalan of Patna; K. P. Jayaswal recognised in the two figures—one male and other female—standing side by side, the two cult deities Hara and Pārvatī. He was of opinion that it ought to be dated in the Maurya period.[1] Several of the animal figures carved on the capitals of the Aśokan columns have been taken by some scholars to stand for gods in animal form; a suggestion has been made that the figures of the elephant, bull, lion and horse appearing on the abacus of the Sarnath lion capital represent the cult gods in theriomorphic forms.[2] It is not certain whether this suggestion is correct; if it is so then they are not objects of worship in their present setting, their rôle having been changed from that of the worshipped to the one of the worshippers. It has been shown what use was made by Aśoka of the divine figures (*divyāni rūpāni*) in inculcating the law of *dhamma* among his subjects; the devas in animal forms are particularly associated with the wheel which symbolises the wheel of Law (*Dharmacakra*). But certain other well-known figures, the free-standing statues, some of them belonging to the Maurya or the Suṅga period as their technique and the polish attaching to them show, were undoubtedly

[1] *J.I.S.O.A.*, Vol. II, p. 1, pl. I.

[2] According to T. Bloch these four figures symbolise the divinities Indra, Śiva, Dūrgā and Sūrya whose vāhanas these animals are, indicating their subordination to the Buddha and his Law; *Z.D.M.G.*, LXII, 1908, pp. 653-6. B. Majumdar thinks that they represent the four principal events of Buddha's life; *A Guide to Sarnath*, p. 81. Bell found these animals carved on some moonstones in Ceylon and on certain pillars at Anuradhapura; *Archaeological Survey of Ceylon*, 1896, p. 16.

venerated by a large section of the Indian people. The inscriptions on the back of the two Patna statues, exhibited in the Indian Museum, are difficult for correct decipherment; attempts by Jayaswal to read the names of two Śaiśunāga kings, Udayī and Nandivardhana, were not upheld by many scholars and few now accept his interpretation of the above two and of another inscribed one from Parkham. The inscription on the latter statue is also fragmentary and very difficult for correct reading; but the character of these three as well as some other uninscribed ones like the Besnagar and the Didarganj female figures and the head and torso of a colossal sculpture, all fully in the round, has been disclosed by the clear inscription on the pedestal of another similar statue of a slightly later date (1st century B.C.), which was discovered by M. B. Garde at Pawāyā, in Gwalior State, Central India. There cannot be any doubt that all the above figures, both male and female, belong to the same category and if we can find a clue to the identity of one among them, the others will also be identified with its help. The part of the inscription on the Pawāyā sculpture, which is the required clue, reads: '*Gauṣṭhyā Māṇibhadrabhaktā garbhasukhitāḥ Bhagavato Maṇibhadrasya pratimā pratiṣṭhāpayaṃti*' (the image of Bhagavān Maṇibhadra is being established by the guild of the worshippers of Maṇibhadra). Certain Buddhist and Jaina texts clearly lay down that Maṇibhadra was the name of a Yakṣa; *Saṃyutta Nikāya* (I, 10, 4), for example, refers to the Maṇimālā Caitya in Magadha as the haunt of the Yakṣa Maṇibhadra; and 'the *Sūrya Prajñapti*, an ancient Jaina text, tells us that a Maṇibhadra Caitya stood to the north-east of the city named Mithilā, the ancient capital of Tirhut.'[1] In the *Mahāmāyūrī* list of the Yakṣas, giving

[1] R. P. Chanda, *M.A.S.I.*, No. 30, p. 7. He further informs us 'In the Vedic literature, the term Yakṣa does not occur as the name

us the names of the tutelary divinities of particular cities and places of India, Purṇabhadra and Maṇibhadra, two brother Yakṣas are described as the particular objects of worship in Brahmavatī.[1] Maṇibhadra in the above inscription is distinctly described as *Bhagavat* which shows that he was an object of worship; it has already been shown above that an early Buddhist text, *viz.*, the *Niddeśa* commentary refers to the worshippers of Purṇabhadra and Maṇibhadra among other deities. The name Kunika, unanimously read by scholars on the pedestal of the Parkham sculpture, has also been found on the so-called statue of Manasā Devī at Mathura, which is described in the inscription as Yakṣi Lāyāva, whose image was made for the sons of Sa, by Nāka, pupil of Kunika.[2] The last-named Mathura image is probably to be

of a class of superhuman beings and Kuvera Vaiśravaṇa (the king of the Yakṣas according to the Buddhist and post-Vedic Brāhmaṇic literature) is the king of the Rakṣas.' But Coomaraswamy says that the word occurs several times in the *Ṛgveda*, *Atharvaveda*, the *Brāhmaṇas* and the *Upaniṣads*; in these early allusions, a dual attitude is recognisable one of fear and dislike, the other of respect. The first reflected merely an Aryan dislike and distrust of aboriginal deities, while the second from the association of the idea of the tree of life, presents in certain Vedic passages, with the Yakṣas who are primarily vegetation spirits, guardians of the vegetative source of life; *Yakṣas*, Pt. II, p. 1-2.

[1] *Journal Asiatique*, 1915, *Mahāmāyūrī*, edited with introduction and notes by Sylvain Lévi, p. 38. *Maṇibhadro Brahmavatyāṁ Pūrṇabhadraśca bhrātarau*. The location of Brahmavatī is unknown. Lévi suggests that the city might have been in the region of Varṇu and Gandhāra.

[2] The pedestal inscription was read and interpreted by R. P. Chanda in *A.S.I.A.R.*, 1922-23, p. 165. If this reading is correct, then both Nāka and Kunika appear to be the names of two early Indian sculptors, like Amrita and Indranilamaṇi, two Gauḍian sculptors of the mediaeval period; the latter will be referred to again in Chapter V of this book.

dated in the Maurya or in the early Suṅga period. Coomaraswamy refers to another Yakṣa figure found at Deoriya, also of the same age in his *Origin of the Buddha Image*, Boston Museum Art Bulletin, 1927, pl. 4, fig. 47. The fact, however, that some of these Yakṣa statues (one of the male ones from Patna in the Indian Museum and the Didarganj Yakṣinī) hold *chaurīs* (fly-whisks) in one of their hands has led R. P. Chanda to conclude that all of them ' were evidently intended for decorative purposes ' and were originally attached to *Caitya* trees or *stūpas*' (*ibid.*, p. 37). He wants to substantiate his view with a reference to the ' disposition of the images of the Yakṣas, Nāgas and Devatās on the railing of the *stūpa* of Bharhut and on the old railing round the Bodhi tree at Bodh-Gaya.' But this conclusion can hardly be accepted; to think of these huge stone figures, in the round, as mere accessories, when we find Maṇibhadra being described as Bhagabat and when we see that these divinities, ardently worshipped by their *bhaktas*, are given the rôles of accessories only in the Buddhist monuments, where they themselves are the worshippers of the Master, is unjustified. The Deoriya figure wears a turban and is sheltered by an umbrella; Coomaraswamy does not exclude the possibility of its being a royal statue. But so striking an affinity exists among these sculptures, that there can be very little doubt about their all being regarded as Yakṣas, who were the cult deities of a large section of the Indians. The yak-tail is not perhaps a distinctive mark of secondary rank in these early statues; it became so in much later reliefs connected with the cults recognised by the orthodox section, where it is placed in the hands of some of the accessory figures of the central cult image. Among the various auspicious signs mentioned in the Jaina *Kalpa-sūtra*, yak-tail is one, and it is sometimes regarded as an attribute of a Cakravartin. The Maṇibhadra statue also seems to have held a yak-tail in its right hand,

while the water or nectar vessel in its left hand is a common attribute placed in the hands of many cult deities like Siva and the future Buddha Maitreya. Coomaraswamy has amassed a wealth of textual evidence in support of their intimate association with the element of *bhakti* and *pūjā* in Indian religion.[1] He has also collected a number of texts containing references to the shrines and temples of the Yakṣas, the former sometimes meaning no more than a sacred tree or a tree with an altar while the latter referring to structural buildings with images enshrined in them. He rightly observes that the existence of image (and Yakṣa images are few of the oldest known images in India) in every case implies the existence of temples and a cult; as regards the Maṇibhadra figure he remarks that 'this must have been housed in some kind of structure.'[2]

The Yakṣas and Yakṣiṇis that are represented and labelled with identificatory inscriptions by the artists of Bharhut are Supavāsa, Virūḍhaka, Gaṅgita, Sūcīloma, Kupira (Kuvera), Ajakālako, Sudasanā and Cadā; the devatās that can be recognised there with the help of the inscriptions are Sirimā, Culakokā (Kṣudrakokā) and Mahākokā; we can also definitely identify with the artists' aid the Nāga king Elāpatra (Erakaṭatra) in his two forms, first as a serpent and secondly as a human being with serpent hoods attached to the back of his head. B. M. Barua has collected mythological stories from the Pāli Buddhist literature referring to the particular occasions when one or other of the above had come in contact with the Buddha and received his blessings.[3] In the other early Buddhist monuments like Sanchi and Bodh Gaya, we find many of these figures, though they cannot be clearly distinguished in the absence of descriptive

[1] A. C. Coomaraswamy, *Yakṣas*, Part I., pp. 24-28.

[2] Coomaraswamy, *Op. cit.*, p. 18.

[3] B. M. Barua, *Bharhut*, Vol. II, pp. 57-74

labels by their side. The Hellenistic artists of Gandhāra, in the approved Buddhist tradition, do not fail to portray elaborately the same class of figures in the numerous reliefs that decorated the various sections of the *stūpas* and *vihāras*. The frequency with which they appear in these monuments, though here in a secondary position, does not fail to impress one about the hold which they had on the religious lives of the people. Several Nāga figures, snake coils and hood attached to the back of their human bodies, are in the collection of the Mathura Museum. The inscribed life-size statue from Chhargaon (*C.* 13. in the Museum) of the time of Huvishka (40th year), standing in a spirited attitude with his right hand raised above the head, shows that this object of worship was installed 'at their own tank by two friends Senahasti and Bhonuka for the propitiation of the worshipful Nāga (*Priyyatti Bhagavā Nāgo*).' The Sculpture No. C. 28 in the same Museum representing a corpulent male and a female figure seated to front side by side has an inscription in Brāhmī characters of the Kushana period, which reads *Priyati Sidha* (*ḥ*) (May the Siddha be pleased).[1] Relief No. C. 8. and Sculpture No. C. 12 there, regarded as similar to the above by Vögel and iconographically akin to Kuvera and his consort (in No. C. 12 the female is shown with a child on her left knee) may properly be described as Siddhas, a class of worshipful beings, the denizens of the *antarīkṣa* region, belonging to the category of the Gandharbas, Vidyādharas, Kinnaras, etc., also represented in early and later art. All the various images just mentioned are mostly those of the gods that are described in the early Jaina literature as *vyantara devatās, i.e.*, 'intermediate gods' (are they also intermediaries in a sense between the mortals and the new formed higher sectarian

[1] J. P. H. Vögel, *Mathura Museum Catalogue*, pp. 88-89, for the Chhargaon Nāga, and p. 92 for the Siddha image.

gods the objects of their worship?).[1] The images of the early Vedic divinities are few and far between—in early Buddhist art Sakra and Brahmā are no doubt introduced as accessories, but their independent figures as objects of worship (*bhagavat*) are not likely to be found; iconic representations of the new-formed sectarian gods like Vāsudeva and Śiva are also rare in the early period.

The above-mentioned data collected from a somewhat summary study of the extant early Indian monuments lend support to the view that the higher section of Indo-Aryans, at the time we are speaking of they have become for all intents and purposes Indians, owed their inception to this practice of making images and worshipping them, to their culture contact with the lower mass of the people and the earlier settlers of India. The evidence of the early Buddhist monuments like Bharhut and Sanchi fully proves that when the higher sectarian god Buddha was not being represented in an iconic form, these folk gods and goddesses were being iconically represented. I shall presently show with the aid of numismatic data that the deities belonging to the orthodox Brāhmaṇical sectaries like Śiva and Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu seem to have already come to be iconically represented in the 1st and 2nd centuries B. C. if not earlier. The iconic representations of these cult-objects, however, was probably a direct outcome of the gradual incorporation of most or all of the lower divinities in the ever-expanding Brāhmaṇic pantheon and their association with and absorption into particular cults. The Kālīya-damana episode in the mythology of the Vāsudeva sect should be profitably

[1] For some details regarding the Vidyādhara motif in early Indian art, refer to my article on 'Vidyādhara' in *J.I S.O.A.*, Vol. IV, No. 1, pp. 52ff. Lüders has recently published a long article on 'Vidyādharas in Indian Art and Mythology' in *Z.D.M.G.*, 1938. The article is full of interesting information.

compared in this connection. The other stories connected with this cult, such as the killing of the ass demon Dhenuka, the bull demon Ariṣṭa, the horse demon Keśin and the destruction of the twin Arjuna trees occurring in the post-Christian Bhāgavata literature and illustrated in art as early as the 4th century A. D. (if not earlier), perhaps portray the mythologists' attempts to refer to the subjugation of some of the lower cults by the higher one which was soon to be accepted as authoritative by the orthodox Vedic section of the people. Coomaraswamy has collected plastic evidence to show how the iconography of the lower gods influenced the same of the higher cult deities ; his remark in this connection is worth quoting : 'In early Indian art, so far as cult images are concerned, one iconographic type stands out predominant, that is the standing figure with the right hand raised, the left on the hip . . . Of this type are the early images of Yakṣas, and Yakṣīs whether independent or attendant. And it is also this type which provided the model for the cult images of other deities, such as Śiva or Buddha, when the necessities of Bhakti determined the appearance of all deities in visible forms.' [1] We have already seen the etiology of the Yogī motif of some of the cult-images ; here, we get a clue to the origin of the other mode. Vögel has also rightly observed 'modern idols of Baladeva manufactured here are exact copies of the ancient Nāga figures.' [2] It may be added that in ancient and mediæval times also, images of Baladeva (Saṃkarṣaṇa, the elder brother of Vāsudeva) were directly copied from the hybrid Nāga figures and this iconographic association has led to the creation of the confused myth that he was an incarnation of the world-snake Ananta Nāga or Śeṣa Nāga.

[1] A. C. Coomaraswamy, *Yakṣas*, Part I, p. 29.

[2] J. Ph. Vögel, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

It will not be out of place here to put in a few words about a practice which is intimately associated with that of worshipping images in shrines. This is the custom of the erection of the *dhvajas* or votive columns in honour of various sectarian deities like Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu, Saṃkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna, Kubera, Skanda Mahāsena and others, before their temples. These *dhvajas* remind us not only of the memorial columns, one of whose early prototypes was the wooden *sthūna* of the Vedic burial mounds, but also of the *Yūpastambhas* which were erected by kings and noble men of yore in commemoration of their performance of the various Vedic sacrifices.[1] The *Garuḍadhvaja* that was discovered at Besnagar has already been referred to. But it will be of interest to note here that two other capitals of columns, whose shafts have unfortunately not been discovered, are shaped one as a *tāla* (fan palm) and the other as a *makara* (crocodile) and there can be no doubt that these, when they were whole, served as the votive

[1] For Vedic *sthūna cf. R.V.*, X. 18, 13. For the *Yūpastambhas*, refer to *Mahābhārata*, III, 198, V. 10 ; I, 94, V. 28-29 ; *Raghuvaṃśa*, VI, 38 ; Isapur stone one with a Brāhmī inscription of the time of Vāsbiska, the successor of Kanishka, in the year 24 of the Kushan era, J. Ph. Vögel, *op. cit.*, p. 189 ; three recently discovered stone Yūpas at Badva in Kotah State (Rajputana) of the Kṛta year 295, *E.I.*, XXIII, p. 42 ff. and pls ; the Bijaygaḍh sacrificial post (*yūpa*) with an inscription of the Kṛta year 428, Fleet, *C.I.I.*, III, p. 253. Reference may also be made to the Aśokan columns ; they are really *Sāsanastambhas* (*cf.* the word *Sāsanastambha* used in the Motupalli pillar inscription of Ganapatideva, *E.I.*, XII, pp. 195-97), but are described as ' *Silāthambhas* ' in the edicts ; it is interesting to note that Aśoka in directly refers to the existing custom of erecting free standing stone pillars in India, *cf.* Rupnath Rock edict, lines 4 5. The erection of *Indra-dhvajas*, usually wooden ones, specially associated with royalty, is frequently referred to in the epic and purāṇic literature ; the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* devotes a whole chapter on *Indradhvaja lakṣaṇam*.

columns dedicated to the two *vyūhas, viz.*, Saṃkarṣaṇa and Pradyumna (the former is *Tāladhvaja* and the latter *Makaraketana*) of the Bhāgavata or the Pāñcarātra cult.[1] D. R. Bhandarkar's suggestion that the *makara*, itself the pinnacle of the capital, was originally surmounted by a crowning piece, another garuḍa capital discovered at Besnagar, is *a priori* unlikely ; for the discovery of the separate *tāla, garuḍa* and *makara* capitals proves the probability of all the three of the four *vyūhas, viz.*, Vāsudeva, Saṃkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha having been enshrined in the locality. The two small holes behind the eyes of the *makara*, which led Bhandarkar to make that suggestion, were probably meant for the insertion of painted banners or flags. It is very likely that the Besnagar site contained also a shrine of Aniruddha, which had within its precincts a *ṛṣyadhvaja* (*ṛṣya* is a white antelope), *ṛṣya* being his special *lāñcchana* ; unfortunately no such *dhvaja* has been discovered at Besnagar or in its environs. The capital of a stone column shaped like a cluster of palmyra leaves to be dated approximately in the 1st century B.C., discovered by Garde at Pawaya in Gwalior State, curiously enough substantiates the old practice of erecting *tāladhvajas*, in honour of Saṃkarṣaṇa.[2] Reference ought to be made in this connection to the capital of a stone column, in the form of ' a banyan tree represented as a *Kalpa-vṛkṣa*, yielding abundance, enclosed by a plaited rail and rising from a square railed base " which was discovered by Cunningham at Besnagar. Bags and vases overflowing with coins are shown beneath the branches of the tree ; a conch-shell and a lotus flower ' similarly exuding coins found on the other side of the tree,' have correctly been identified by Coomaraswamy with the two of the ' *nidhis* '

[1] *A.S.I.A.R.*, 1913-14, pp. 188-91, pl. LIII and LIV.

[2] *A.S.I.A.R.*, 1914-15, Part I, p. 21, pl. XVI c.

of Kubera, *viz.*, *Śaṅkha* and *Padma*. This banyan capital which is usually dated in the 3rd century B. C. must have been originally placed on the top of a column standing in front of a shrine of Kubera-Vaiśravaṇa, whose special cognisance was a bag or a vase full of coins.[1] Not very long ago were discovered some interesting stone objects at Lala Bhagat, a small village in the Dehrapur Tehsil of the

[1] Coomaraswamy, *Yakṣas*, Pt. II, p. 72, pl. 1. The original is in the Indian Museum, Calcutta ; I have counted the number of objects coming in a downpour as it were from the *Kalpadruma* and have found in all there are 8 such:—a conch-shell, a lotus, two vases all exuding coins and four more or less similar bags or purses, their necks tied round by strings, the idea being that they are also containing treasures. Coomaraswamy enumerates 9 treasures of Kubera, *viz.*, *Padma*, *Mahāpadma*, *Śaṅkha*, *Makara*, *Kacchapa*, *Mukunda*, *Nanda*, *Nīla* and *Kharva* which are nearly water-symbols according to him. But the list is not the same in all the texts ; the above list does partially agree with the one quoted in the *Śabdakalpadruma* from *Hārāvalī*, the names of the last three being put in as *Kunda*, *Nīla* and *Varcca*. *Kunda* seems to be a mistake for *Nanda* and *Varcca* or *Kharva* are evidently later additions; for the same lexicon quotes from Bhārata—'*Mārkaṇḍeya-purāne tu varcca iti hitvā aṣṭāveva uktāḥ*:—*Padmini nāma yā vidyā Lakṣmīstasyādhidevatā* | *Tadādhārāśca nidhayastān me nigadataḥ śṛṇu* || *Tatra Padmamahāpadmān tathā makarakacchapān* | *Mukundanīlānnandaśca śankhaścaivāṣṭamo nidhi* || *Satyāmṛddhyāṃ bhavantyete sadbhiḥ saha bhavantyamī* | *Ete hyaṣṭau samākhyātā nidhayāstava kroṣṭuke* ||

So we see there is no uniformity about the number and we can suggest that the eight objects descending from the banyan capital symbolise the *aṣṭanidhis* of Kubera. Mediaeval representations of Jambhala, the Buddhist counterpart of Kubera show the god seated on a couch beneath which is a row of *eight* coin jars, on the upturned one of which exuding coins, the god's right leg rests; one of his hands holds a mongoose vomitting jewels; the purse is the usual cognisance of the Brāhmaṇical Kubera. The number of coin jars beneath the seat of Jambhala should be noted in this connection.

Cawnpore district, U.P.; these consisted of a red sandstone cock carved in the round and a broken red sandstone pillar square below and octagonal above.[1] The latter bears among other figures the one of Gaja-Lakṣmī flanked by a pilaster emerging from a pot resting on the head of a Yakṣa and crowned by a cock; the stone cock must have originally served as the capital of a column, perhaps the very column whose carved shaft was found some distance from it, as it still bears a tenon projecting from its bottom. The cock as well as the peacock is the particular emblem of Kārttikeya and is especially associated with various aspects of the deity; thus on the coins of the Kushana emperor Huvishka, Mahāsena and Skanda, two of the different aspects of the same god are shown holding in their hands standards surmounted by a bird which is presumably a cock or a peacock.[2] Skanda Kārttikeya is described in the texts as *Barhiketu* (*Skanda Kumārarūpaḥ śaktidharo barhiketuśca, Bṛhat Saṁhitā* ch. 57), and so there can be no doubt that these Lala Bhagat finds are connected with the cult of Kārttikeya whose shrine existed somewhere near their provenance in the 2nd century A.D. On one class of the Yaudheya coins, Skanda appears accompanied by a peacock and on the peacock type coins of Kumāragupta I, he rides on the bird. Some mediæval sculptures of this god are known, where a cock is placed in his hand. The *Viṣṇudharmottara* enjoins that *kukkuṭa* and *ghaṇṭā* should be placed in his right hand, while *vaijayanti patākā* and *śakti* in his left. The *Mahābhārata* associates cock with him (*Tvaṁ krīḍase*

[1] *A.S.I.A.R.*, 1929-30, pp. 132-33, pl. XXXI. The objects are to be dated in the 2nd century A.D. and not B.C. as wrongly put down by M.S. Vats; the editor of the Report corrects the mistake. The inscription on the face of the pillar reads:—*Kumāra vara*....., in characters of the 2nd century A.D.

[2] Gardner, *B. M. C. G. S. I.*, pp. 138, 149, pl. XXVII, 16, and XXVIII, 22. See pl. IX, figs., 7, 8.

ṣanmukha kukkuṭena yatheṣṭa nānāvidha kāmanarūpī, III. 231, 16). One other interesting fact worth noticing about the pillar fragment is that the prominence given to the figure of Sūrya among the carvings on its side supports the suggestion of some writers that Kārttikeya had some solar connection; Skanda is sometimes regarded as one of the attendant divinities of the sun god in some iconographic texts where he is both named as Daṇḍa and Skanda (*cf.* T. A. G. Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, Part II, pp. 303-04, where he quotes from *Viśvakarmā-śilpa* and *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*).[1]

The Numismatic data are so very interesting and important especially for determining the early types of Brāhmaṇical deities and they have been so little systematically treated that I have reserved a separate chapter for discussing them.

[1] These points were raised and discussed by me in fuller details in an article on 'Indian Votive and Memorial columns', published in *J. I. S. O. A.*, Coomaraswamy Volume, pp. 13-20.

CHAPTER IV

Brahmanical Divinities and their Emblems on Early Indian Coins

Aniconic tradition of the early Indo-Aryans supported by the evidence of the earliest Indian coins (punch-marked and cast)—explanation of the symbols appearing on them, somewhat conjectural in character—symbols and devices on tribal coins admit of surer interpretation—*Yūpa* on coins—Lakṣmī on the coins of indigenous and foreign rulers of India—her different types.—Appearance of sectarian gods on early coins - Śiva in animal form—his emblems—Śiva in human form on Ujjain coins—on some coins of the Indo-Scythian, Indo-Parthian and Kushan kings—A unique representation of Śiva on a coin of Huvishka.—Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu, rare on early coins—on those of the Pāñcāla Viṣṇumitra and on a Kushan seal—a few of his emblems probably recognisable on some coins—Goddesses other than Lakṣmī on some indigenous and foreign coins of India—Umā on Huvishka's coins—Sūrya not anthropomorphically represented on early indigenous coins—his early forms : Spoked wheel lotus, rayed disc on altar, etc.—and Subrahmaṇya, Skanda Kumāra, Viśākha and Mahāsena on coins—Indra—Agni—Yaksas and Nāgas on Indian coins—Some general remarks on the above repesentations—Contemporary art conditions how far reflected by the above coin-devices.

The way in which the ancient Indian coins and seals can be utilised for the study of Indian iconography has already been indicated in the first chapter. The value of the earliest Indian coins in this respect has also been briefly assayed.[1] The one substantial fact which is supplied to us by them, if we accept the view sponsored by

[1] For a somewhat detailed discussion about the significance of some of the symbols appearing on them, refer to Coomaraswamy, *H.I.I.A.*, pp. 43-45. D.B. Spooner at first suggested that many of the symbols were particularly Buddhist in character, the so-called solar symbol stood for Dharma-Cakra. the tree, for Bodhi tree, etc., *A.S.I.A.R.*, 1905-06, pp. 151 ff. But later he discarded this view in favour of second one, *viz.*, that many of them were Zoroastrian in nature; thus, the solar symbol stood for Mithra, the tree for *haoma* tree, etc., *J.R.A.S.*, 1915 pp. 411-13. D. R. Bhandarkar supposed that

several scholars that many of the symbols are religious in character, is that they fully corroborate the conclusion already arrived at with the help of textual and monumental evidence with regard to the earlier aniconic tradition of a large section of the Indians. Even when iconism had come to be accepted by the majority of the Indian people, they continued the earlier practice. Some of the animals appearing on them may stand for theriomorphic representations of deities while others on mountain symbols, three, five or six arched ones, may also have some cult significance; the wheel, lotus and rayed disc may well be accepted as depicting the Sun god; the tree within railing may stand for *vṛkṣa caityas* or *sthala-vṛkṣas*; we find even a human figure holding a staff and a vase in his two hands, depicted almost in the same manner as on the coins of Ujjayinī where we can justifiably identify it as Siva; the three-arched mountain symbol with a crescent above it may typify the aniconic representation of the same god (he is sometimes described as *triśṛṅga parvata, cf.*

many of these can be explained as the various ways of representing the seven jewels (*sapta ratnāni*, such as *hasti, aśva, ratha, maṇi, stri, gṛhapati* and *parināyaka*), the insignia of an Indian Cakravartin empowered to strike coins, *A.S.I.A.R.*, 1913-14, p. 211. Durga Prasad has recently tried to explain the significance of these symbols with the help of some late texts and has suggested that most of these are Tantric in character, thus describing the circular cluster of dots as *vinduṃaṇḍala*, a variant of the so-called Taxila symbol as *ṣaḍara cakra*, etc., *J.A.S.B.*, 1934, Numismatic Supplement No. XLV, pp. 16-55. J. Allan in his latest publication—*Catalogue of Coins of Ancient India in the British Museum*—has justifiably refrained from putting forth any suggestion about their character and has gone to the length of drawing most of these for referring to them in his description. P. N. Bhattacharyya in his *Memoir* (of the Archaeological Survey of India, (No. 62) on a hoard of silver punch-marked coins from Purnea, has very carefully noted the multifarious symbols and their variants appearing on them; he also has not attempted to explain any of the marks.

Coomaraswamy, *O. Z.*, 1927-28, p. 179) with the lunar crescent on his crest, *Śaśāṅkaśekhara* (Pl. I, figs. 1-4); some others again as the second from the top on the left column of page 300 of Allan's *Catalogue* may be taken to depict schematically a *garuḍa* or a *makara dhvaja*. But all these suggestions are by their very nature, conjectural in character and no certainty can be arrived at, in the present state of our knowledge. It seems, however, there is a great resemblance between some of them and others appearing on the pictographic seals of the Indus Valley, and if we can ever recognise the exact significance of the latter, then more light may be thrown on the former. But this uncertainty and hesitation disappear to a very great extent when we take up the study of the local and tribal coins. Some at least of the figures appearing on them can be explained with much greater confidence and when this is done it will appear that these are associated with particular religious practices or cults. Thus, the bull standing before a symbol (Pl. II, fig. 2) differently represented (Allan, *op. cit.*, p. 307, Nos. 3—6) on the earliest coins of the Ārjunāyanas and the Yaudheyas (collectively to be dated in the 2nd—3rd century B.C.) may very well represent the bull before the *yūpa*, *i.e.*, the sacrificial post. Allan has offered two suggestions for the symbol—a *liṅga* or a *yūpa*, the latter of which is acceptable. He has noticed this symbol on the reverse of one round copper coin of Viṣṇumitra, collected by Prinsep from Kanauj ; he correctly remarks that, 'The reverse has a horse apparently before a sacrificial post (*yūpa*) and may commemorate an *aśvamedha* sacrifice.[1] One can compare the representation of this

[1] J. Allan, *Op. cit.*, pp. XCIV, 147, Pl. XIX, 13 An elaborate form of the same symbol appears on the Aśvamedha type coins of the Gupta emperors, Samudragupta and Kumāragupta I. I have referred to this symbol, though it does not represent an icon, for showing how Vedic ceremonial religious practice is being portrayed by a few at least of these tribal coins. In my paper on Devices on some tribal coins,

Vedic *yūpa* with figures appearing on some other early coins in the tribal series, which were certainly based on plastic types and which were also cult objects. Stone yūpas belonging to the third century A.D. have been discovered at Badva, Kotah state, Rajputana; their shape, supports my contention to a great extent (for some symbols appearing on punch marked, local, tribal and other coins of ancient India, refer to Plates I and II).

One of the earliest devices, frequently found on tribal coins, is Gaja-Lakṣmī, *i.e.*, Lakṣmī standing (rarely seated), being bathed by two elephants (Foucher recognises in it, the nativity scene of the Buddha). It appears on an uninscribed coin from Kausāmbī (3rd century B.C.), coins of Viśākhadeva, Śivadatta and probably also of Vāyudeva of Ayodhyā (1st century B.C.) and uninscribed coins of Ujjayinī (2nd-3rd century B.C.); nay such was the popularity of this device that many alien rulers of northern India like Azilises, Rajuvula and Sodasa adopted it on their coins.[1]

published in *I.H.Q.*, Vol. XVI, 1940, I have adduced grounds for explaining the 'Bull before *yūpa*' symbol, as associated with the *Sūlagava* sacrifice mentioned in the Gṛhyasūtras. The performance of this sacrifice resulted in the acquisition of wealth and prosperity.

[1] J. Allan, *Op. cit.*, pp. 131-4, 149, 187, 190-1, 256 and corresponding plates; R. B. Whitehead, *Punjab Museum Catalogue*, Vol. I., p. 135, Pl. XIII, fig. 333. The reverse device of some copper coins of Maues and Azes (*P.M.C.*, Vol. I, pp. 100-101, 122; *B.M.C.*, pp. 70-71, 89) has been described as a 'female figure standing to front between trees'; Whitehead says that it may be a Bacchante among vines, while Gardner asks whether it may be a Maenad standing between two vines. Coomaraswamy in his article on Early Indian Iconography (*Eastern Art*, Vol. I, p. 178) refers to three varieties of Lakṣmī, the third one described by him being Padmavāsinī, Kamalālayā type, in which she is surrounded by flowering stems and growing leaves, and very often she holds one of the flowering stems in each hand. The above coin device of Maues and Azes (*cf.* Pl. VII, fig. 2) may be a Hellenised version of the 3rd variety of Laksmī. Coomaraswamy

(Pl. VII, fig. I). Relief carvings illustrating this motif are found on the early monuments of Central India; here is a close approximation of the numismatic and sculptural representations. The motif, as it typifies the Indian idea of prosperity, frequently appears on coins and sculptures of later day and is still portrayed by the Hindus. Goddess Lakṣmī again, without the attendant elephants, either seated on a full-blossomed lotus or standing with a lotus flower in her hand, or standing on a lotus with the same flower in her hand, very often appears on the coins of Ujjayinī, on those of the Hindu kings like Brahmamitra, Dṛḍhamitra, Sūryamitra, Viṣṇumitra, Puruṣadatta, Uttamadatta, Balabhūti, Rāmadatta and Kāmadatta of Mathura, on the coins of the Satraps of Mathura like Śivadatta, Hagamasa, Rajuvula and Sodasa, on the coins of the Rājaṇya Janapada and on the coins of Bhadraghoṣa of Pāñcāla.[1] The so-called 'dancing girl wearing long hanging ear-rings and oriental trousers' on the coins of the Indo-Greek kings Pantaleon and Agathokles, dubbed as 'a strictly Hindu type' by Gardner, has been recognised by Coomaraswamy in his article on 'Early Indian Iconography' as Śrī-Lakṣmī, with a great deal of justification. I myself hesitatingly suggested that the female figure on the

illustrates the motif as represented in the early Indian art of Central India, and the similarity is very striking.

[1] J. Allan, *op. cit.*, pp., 252, 259-67, 270-71, 273-84, 210-12, 279-97 and corresponding plates. The figure of the goddess on the Mathura coins was sometimes wrongly identified as that of Kṛṣṇa, *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. I, p. 626. For a detailed study of the early iconography of Śrī-Lakṣmī on the basis of textual, monumental and numismatic data, refer to A. C. Coomaraswamy's article on 'The Early Indian Iconography, in *Eastern Art*, Vol. I, pp. 175ff. The coins which are noticed above can collectively be dated from the 2nd century B.C. to the 1st century A.D. Some of these figures however, may also stand for Durgā-Gaurī, as will be shown later on.

above coin with a very long equine head may stand for Yakṣinī Aśvamukhī (Pl. VII, fig. 3).[1] The city deity of Puṣkalāvatī on the unique Indo-Scythian gold coin described by Gardner (*B.M.C.*, p. 162) may very well be identified as Lakṣmī with a lotus in her hand, as has been suggested by Coomaraswamy in the above article. It may be argued that the numismatic and sculptural representations of Lakṣmī do not prove much with regard to the iconic representations of deities associated with different Brahmanical cults like those of Śiva and Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu, because, Lakṣmī, as the Indian goddess of wealth and prosperity, was respected by the Indians in general. But here also early Indian coins do not fail us. The appearance of the cult-gods on them may not be as frequent as that of this particular goddess, but their figures are undoubtedly met with. The reason of the comparative infrequency is obvious; Lakṣmī could very appositely be used by the issuers of coins (units of wealth), to whatever creed they might belong; but such could not usually be the case with the sectarian gods or goddesses.

With regard to the representation of Buddha and Śiva on the coins, the following observation of Coomaraswamy is worth noticing, ' In Buddhist art, we find at Bharhut and Sanchi the tree, wheel, etc., on or behind an altar, clearly designated in the inscriptions as Buddha (*Bhagavato*) and worshipped as such... Later on the figure of a human teacher takes its place upon the throne, the old symbols being retained as specific designations... In the same way with Hindu types; thus we find at first the humped bull alone, then a two-armed, and finally a four-armed figure accompanying the bull, once the representative of the deity, now his vehicle, while other

[1] *I.H.Q.*, Vol. XIV, 1938, p. 102.

symbols are held in the hands as attributes.' [1] As regards Buddha, no certain representation of him appears on coins before the time of Kanishka; the seated figure on certain coins of Kadaphes cannot be definitely recognised as Buddha on account of the hammer-like object placed in his raised right hand, while those seated figures on certain copper coins of Maues and a few hailing from Ujjayin are of uncertain character (*cf.* Coomaraswamy, *The origin of Buddha Image*). [2] In the case of Śiva, it is true, there cannot be much doubt in identifying the bull appearing on many indigenous coins as well as on those of the alien rulers of India as representing him theriomorphically. Thus, the humped bull, represented on the reverse side of the unique gold coin of an uncertain Indo-Scythic king, bearing legends in Greek and Kharoṣṭhī script, *Tauros* and *Uṣabhe* (*Vṛṣabha*), most presumably stands for Śiva; this reminds us of the same device appearing on the coins of the white Hun ruler Mihira gula with the legend *jayatu vṛṣaḥ* in the script of the period. [3] But, as it has been shown above that the bull before a particular symbol on certain coins may also have represented the sacrificial bull.

Before I pass on to the anthropomorphic figures of Śiva on early indigenous and foreign coins, I shall refer to a symbol which appears on an uninscribed cast coin, (provenance unknown). It seems to be a somewhat realistic representation of the *liṅgam*. If the interpretation of this symbol is correct, then we have here an emblem intimately connected with Śiva-worship. In fact, Allan

[1] A. C. Coomaraswamy, *H.I.I.A.*, p. 45.

[2] The seated figure on the coins of Kadaphes may stand for Śiva; the head seems to bear on it a *krobylos* (*jaṭāmukuṭa*), but the object in the raised right hand is not distinct.

[3] P. Gardner, *British Museum Catalogue of Coins of the Greek and Scythic kings of India*, p. 162, pl. XXIX, 15; V. A. Smith, *Catalogue of Coins in the Indian Museum*, Vol. I, p. 230, pl. XXV, 5.

has definitely described it as '*liṅgam* on square pedestal;' the tree in railing on left of the same coin may stand for the *sthala-vṛkṣa* in association with the particular Śaiva emblem. Allan thus describes its obverse: 'Building(?) on l.; tree in centre; on r. female figure to l.' There can be no doubt about the inter-relation of many of these symbols appearing on such types of coins and on the basis of Allan's description as supported by his plates, one is tempted to find in the obverse and reverse devices of this coin, the cult object, the sacred tree associated with it, the shrine (?) as well as the votary all together (Pl. I, figs. 14-15). Though Allan has not named another symbol appearing on the obverse of two square copper coins probably to be attributed to Taxila, its very appearance seems to connect it with the other one just described, the pedestal here being somewhat summarily represented (Pl. I, fig. 9). But *liṅgams* with or without elaborate pedestals are known to have existed in ancient times (for example, the Guḍimallam Liṅga, one of the earliest one, rises abruptly from the floor of the shrine); in fact, in the early specimens the latter mode was usually followed. Now, the reverse of these coins has a hill with trees growing from its two sides and an honorific parasol like emblem on the top. Here again, these symbols, taken together seem unmistakably to point to their cult connection. A Śivaliṅga on a pedestal placed between two different trees in side railings is also represented on the obverse of var. *c* of class I coins hailing from Ujjain.[1] As for the association of the tree with the phallic emblem of Śiva reference may be made to the terracotta seal in the collection of Dhir Singh Nahar, having on it a Śivaliṅga with subdued realism, described as *Pādapeśvara* in

[1] J. Allan, *op. cit.*, p. 85, No. 2, Pl. XI, 2; P. 233, Nos. 154 and 154a, Pl. XXXV. 5 and P. 243, No. 19, Pl. XXXVI, 15.

Gupta characters. Even now many of the important Śivaliṅgas worshipped in India have their particular trees; the celebrated Ap-liṅga of Jambukeśvara near Srirangam and the tradition associated with it should be noted here. Numerous textual references can be cited to show Śiva's connection with hills and mountains; notice should be taken here, however, of the extremely realistic phallic emblems of Śiva shown above or beside a hill exactly in the manner in which the latter symbol is drawn on the Taxila coins, and inscribed in Brāhmī characters of the Gupta Period, on some Terracotta seals from Bhita (*A. S. I. A. R.*, 1911-12, p. 46, Nos. 15 and 16; Pl. X, fig. 4). The three coins noted above can with some confidence be dated in the 2nd-3rd century B. C., if not earlier. Coomaraswamy remarked with regard to the symbols on punch marked coins, before the publication of Allan's *Catalogue* that the 'marks which we might expect, but which are not found, include the liṅgam etc.' (*H. I. I. A.*, p. 45). If the above suggestion is accepted and there is every reason to accept it, we find here perhaps the earliest representation of phalli on some local or tribal coins of the historical period (for the phallic emblems of Śiva on an Ujjain coin, see Pl. I, fig. 10).

A few other symbols appearing on the indigenous as well as the foreign coins of India must have to be interpreted as so many Śaivic emblems. The reverse side of the coins of the Pāñcāla king Rudragupta bears a device which has been described by Allan as 'railing with three pillars above; uncertain objects at top of each.'' Two of these coins are illustrated on Plate XXVII (Nos. 1 and 2) of his book; the reverse of No. 2, I think, discloses the identity of this device. The central object is a trident (*triśūla*) placed inside a railing and the side ones are pillars similar to the two shown on either side of Agni standing over a basement on the coins of Pāñcāla Agnimitra. The associa-

tion of the issuer's name Rudramitra with the well-known attribute of Rudra-Śiva will have to be noted here. In fact, Allan in his Introduction (p. CXVIII-CXIX) puts forth the same suggestion; he writes, 'Rudragupta has on his reverse a trident between two pillars (*e.g.*, Pl. XXVII, 2), the emblem of Rudra-Śiva. On other coins (*e.g.*, Pl. XXVII, 1) the object appears to be a star or a kind of double trident with prongs below as well as above.' If we compare the central object with the same on the reverse of a coin doubtfully attributed to Taxila we find that both of them are identical. The latter has been described by Allan as 'Tree in centre; standing figure on either side' (*op. cit.*, p. 237, No. 2, Pl. XLV, 1); but there are only three prongs and these are placed on the top of the long staff issuing out of a basement. The two figures on either side of this enshrined *Triśūla* emblem may simply represent the votaries before the object of their devotion. The central object on the obverse of the next coin reproduced in Allan's Plate XLV may show a tree as several branches issue out of the central stem; whatever may be its significance, it is also an object of worship. But this time it is so possibly to other gods; one in his animal form; *cf.* Allan's description of the whole device—'Tree in railing in centre; on left, figure on elephant to right; on right, lion right with a solar symbol above; at top the hill with crescent, the taurine, *swastika* and an uncertain object' (p. 237). It can be suggested that some sacred tree associated probably with Śiva is being shown here as an object of veneration. Cunningham describes the reverse of a coin of the Pāñcāla Dhruvamitra as 'Trident on basement of Buddhist railing' and remarks 'Dhruva is the north Polar Star, but as it is also a name of Śiva, I conclude that the trident refers to him' (C., *C.A.I.*, p. 81, Pl. VII, fig. 3). Allan, however, writes about the same device, 'The object in question, which stands on a platform in the position usually occupied by the deity bet-

ween two pillars with cross-bars at top is, however, not a trident. On No. 53 (Pl. XXVII, 5) it looks like a battle-axe, but on No. 55 (Pl. XXVII, 6) and others the shaft is clearly bent. It must be a symbol of Dhruva, the pole-star ' (cxviii). I am not sure about the nature of the device from the respective plates, but even if it be a battle-axe at all, then that would also connect the symbol with Śiva ; its being a particular emblem of the polar star, however, should not also be discounted, especially with regard to the coin No. 55. In any case, I shall presently show how the combined trident-battle-axe was sometimes used by itself as the obverse or reverse device on coins. Mention may be made in this connection of a symbol appearing on some of the uninscribed cast coins described by Allan in the pages (87-91) of his book ; (Pl. I, fig. 5). When observed along with the above devices, it is highly probable that it represents as played trident with broad flattened prongs, issuing out of a railing which contains also two parasol-like objects on its two sides (a comparison with the side parasols of railings enclosing Bodhi-tree and other Buddhist symbols, as represented in Bodh Gaya and Amarāvatī reliefs is suggested). The combined trident and battle-axe placed before the tree in enclosure on the reverse sides of the Audumbara chief Dharaghoṣa should be noted here (Allan, *op. cit.*, p. 124, Pl. XIV, 14). This combined symbol with undoubted Śaiva association appears on the obverse of Wema Kadphises' coins, where the king, a Māheśvara by faith, puts offerings in honour of his deity on the sacrificial fire (Whitehead, *P.M.C.*, Vol. I, Pl. XVII, 36). The same symbol is present on the coins of Vāsudeva and Vāsu; when Samudragupta issued some of his gold coins in evident imitation of the late Kushan money, he had to replace the trident-battle-axe standard of the prototypes of his coins with the Garuḍa emblem sacred to Viṣṇu, as he was a *Parama-bhāgavata* (a devout *Bhāgavata* or

a Vaiṣṇava). The replacement of the hill symbol with crescent above, possibly a Śaiva emblem, with Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu's Garuḍa, by Chandragupta II in his silver issues struck in imitation of the silver coins of the Western Satraps after he had overthrown them, may also be explained in the same manner.

Śiva appears for the first time in an anthropomorphic form on the many coins hailing from Ujjain and its environs. The single standing figure on many of these coins can be definitely identified with him. Cunningham was not certain about its identification; but the attributes in the hands, *viz.*, a staff—not a sun standard, as he described it, for the solar symbol does not seem to be joined to the staff—in the right and vase in the left clearly disclose the identity (Pl. I, fig. 7). Any doubt whatsoever is set at rest by the testimony of another variety of the same series of coins which shows a bull slightly prancing up and looking up at the deity (*cf.* the *Matsyapurāṇa* passage which enjoins that Viśākha the mount of Śiva should be in the attitude of looking up at the god, *devavīkṣaṇatatparaḥ*; Pl. I, fig. 13). Moreover, the three headed standing figure on the obverse of a third variety of the Ujjain coins, carrying the identical attributes further strengthens my hypothesis (Pl. I, fig. 8). Cunningham, no doubt, identified the latter as Mahākāla, but his statement that 'this coin may be accepted as a single evidence of Brahmanism at Ujjain' is unjustifiable. Allan is in doubt about the identity of this figure; he proposes that this figure and its variants may stand for both the deities, *viz.*, Śiva Mahākāla and Skanda Kārttikeya (in the body of the *Catalogue*, however, he invariably describes them as Kārttikeya or simply as deity). The three heads of the figure on some Ujjain coins have been taken by him to partially represent the six heads of the latter divinity. But we have six-headed figures of Kārttikeya in indigenous coins

and three-headed Śiva figures are known from Kushan coins.[1] On the obverse of the Audumbara chief Dharaghoṣa's silver coins, we find the figure of Viśpamitra (Viśvāmitra) as described by the Kharoṣṭhī legend across the figure, but on the reverse there occur two symbols which are intimately associated with Śiva, *viz.*, combined trident-battle-axe on a pedestal and a tree within railing. What is further of interest in the case of the copper coins of the Audumbara chiefs, Śivadāsa, Rudradāsa and Dharaghoṣa, is that they almost invariably bear on their reverse sides the representations of structural shrines ('domed pavilions,' Coomaraswamy, and two-storied domed *stūpa*, Allan) with the trident-battle-axe standards almost invariably placed before them (Pl. I, figs. 16-17). The latter unmistakably prove that the structures are not *stūpas*, but Śaiva shrines which must have contained images or phallic emblems of Śiva. The coins can be dated in the 2nd-1st centuries B.C. On certain copper coins of the second century A.D. issued by an anonymous ruler of most probably the Kuniṇḍa tribe, we find the standing figure of Śiva, holding in his right hand a trident-battle-axe, his left hand from which hangs some thing (? tiger skin) resting on hip; his head is adorned with *jaṭās* arranged in the *jatābhāra* manner, as we find the same arranged on that of Śiva carved on the shaft of the Śiva-liṅga at Guḍimallam; on some specimens, however, he seems to be standing under an umbrella (Pl. I, fig. 21.). The legend on these coins reads '*Bhagavata Chatreśvara mahātmanaḥ*,' *i.e.*, of the

[1] Cunningham, *C. A. I.*, pp. 97-8, pl. x, figs. 1-6; Allan, *op. cit.*, Introduction, pp. cxliii, 245-52. The object in the right hand of the figure is invariably described by Allan as spear, but it is nothing but a staff or a standard; the spear in the right hand of the definitely recognisable Kārttikeya on several varieties of the Yaudheya coins can rightly be distinguished from the staff above.

holy or worshipful one, the noble-souled lord of the *Chatra* (one of the Indian insignia of sovereignty).[1]

Among the coins of the early foreign rulers of India, Śiva has been recognised on certain billon coins of Gondophares. He stands facing with his left leg slightly advanced and head bent a little towards the left, clasping a long trident in his right hand and a palm-branch in his left which rests in the approved Indian iconographic manner on the hip (*kaṭihasta*). Faint traces of *jaṭā* are to be found on his head. E. J. Rapson described another variety of the deity with his right hand extended and a trident in his left hand (*J.R.A.S.*, 1900, pp. 285-6). Figure 9 in Pl. XXII of Gardner's *Catalogue* shows this second variety of Śiva on Gondophares coins. The stance of the god in this type is exactly similar to the one of Śiva (undoubtedly so) on some gold coins of Wema Kadphises, where the deity is depicted without his mount, though there is a little difference in the placing of attributes (Pl. I, fig. 19). Thus, the object held in the right hand of the latter figure is not simply trident but trident-battle-axe combined (as in the Kuninḍa coin noted above) and the object hanging down from the left arm is the skin garment, the palm branch being absent. But the extreme similarity of the slightly bent pose of the body, just suggestive of the *dvibhaṅga*, is a very important consideration and the possibility of

[1] For the above Audumbara and Kuninḍa coins, refer to Allan, *op. cit.*, pp. 122-25 & plates; pp. 167-68 & plates. Does this class of Kuninḍa coins show that the tribal state of the Kuninḍas at one time was dedicated to the Lord Śiva in the 2nd century A. D., and the coins were issued in his name in the capacity of ts sovereign ruler (the title Chatreśvara is significant)? We can cite a modern analogy; the real ruler of the Travancore state is Lord Padmanābha and the ruling chief acts as his substitute. In mediæval times, the Kingdom of Mewar was also sometimes dedicated to the Lord Eklińgaji, its patron deity.

its being the Greek deity Poseidon because that god too has a trident as his attribute and the palm-branch is a Greek insignia, can be discounted. In the other variety noticed by Rapson the palm-branch is absent. The epithet *devavrata* applied to Gondophares on most of his coins may be significant; it is likely that *deva* here does not simply mean 'god' but means the god Śiva as in several passages of Hiuen-Tsang's *Si-yu-ki* (*cf.* his statement, 'Outside the west gate of the city of Puṣkalāvatī was a Deva-temple and a marvel-working image of the Deva;' Watters, *On Yuan Chwang*, I, p. 214). Considering all these facts one must be careful about accepting Tarn's statement that Śiva 'does not appear in person on coins till those of the Kushans.' [1] On a round copper seal discovered at Sirkap in the year 1914-15, Śiva appears with trident in left hand and club in right; it is biscriptual, bearing the legend '*Śivarakṣitasa*' in Brāhmī and Kharoṣṭhī characters of the early first century A.D. The standing pose of the figure is slightly dissimilar to that of the same god on the coins of Gondophares and Wema Kadphises just discusssed; the left leg is placed in the same manner but the right one with the bent knee is stretched forward. But the club on the right hand is specially noteworthy, because it greatly resembles the knotted club in the hands of Herakles appearing on some Indo-Greek coins. The treatment of the whole figure is undoubtedly Hellenistic, though the subject itself and part of the motif is purely Indian (*cf.* the loin cloth and the turban on the head; Pl. VIII, fig. 3). [2]

[1] W. W. Tarn, *The Greeks in Bactria and India*, p. 402. For the above coins of Gondophares and Wema Kadphises, *cf.* Whitehead, *op.cit.*, p. 151, Pl. XV, Fig. 43 and p. 183, Pl. XVII, Fig. 33. Tarn evidently was unaware of the presence of Śiva in his personal form in much earlier indigenous coins of Ujjain, just noticed.

[2] Sten Konow, *C. I. I.*, Vol. II, p. 102. Pl. XX, 11. The name of the owner of the seal, Śivarakṣita, is interesting; it means one

The same god appears on the obverse of some square copper coins of Maues. The type on the British Museum specimen has been described by Gardner as ' male figure l., chlamys flying behind; holds club and trident' (*B.M.C.*, p. 71, Pl. XVII, 3); but Whitehead describes it on a Punjab Museum specimen of the same variety of Maues' coin as ' male deity striding to l. with flowing draperies, holding club in r. hand and long spear or sceptre in l.' (*P.M.C.*, Vol. I, p. 101, Pl. X, 25). A comparison of the plates in the two catalogues will show that both the specimens belong to the same variety of Maues' square copper coins and Gardner's description, though short, is quite correct. In fact, the peculiar knotted club in the right hand and the trident held over the left shoulder in the left and the particular stride leave no doubt that the god is identical to the one on the seal of Śivarakṣita, where the very name. 'One protected by Śiva,' shows that the god is Śiva. Thus, this is an undoubted representation of Śiva on a coin of Maues and we can now say that Śiva makes his appearance on some coins of alien rulers of India, much earlier than those of Gondophares (Pl. VIII, fig. 1). Attention may be drawn in this connection to the obverse of Maues' coin (No. 13 in Cunningham's *Coins of the Indo-Scythians*, p. 30, Pl. II, Fig. 13) which has been described by Cunningham as ' Male figure to front, with elephant goad over l. shoulder'; elephant goad as an attribute of Śiva appears on the coins of Kanishka and Huvishka and it is very probable that this particular figure also represents Śiva (Pl. VIII, fig. 2). Those figures on Maues' coins which carry only a trident in their hands and sometimes trample

protected by Śiva, *i.e.*, Śiva was his patron deity. On this analogy, the name Terambi-pāla, referred to in the end of the first Chapter may mean ' one protected by Terambi.' Terambi or Terambā may be the feminine form of Tryamba or Tryambaka, a name of Śiva.

on a dwarfish figure are to be identified as Poseidon, as he appears on certain coins of Antimachus Theos. But the composition reminds us of the Indian one in which Śiva tramples on Apasmāra-Puruṣa. The bronze seal No. 12, unearthed at Sirkap, Taxila, is described by Marshall in *A.S.I.A.R.*, 1914-15, p. 33, Pl. XXIV, 50, as Herakles trampling down a bull-shaped dragon; the Kharoṣṭhī legend in it was tentatively read by him as *Tiḍusa Vibhumitrasa*(?). Konow definitely reads it as *Baḍusa Viśpamitrasa* and translates it as 'Of the Young Brahman Viśvāmitra' (*C.I.I.*, Vol. II, p. 102). Does this figure represent Śiva as Viśvāmitra (*cf.* the Audumbara coin noticed above), the name of the person in this seal being after the name of the god reproduced? The bull below the left leg of the principal figure is significant (Pl. VIII, fig. 4).

The most noteworthy representations of Śiva, however especially from the iconographic point of view, are those that appear on the Kushan money, the coins of Wema Kadphises, Kanishka, Huvishka and Vāsudeva. It is not merely the feature of the multiplication of Śiva's hands and heads that is interesting, but the varying nature of the attributes placed in the hands of Śiva is also of great iconographic interest. In the earliest of the Śiva figures in this series, *viz.*, those on the coins of Wema Kadphises, the god is invariably two-handed, the right hand, almost without exception, holds a trident or a trident-battle-axe, while the left one hanging downwards carries a water-vessel, with the skin upper-garment slung round the forearm; the last feature strongly reminds us of the same in the figure of Viśvāmitra on Dharaghoṣa's silver coins noticed above and the representation of standing Herakles on the coins of certain Indo-Greek rulers like Demetrius (*cf.* also the figure of Herakles on some coins of Huvishka; (Pl. I, fig. 18). The treatment of the *jaṭā* differs in individual specimens, two modes being discernible, one

where the matted locks are gathered together ending in a knob just on the centre of the head, while in the other mode, beneath that is shown a convex-shaped object, which may be the hair treated in a fashion similar to that on the head of Śiva in the Chatreśvara coin of the Kuninḍas. On one copper coin of Wema Kadphises, again, reproduced in Cunningham's *Coins of the Indo-Scythians and Kushans* (Plate XV, Fig. 11), the deity seems to be poly-cephalous; Cunningham has, however, described the figure simply as Śiva. In the coins of Kanishka and Huvishka the iconography of Śiva acquires a new orientation, and both the two-handed and the four-handed figures are found with a variety of attributes reminiscent of the varied iconography of later days. Śiva here almost invariably appears without his mount and when he is two-armed, he carries a trident in the right hand and a gourd in the left (Whitehead suggests the possibility of the latter's being a human head, but that is unlikely). On some copper coins of Kanishka in the Indian Museum, Śiva grasps a spear or a staff with right hand while his left hand rests on a club. On several types of gold and copper coins of Kanishka the god is four-armed and is shown wearing a garland or necklace, but different sets of attributes appear on different specimens; on one set of Kanishka's and Huvishka's coins are found in the upper right hand *vajra* (small hand-drum according to Cunningham and Whitehead; but the object closely resembles the thunderbolt which is held by Vajrapāṇi the attendant of Buddha in Gandhāra art), in lower right, a water-vessel with mouth downwards (an unusual way of holding it), in upper left hand a trident and in lower left an antelope (Pl. VIII, fig. 6). On some specimens of this series we find elephant-goad along with the water-vessel in the lower right hand; this mode of crowding two attributes in one hand is uncommon in the representations of the Indian deities. Again, four-armed

Śiva on certain copper coins of the same ruler holds noose in lower right hand, while the lower left sometimes is empty, but at other times resting on hip or hanging down, it holds a water vessel, the other attributes being similar to the above. Some gold coins of Huvishka show three-faced and four-armed Śiva, having water-vessel, thunderbolt, trident and club respectively in the four hands from the lower right upwards (Pl. IX, fig. 1); on other gold coins of the same king Śiva appears as one-faced with more or less the same attributes, an antelope being placed in the lower left hand ; but such is the imperfect state of preservation of many of his copper coins, that the attributes held by the hands of Śiva are seldom fully discernible. Huvishka's gold coin described by Gardner in P. 148 of his book (Pl. XXVIII, 16) has a type of Śiva figure on the reverse, which is of outstanding interest from iconographic point of view. His description is as follows, 'Śiva facing, three headed, nimbate ; clad only in waist band, ithyphallic; has four arms and hands, in which are goat, wheel, trident, and thunderbolt' (Pl. IX, fig. 2). *Triśūla*, *vajra* and *cakra* are recognisable in the front left, back left and back right hands respectively ; the goat or antelope in the front right is not so very distinct. There are undoubtedly three-heads all encircled by a halo sometimes absent round the heads of the varieties of deities ; whether however the faces are all human is not quite clear. The *cakra* in one of the hands and the *urddhaliṅga* feature, the latter so common in sculptural representations of Śiva from the late Kushan period onwards, are noteworthy characteristics. Does the type show the beginning of the interesting composite icon of Harihara of subsequent days or is it of the same nature as that of the Gandhāra sculpture of Trimurti. ? [1] It may

[1] A.S I.A.R., 1913-14, pp. 276 ff., pl. LXXIIa. Natesa Aiyar describes the Gandhāra relief as a three-headed and six armed Trimurti

be noted that no other of the early coin representations of Śiva bears the *urddhaliṅga* sign. One unique copper coin of Huvishka in the collection of the Indian Museum has the figure of 'an archer standing right, holding a bow as long as himself, with string inwards; legend right in peculiar characters, which look like old Brāhmī for *Ganeśa*' (Smith). Only one other specimen of such a coin was known, when Smith published his *Catalogue*, and these two coins are of outstanding interest both from the numismatic and iconographic point of view. These are the two exceptional pieces where Brāhmī script is used to describe the deity in the imperial Kushan series, and the device here has nothing to do with the elephant-headed and pot-bellied deity bearing that name. Here Śiva is most presumably indicated by the word which is also mentioned in the sixth canto of the *Rāmāyaṇa* as one of the attributive epithets of Śiva (*Ganeśo lokaśambhuśca lokapālo mahābhujaḥ | Mahābhāgo mahāśūlī mahādaṃṣṭrī maheśvaraḥ ||*). If the identification of this device is accepted, then we have here a unique representation of Śiva of early times where bow is his principal attribute (*cf.* the Ṛgvedic description of Rudra already noted in the last chapter—*Arhan vibharṣi sāyakāni dhanvārhan niṣkam*, etc.). Our survey of the iconographic types of Śiva represented on Huvishka's coins will be incomplete, if we fail to take note of the unique quarter stater of the same ruler, in the collection of the Punjab Museum, which has two figures, one male and the other female, standing facing each other, with a Kushan monogram between them, the former being described as Bhaveśa (Oeso) and the latter as Nana. Now there can be very little doubt that here Nana

the head to the proper right being that of Viṣṇu, while the one to the proper left being that of Brahmā; the central head is that of Śiva recumbent on his bull. But from the plate, the animal appears to be an elephant and the head on the proper left seems to be leonine.

is identified by the die-cutter with Umā, the consort of Śiva, whose figure also is to be found on an unique coin of the same Kushan ruler, where the goddess was correctly described as Umā (OMMO) by the die-cutter (Pl. VIII, fig. 5); this coin was noticed by E. J. Rapson in *J.R.A.S.*, 1897, p. 324. Cunningham had two gold coins in his collection, one a stater and the other a quarter stater, which were later acquired by the British Museum. The latter is similar to the one in the Punjab Museum (*P. M. C.*, Vol. I, P. 197, Pl. XVIII, fig. 135) just described, but the former is the same in which Rapson recognised the figure of Umā. Cunningham wrongly described both the pieces in the same manner; Śiva is no doubt identical in both, but on the stater piece the goddess holds a different object in her right hand (in the other, Nana holds her peculiar sceptre tipped with a horse's head) and the inscription by her side can be clearly read as OMMO (Umā). Rapson remarked 'not only is the inscription quite distinct, but the symbol which the female deity holds in her hand, it may perhaps be a flower, is quite different from the well-known symbol of Nanaia; and we may, therefore, unhesitatingly add Umā to the list of Indian deities represented on Kushan coins' (*J.R.A.S.*, 1897, p. 324). Rapson was quite correct in the above remark and we can produce fresh evidence in its support. The reverse of a stater piece of Huvishka reproduced in Pl. XVIII (No. 136) of the *Punjab Museum Catalogue*, Vol. I (p. 197) is described by Whitehead as 'Figure of goddess with the cornucopiae as on No. 130, with name to l., which is quite blundered and illegible.' But if the legend is compared with the other where Rapson reads OMMO (the coin is reproduced by Cunningham in *Numismatic Chronicle*, Ser. III, Vol. XII, Pl. XIII and *Coins of the Indo-Scythians and Kushans*, Pl. XXIII, fig. 1), it can similarly be read. It begins from top left corner and runs sideways; the first two letters are quite clear,

but the third letter (the second M) shows two short additional strokes attached to it and the last letter an O due to exigencies of space runs into the top corner of the second M. The whole legend stands thus O M M O (Pl. VII, fig. 5). The goddess Umā here holds a cornucopiae like certain figures of Demeter, Tyche and Ardochso; but in the coins of Huvishka, we find some such transpositions. Ambikā (Umā) holding cornucopiae after the Ardochso figures on late Kushan coins can be seen also on the Chandragupta-Kumāradevī coins in the Imperial Gupta series.

We do not get so many varieties of Śiva figures on the gold and copper coins of the last great Kushan emperor Vāsudeva, where the god is usually depicted as two-armed and accompanied by his mount, having one face or three faces. A unique gold coin described by Cunningham bears Śiva with three heads and four arms, standing to front; water vessel, noose, trident and tiger-skin are placed in the four hands from the lower right onwards; his mount has got a bell attached to its neck (*C.I.K.*, Pt., III, p. 74, pl. 24, fig. 9). When he is depicted two-armed, he almost invariably holds noose (*pāśa*) in the right hand and trident in the left. As regards the treatment of the head, one curious feature of these coins is worth-noticing; sometimes the residue of the hair after being used to form a top-knot on the centre of the head, descending down the sides of the face, are treated in such a manner as to give a spurious appearance of the deity's being three-headed. But on other specimens, the additional faces, one on either side of the central face can undoubtedly be recognised. On the basis of the noose in the hand of Śiva on some Kushan coins, Cunningham describes 'Śiva as Yama'; but the association of Śiva or Rudra Śiva with noose is also comparatively old, and in the later developed theological doctrines of the Śaiva system, *pāśa* (fetters) is very intimately connected with the god.

He is the binder of the individual souls as he is also the loosener of them. Thus, the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, where Rudra-Śiva is the god extolled says—*Tat kāraṇa sāṅkhya-yogādhigamyaṃ jñātvā devaṃ mucyate sarvapāśaiḥ* (VI. 13); the *Atharvaśiras Upaniṣad*, which is a sectarian Upaniṣad extolling the glories of Śiva, describes a rite and that is the Pāśupata one, which is called *Paśupāśavimokṣaṇa*. The god Śiva as he appears one-headed and two-armed on the coins of Vāsudeva, served as the prototypes of the devices of some of the later Kushan coins and those of Kushano-Sassanian rulers and of many Hindu princes of India, like the kings of Kashmir.[1]

It is curious that though we get some inscriptions referring to the Bhāgavata shrines of the pre-Christian and early post-Christian period, as previously noted, very few representations of the sectarian god Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu are found on the coins of the same period. On the other hand, though, the numismatic portrayal of the other cult deity Śiva is so very elaborate, very few epigraphic references to Śivite shrines of the contemporaneous periods are forth-coming; still, there can be no doubt that there were such shrines as fully proved by some of the Audumbara coins noted above. One can refer here *in passim* to the Kharoṣṭhī inscription of the 1st century A.D. discovered at Panjtar below the Mahaban range, where a Śaiva shrine is probably mentioned; the inscription bears the date 122. If Cunningham's eyecopy of it is accurate, there can be no question about the correct-

[1] The description of many of the coin-types selected above are based on a close observation of the specimens in the collections of the Indian Museum, Calcutta, and the Punjab Museum, Lahore. The reader is referred to the relevant sections of the catalogues of the respective museums. Some descriptions are also based on Cunningham's plates appearing in his *Coins of the Indo-Scythians & Kushans*, Pl. XV. 11, Pl. XXIV. 6, 7, 8. 9.

ness of Konow's reading of a part of the 2nd line thus, *moike urumujaputre karavide śivathale* which has been translated by him as 'was made an auspicious ground by Moika, the Urumuja scion.' In the introductory section to his edition of this inscription, he remarks, "What a *śivathala* is, I cannot say. The word may mean 'a Śiva sanctuary' or simply 'an auspicious ground,' and the latter meaning is probably the more likely one." But the alternative meaning which he has himself suggested but discarded, seems to me to be more acceptable. The words '*sthala*' and *sthāna* are very frequently used in epic literature (*cf.* the word *Brahmasthāna* in the passage, *Tato gaccheta rājendra Brahmasthānamanuttamam*, *Mahābhārata* III, 85, 103) and the inscriptions (*cf.* the word *mahāsthāna* in the Mathura inscription discussed before) in the sense of 'a sanctuary,' 'a shrine.' The evidence of contemporary coins, as we have seen above, as well as the observations of foreign writers like Hesychius and Stobaeus fully prove that Śiva was the great god of worship among the people of north-western India; Śiva in his animal (bull) form was known to the Greeks as the god of Gandhāra as Hesychius writes, '*Gandaros, o Taurokrates par Indois.*' Now as regards Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu, we could expect to find his figures on the coins which were discovered from Besnagar and Mathura, because both these localities, as we have seen, contained shrines of the god. But on the earliest monetary issues of Besnagar we do not find any such figure which can be described to represent him; the die-struck coins issued by the early Hindu kings and the Saka satraps of Mathura bear a standing figure with right hand upraised and left hand on hip which was described as Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa by some numismatists due to the close association of this place with the Kṛṣṇite tradition. But now this view has rightly been rejected and Śrī-Lakṣmī has been recognised in the particular device. On one interesting coin, however, in the

so-called Pāñcāla Mitra series, we find the figure of Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu. The coin was issued by Viṣṇu mitra and in evident allusion to his name this particular god was figured; the close correlation between the name of the issuer and the deity represented on the reverse is one of the interesting characteristics of most of these coins dateable in the 1st. century B.C. The figure is described by Cunningham simply as four-armed ; but Allan thinks that he is really two-armed, 'his robes hanging down giving an effect' which led Cunningham to describe it as above. According to him the four arms would come down from the shoulders and not from the elbows. 'It is possible that he is represented as grasping on the left a pole surmounted by a discus and another on the right surmounted by a trident.' The size of some of these copper coins is so small and their preservation is so indifferent that it is impossible to be sure about the iconographic features of the deity figured on them. But the artistic convention of separating the arms from the elbow downwards is well known in India and many early mediæval specimens are known where this is adopted by the image-maker. Al Idrisi's description of the Sūrya image enshrined in the sun-temple at Multan is to be noted in this connection; he says, that 'its arms, below the elbow, seem to be four in number' (Elliots' *History of India*, Vol. I, p. 82). As regards the attributes, the only certain one is the *cakra* in the upper left hand of the god, but it is held by the rim and not placed on the top of a pole. We can profitably compare this figure with the other one of Viṣṇu which appears on a Kushana seal matrix attributed by Cunningham with a great deal of justification to Huvishka. The seal representation is of interest not only from the iconographic point of view, but also from the fact that a Kushan chief, possibly Huvishka himself, appears in the rôle of a devotee of Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu. The chief in the Kushan

dress, with a jewelled cap like the one to be seen in A type busts of Huvishka on his gold coins, is shown reverentially looking up at the god with his hands in the *añjali* pose. The god carries in his four arms a wheel (shown exactly like a cart-wheel). a mace (curiously reminiscent of the same in the hand of Śiva in the seal of Śivarakṣita, noticed above), a circular ring-like object and a globular thing, perhaps meant to depict a conchshell; he is decorated with a long fluttering scarf (Pl. VII, fig. 4).[1]

These are the few Viṣṇu figures on early Indian coins and seals of the 1st century B.C.—2nd century A.D., known to me. But some emblems, particularly associated with the Vāsudeva cult, are probably to be recognised in some of the devices of the indigenous coins of India of a very early period. We have already suggested the possibility of finding the *garuḍa* or *makara* emblems in the signs of a few of the early punch-marked coins of India. Certain double-die square copper coins of Taxila bear on their obverse a symbol which has been described by Allan as a pillar in a railing surmounted by a fish-like object (Pl. II, fig. 4). A few round copper coins of uncertain origin bearing fragmentary legends (reading extremely uncertain) have on the reverse a symbol described by Allan as 'a bushy tree in railing;' but a consideration of the figures i-vi of pl. XLVI of Allan's book enables us to offer a plausible suggestion that these are really columns surmounted by fan-palm capitals (Pl. II, fig. 3). A comparison with representations of ordinary palm trees which

[1] For Viṣṇumitra's coins, refer to Cunningham, *C.A.I.*, p. 84, pl. VII. fig. 21; J. Allan, *op. cit*, pp. CXIX, 202 pl. XXIX, 6-9. For the Kushan seal, refer to *Numismatic Chronicle*, 1893, pp. 126-7, pl. X, fig. 2. also R. P. Chanda, *Modern Review*, 1933, pp. 97-98. A crude outline of a human figure holding a wheel by its rim, appearing on one of the punch marked coins in the Purnea hoard, is also reproduced by me for comparison (*cf. M.A.S.I.*, No. 62, pl. VI, No. 120); *cf.* Pl. I, fig. 27.

appear on certain coins of Ayodhya lends support to this view. Reference has already been made above to the fan-palm capitals discovered at Besnagar and Pawaya, the former in Bhopal and the latter in Gwalior state. Thus, it is very likely that these symbols are really based on the votive columns connected with Bhāgavatism, *viz.*, the *garuḍa*, *mīna* (*makara*) and *tāla* capitals associated with Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu, Pradyumna and Saṃkarṣaṇa respectively. The elaborate wheel appearing on the reverse of the unique silver coin of the Vṛṣṇi Rājanya gaṇa has been described by Cunningham and Allan as a *dharmacakra*; but its appearance on a coin of Vṛṣṇirājanya, with which clan according to consistent Epic and Purāṇic tradition the name of Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa is associated makes it highly probable that the *cakra* stands for the *Sudarśanacakra* of Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu, one of the best revered symbols among the early Pāñcarātrins and the Vaiṣṇavas (Pl. II, fig. 7). The basic idea underlying the wheel in its association with Vāsudeva is solar and the wheel as a symbol par excellence of the god is undoubtedly one of the tangible signs of his connection with the Vedic Viṣṇu, an aspect of the Sun. If this suggestion is accepted, we are to seek for the interpretation of the composite pillar capital made up of the foreparts of a lion and an elephant appearing on the obverse of the same coin from the early Pāñcarātra mythological literature (Pl. II, fig. 10).[1]

[1] For the symbol on the double-die Taxila coin, refer to Allan, *op. cit.*, p. 229; for the Ayodhya coins, refer to *ibid*, pl, XVII, figs. 10-12; for the Vṛṣṇi coin refer to Cunningham, *op. cit.*, p, 70, pl. IV, fig. 15 and Allan, *op. cit.*, 281, pl. XVI, 5. Cunningham reproduced and described the unique Vṛṣṇi coin along with the two Audumbara coins, one silver and the other copper; he does not say anything about its provenance; but Allan says, it presumably hails from the northern Punjab. Allan remarks about its obverse—'The obverse is a pillar surmounted by an animal, half lion and half elephant, above which is a *nandipāda*,' p. CLV.

The wheel surrounded by a circle of dots appearing on the obverse of the Kaulūta chief Virayaśas (*c.* 1st century A. D.) as reproduced by Cunningham along with the coins of the Audumbaras, may also admit of this interpretation (Allan, *op. cit.*, p. 158). It has no doubt been described as 'a probable *Dharmacakra*' by Allan in Introduction to his book (p. c.) but it can also be explained in the above manner. These symbols could well be utilised by all sects for their religious purpose and were never the monopoly of any particular one for all times and all places. A variant of the same *cakra*, but much less elaborate than the other two noted above appears on the reverse of the copper coins of Acyuta, one of the kings uprooted by Samudragupta. It is of the same type as that held in the hand of Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu appearing on the Kushana seal attributed to Huvishka by Cunningham. It should be remembered that Acyuta is one of the twenty-four names of Para Vāsudeva, the weilder of *Sudarśana*, and the Indians from early times had special predilection for adopting the names of the gods of their choice.

In the previous paragraphs, I have discussed the nature of the data supplied by coins about the iconic and aniconic religious practice of two of the major Brahmanical sects of ancient India. It is time now to consider what materials they supply to us regarding the same of the other sectaries, the worshippers of other principal Brahmanical gods and goddesses. Durga Prasad's attempts to read Tāntrikism, especially associated with the Śakti worship, in the symbols of the ancient punch-marked coins are open to criticism and his conclusions cannot be accepted with confidence. In the die-struck and cast coins, however, appear several female figures some of which can be shown to stand for different goddesses. Variants of Lakṣmī (Gaja-Lakṣmī Śrī) the goddess of wealth and prosperity have already been recognised on some of them. Allan observes 'on the reverse of Bhadra-

ghoṣa's coins (Pāñcāla Mitra series) is a female deity standing on a lotus, whom we may identify as Bhadrā in allusion to the name of Bhadraghoṣa . . . . ;' he is diffident however, about identifying her with any of the particular goddesses who bear this epithet. She is probably none other than Lakṣmī, or she may also represent the goddess Durgā who is associated in one of her aspects with Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva as Ekānaṃśā or Subhadrā ;' in the *Skanda Purāṇa* Kṛṣṇa is made to say, 'in the white fortnight of the month of Āṣāḍha, in the second day which is in the Puṣyā nakṣatra, after placing Bhadrā with Rāma and myself on the chariot . . .' (*Āṣāḍhasya site pakṣe dvitīyā puṣyasaṃyutā | Tasyāṃ rathe samāropya Rāmaṃ māṃ Bhadrayā saha* || — as quoted in the *Śabdakalpadruma* under Bhadrā). The *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* writes: *Ekānaṃśā kāryā devī Baladeva-Kṛṣṇayormadhye | Kaṭisaṃsthitavāmakarā sarojamitareṇa codvahatī* (ch. 57, verse 37).[1] Thus, the lotus in the hand alone would not always justify us in identifying the figure as Lakṣmī unless some other distinctive marks are present; the lotus on which a few of these goddesses are made to stand is not also the characteristic of Lakṣmī alone, for the lotus pedestal is one of the commonest pedestals on which the images of sectarian divinities are placed in Gupta and post-Gupta art. The coins simply give earlier evidence; they also emphasise another common pedestal used in earlier times, *viz.*, railing pedestal which has been invariably and in most cases quite unjustifiably described by Cunningham as 'Buddhist basement railing' in his account of early Indian coins. On the basis of the above observations, one will be justified to hold that some of these female figures on coins

[1] For the association of Ekānaṃśā Subhadrā with the Śakti (Durgā) in one of her aspects, refer to J. C. Ghosh's paper on Ekānaṃśā in *J.R.A.S.B.*, 1936, pp. 41-46 and Pl. 7. For Bhadraghosa's coins, refer to Allan, *op. cit.*, pp. cxvii, 197, and plates.

with lotus in their right hands and their left hands resting on hip are variants of the goddess Durgā. Their association with particular animals, however, will help us to differentiate between these two classes of goddesses. Now, on the coins of the Kuninḍas, we almost invariably find a stag (at first incorrectly identified by Theobold as a buffalo) along with a goddess standing on lotus and holding a lotus flower in her right hand. S. V. Venkatesvara in his article on Vedic Iconography discussed by me in the second chapter of this book, writes, 'In the latest (*khila*) Vedic texts we have the goddess Śrī represented as a golden antelope adorned with garlands of silver and gold' (p. 25). But he does not give us any reference, so it cannot be checked. If he is correct, however, then we find here both human and animal forms of this goddess. The *Mahāmāyurī* (verse) refers to the Yakṣa Uṣṭrapāda who was the special object of worship in the land of the Kuninḍas (*Uṣṭrapāda Kuninḍeṣu*). Uṣṭrapāda means a being either human or animal with the feet of a camel, and not a camel; if we recognise the Yakṣa Uṣṭrapāda in the animal represented on the Kuninḍa coins, then the attendant female figure may or may not stand for Lakṣmī. The obverse of the coin type No. 30 of Azes in the *Punjab Museum Catalogue*, Vol. I, p. 129, has been described by Whitehead as 'Goddess Lakṣmī standing to front with flower in raised right hand.' Gardner writes about the same device 'a female deity facing, clad in himation; holds in raised right hand, flower; stands on lotus; besides her, lion ? (Lakṣmī?).'[1] The forepart of the lion

[1] Gardner, *op. cit.*, p. 85, Pl. XIX. 5. Gardner says, 'It is probable that the goddess who appears on the coins of Azes as standing on a lotus, and holding a flower is either Pārvatī, the dread wife of Śiva, or Lakṣmī, the goddess of fortune; the supposed lion, which seems to lie under her left elbow, may be after all only a lump of oxide (p. lix). But the possibility of recognising the mount of the goddess is still there and in any way she is thoroughly an Indian

is recognisable from his plate and this makes it highly probable that here we find a representation of Durgā-siṃhavāhinī, the consort of Śiva (Pl. VII, fig. 6). It is true that the lotus at her feet and the same in her raised right hand would indicate the possibility of her being Lakṣmī ; but its nature may be more or less the same as that of the reverse device of the Chandragupta I-Kumaradevī coins and the lion-slayer type coins of Chandragupta II, in the imperial Gupta series of gold coins. The goddess seated on a lion, holding a lotus flower or cornucopiae in her left hand, a fillet in her right hand and her feet sometimes resting on lotus led Allan to describe her as Lakṣmī or Ambikā (CGCBM, lxxii-lxxiii, lxxxiii). The *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* passage has already been quoted in my support ; many texts like the *āgamas* give us more or less identical descriptions of two-armed Durgā-Gaurī images (*Dakṣiṇe cotpalaṃ haste vāma-hastaṃ pralambitam...*). It is true that the Syrian or Elamite goddess Nanaia is occasionally represented on some Kushan coins and seals as riding on a lion (Pl. I, fig. 24) ; but the mode of her presentation is quite different from the device under discussion.[1] The goddess in the Azes coin, however, is purely Indian ; her graceful *tribhaṅga* pose, the *kaṭihasta* feature and the raised right hand holding lotus are all Indian characteristics. That Śiva was the god par excellence in the Gandhāra region has already been noted ; it is no wonder that his consort Ambikā should also be well recognised as an object of worship in the same locality. Hiuen Thsang's reference to the shrine of Bhīmādevī, the spouse of Īśvara Deva (Śiva) in Gandhāra, as supported by the reference to Bhīmāsthāna in the *Mahābhārata*, previously mentioned,

goddess, be she Lakṣmī or Pārvatī. Coomaraswamy recognises in her Lakṣmī, in his article on 'Early Indian Iconography' noticed above.

[1] Cunningham, *Coins of the Indo-Scythians and Kushans*, p. 63, Pl. XXII, fig. 19.

should be noted again in this connection. On some of the gold and copper coins of the Kushan emperor Huvishka also, appears a goddess who is described as Nana; we have already seen that OESO (Bhaveśa or Śiva) is depicted in company with Nana on some of his gold coins (*CCIK*, pp. 65-66, Pl. XXIII, 2, and Whitehead *PMC*, p. 197, Pl. XVIII, 135). On the other coin of Huvishka noticed above in connection with Śiva type, Śiva is accompanied by another goddess who is described as Umā (*OMMO*). It has already been shown that we can correctly recognise the goddess Umā by her name on the gold coin of Huvishka in the Punjab Museum (*PMC.*, Pl. XVIII, fig. 136); here, however, the goddess holds a cornucopiae instead of a lotus. It should always be borne in mind that we do not get the help which is rendered to us by the Kushan die-cutters in naming the deity used as a device in particular dies, from others. But that there lie hid some Indian divinities among the medley of coin devices appearing on the Indo-Scythian and other coins is extremely probable. The Sakas were ruling over part of northernmost India and it is natural to expect that they would show on their coins some of the Indian cult divinities, the objects of worship among their subjects for whose use these coins were issued. Several unidentified goddesses appear on the reverse sides of certain copper and silver coins of Indo-Scythian rulers Maues and Azes. Gardener remarks 'When we reach the issues of king Maues (Pls. XVI, XVII), we find a wealth of most remarkable and original barbaro-Hellenic figures; a figure resembling Tyche (XVI, 3), holding in one hand a patera, in the other a wheel, who seems to be the original of the still more outlandish figure of Azes' coins (XVIII. 10, 11)...."[1]

[1] P. Gardner, *British Museum Catalogue of the Coins of the Greek and Scythic Rulers of India*, p. lviii.

The so-called Tyche may after all be an Indian goddess, because the many-spoked wheel which is held by her left hand distinctly reminds us of the one placed in the hand of the ithy-phallic figure of Śiva on a coin of Huvishka, as also of the other in the hand of Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu in the Kushan seal attributed by Cunningham to the same Kushan emperor (Pl. VII, fig. 7). Comparison may be made between this goddess on Maues' bronze coins with the sculpture of a goddess discovered in the Mohmand country reproduced by V. A. Smith in his *History of Fine Arts in India and Ceylon* (1st. Ed. fig. 78); the latter is, however, four-handed, holding in her hands among other objects, a *cakra* and a *gadā* and is most probably a Hellenistic representation of Vaiṣṇavī, the *śakti* of Viṣṇu. The goddess standing on lotus, facing and holding an uncertain object in her raised right hand (a tree branch with three leaves attached to it ?), with the left one resting on her hip, on the coins of Pāñcāla Phalgunīmitra may depict the asterism Phalgunī whose name is borne by the striker (Allan, *op. cit.*, pp. 194-5, and plates).[1] If it be a representation of Phalgunī at all, its iconography is in no way similar with that of Purva-Phalgunī and Uttara-Phalgunī as it appears in the late compilation of Hemādri. Pūrva-Phalgunī is described by him as elephant-faced, red-coloured, two-handed with parrot in her hand and seated upon a wheel (*Pūrvā hasti-mukhā sphasthā śukahastadvyāruṇā*), while Uttara-Phalgunī is tiger-faced, riding on a cow, white in colour, her four hands holding sun, moon, rosary and *khaṭvāṅga* (*Vyāghrānanottarā gosthā śubhravarṇā caturbhujā | Dvyakṣinī sūtra khaṭvāṅgadhāriṇī parikīrttitā ||* *akṣiṇī* here means sun and moon).

[1] For some detailed observations of mine on the Indian elements in the coin devices of early foreign rulers of this country, the reader is referred to *I.H.Q.*, Vol. XIV, pp. 93-8.

Sūrya appears frequently as an object of worship on the early tribal coins of ancient India. But the mode of his representation is not anthropomorphic. The commonest symbol to be found on the early punch-marked coins of India is designated by scholars as solar; it is the wheel and its numerous variants (Pl. II, fig. 6). Foucher finds in them so many forms of the *Dharmacakra* symbol; but the earlier suggestion that most of them stand for sun is more acceptable. We have already seen that spoked wheel and its variants appearing on certain tribal coins may stand for the Sudarśana of Viṣṇu and Vedic Viṣṇu was an aspect of the sungod with whom Vāsudeva was identified. On some of the earliest coins in the punch-marked series and on the Eran money (dated as early as the 3rd century B. C.) we very frequently find the lotus figure; in the latter the eight petalled lotus is clearly recognisable (Allan, *op. cit.*, p. 143). Now the lotus is intimately connected with the sun from very ancient times; it played a conspicuous part in the mythology of Brahmanism and its association with the sun is fully borne out by the evidence of the Purāṇas which enjoin the execution in sculpture of a twelve-petalled lotus, on different petals of which figures of the different aspects of the sun god are to be placed with the god Bhāskara on the central pericarp (*karṇikā*).[1] The lotus symbolising the sun and the creative force (Sūrya is Savitṛ—*sarvasya prasavitṛ*, the creator of all) came to hold a unique place in Indian art of all ages and all religious creeds; the author of the *Viṣṇudharmottara* realised the importance of this motif in iconographic art and gives full and detailed instructions for

[1] Hemādri in his *Vratakhaṇḍa*, pp. 528, 535 and 539, quotes from the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, *Skanda P.* and *Matsya* P., the respective passages dealing with Divākara Vratam, Āsāditya Vratam and Sūryanakta Vratam. See also Hemādri, *ibid*, p. 553 about Sūrya Vrata from *Saura Dharma*: "*Upalipya sucau deśe Sūryyaṃ tatra samarccayet | Saṃlikhet tatra padmantu dvādasāraṃ sakarṇikam ||*

its carving (Book III, Ch. 45, Vv. 1-8). In the anthropomorphic representations of divinities in sculptures, lotus is the commonest symbol found in their hands. Some of the lotuses, at least those on the early coins, if not all, may be taken to represent the sun. In this connection, reference may be made to the so-called Taurine symbol which is very frequently found on these as well as later coins of India. It was suggested by me long ago that it might symbolise the sun and the moon represented together, the disc symbolising the one and the other being symbolised by the crescent attached to it.[1] A few round cast copper coins of Kāḍa (probably a tribal name) of the 3rd century B.C. bear on one of their sides a large rayed circle which has been correctly described by Allan as 'Sun' (Allan, *CAI*, p. 145). But the clearest and the most significant way of representing the Sun god as a rayed disc enshrined as an object of worship is to be found among the devices of certain tribal coins which can be dated from '200 B.C. to the end of the first century B.C.' (Allan). These are the coins of Sūryamitra and Bhānumitra in the series described by Cunningham as 'Pāñcāla Mitra'; in the former, the god is represented 'as a ball from which rays radiate; below it is the symbol, and the whole is placed on a platform, as usual between two pillars with cross-bars,' while in the latter he is also shown as a radiate globe placed immediately on a railed platform between two pillars' (Allan. *CAI*, pp. cxviii-cxix, 193, 195, 197). The relationship between the name of the issuer as well as the deity reproduced on these coins has already been emphasised; now what is most interesting is that we find here an unmistakable

[1] *Indian Antiquary*, 1925; J. N. Banerjee on 'The Representation of Sūrya in Brahmanical Art, p. 2, fn. 6. C. L. Fábri has made the same suggestion in his article on 'The Punch-marked coins: A Survival of the Indus Civilisation' *J.R.A.S.*, 1935, p. 314.

evidence of the Brahmanic symbol for the sun used in sacrificial ritual as a regular object of worship (Pl. II, fig. 8). The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* tells us that in piling the fire altar, a disc of gold was placed on it to represent the sun (*Ś.B.*, VII, 4. 1. 10); in Sūryamitra's coins, the symbol upon which the rayed disc of the god is placed is very likely the summary representation of the firealtar, which is conspicuous by its absence in the coins of Bhānumitra. Now, there can be very little doubt that at the time when these coins were being issued, the Vedic sacrificial system had been much mixed up with the far-reaching religious changes and thus it happens that the sun-symbol appears in the rôle of an *arccā* on these coins. As regards the anthropomorphic representation of this god on the coins, we do not find any such on the early indigenous ones of India; but figures of sun in human form are met with on certain coins issued by the alien rulers of India like the Indo-Greeks and Kushans and they will be elaborately noticed in determining the evolution of the north Indian sun type in my forthcoming book on the images of the Hindu gods and goddesses.

Another deity who can be recognised without doubt on some of the tribal coins of ancient India as well as on the coins of the Kushan emperor Huvishka is Skanda Kārttikeya. Though he has not found a place in the stereotyped list of five principal gods of the five chief sects (*viz.* Śaiva, Vaiṣṇava, Saura, Śākta and Gāṇapatya) as formulated in later texts (*Pañcopasanā*, the worship of *Gaṇesādi Pañcadevatā*), numismatic evidence distinctly proves that his images or emblems were certainly highly venerated by a good many people of ancient India. He was worshipped by some Indian kings and tribes, such as Kumāragupta I of the Gupta dynasty and the Yaudheyas, who had special reason to court his favour. Some other kings also seem to have paid homage to him. On the reverse of a circular copper coin of Devamitra, a local king of Ayodhyā of an early date (c. 1st

century A.D.) we find a symbol which has been described by V. A. Smith as 'Cock on top of post' (Pl. II, fig. 5); on some coins of Vijayamitra of the same series also we find the same device (Nos. 31 & 32 in the series). It can justifiably be presumed, that it was based on a cock-crested column special to Kārttikeya. This suggestion is further supported by the carved pillar shaft and the cock capital found at Lala Bhagat, previously noticed in the chapter.[1] I have already shown that the staff and vase carrying standing figure on certain Ujjain coins cannot be called Kārttikeya but is to be described as Śiva. But the former god appears in human form sometimes in a poly-cephalous manner (six-headed) on one unique silver and certain copper coins of the Yaudheyas, belonging to the second century A.D. The obverse of one class of these coins bears the six-headed but two-armed Kārttikeya (Ṣaḍānana), holding a long spear (*śakti*, the emblem special to Kārttikeya) in his right hand, the left hand resting on hip; the reverse bears the goddess, presumably Lakṣmī, with an aureole round her head, and not a six-headed goddess as Cunningham describes. The legend on the silver coin has been reconstructed by Allan as *Yaudheya-bhāgavata-svāmino Brahmaṇya* (*sa* or *sya*) and on the copper coins as *Bhāgavata-svāmino Brahmaṇya-devasya* (or *sa*) *Kumārasya* (or *sa*) (Allan, *CAI*, p. cxlix, cl). Allan renders the two legends into English

[1] V.A. Smith, *CCIM*, vol. I, p. 151, Nos. 28, 31, 32. Sometimes the 'cock is placed on ground in front of post' as on No. 29 of Vijayamitra. Allan does not tell us anything about the pillar, but in his plate XVII, fig. 22, is reproduced a coin of Vijayamitra with the device of the 'cock on pillar'; in the body of the *Catalogue*, he invariably describes the bird as a cock, but in his introduction (p. lxxxix) he writes about it as 'a bird, usually called a cock but probably a *haṃsa*.' I have seen the above coins of Devamitra and Vijayamitra in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, and I have no doubt that Smith's description is correct. Considered along with the Lala Bhagat finds, the above suggestion should be accepted.

in this manner: 'Of Brahmaṇya (a name of Kārttikeya), the divine lord of the Yaudheyas' and 'of Kumāra the divine lord Brahmaṇya deva.' In both the cases the genitive case-ending of the name of the divinity and of the attributive epithet *svāmi* (the reading *Bhagavato* in place of *Bhāgavata* would better fit in with the general sense of the coin legend) shows that the coins were issued in the name of the deity. This is very interesting, because it possibly shows that the Yaudheyas had dedicated their State to the god of their choice who was regarded by them not only as their spiritual but also as their temporal ruler.[1]

Sir John Marshall's description of a very well executed terracotta seal with inscriptions in characters of the 3rd or 4th century A.D. found by him in course of excavations at Bhita, and his illuminating remarks on them deserve attention in this connection. It is the seal of a ruling chief; it has in its field a pile of balls (evidently a mountain) with a post on its either side, a waved line (river?) below and sun and crescent (moon) above; the legend around the margin is '*Śrī Vindhya-vedhamahārājasya Maheśvara-Mahāsenātisṛṣṭa-rājyasya Vṛṣadhvajasya Gautamīputrasya.*' Marshall translates it as follows: "Of the illustrious Mahārājā Gautamiputra Vṛṣadhvaja, the penetrator of the Vindhyas, who had made over his kingdom to the great Lord Kārttikeya." The appellation *Maheśvara-Mahāsenatisṛṣṭarājyasya* is significant. He remarks, 'It seems to indicate that in ancient times there may have existed a pious custom according to which rulers on the occasion of their accession entrusted their kingdom to their *iṣṭadevatā* and considered themselves as their mere agents.' He also cites the analogical case of

[1] M. A. Smith suggested that these coins were issued by a chief calling himself Svāmi Brahmaṇya Yaudheya. A proper interpretation of the legend as well as that of the Chatreśvara coin of the Kuniṇḍas previously noted leads to one conclusion—that suggested by me.

Travancore rulers who call themselves Padmanābhadāsa, they being mere agents of the Lord Padmanābha. I may observe here that I suggested my interpretation of the particular Kuniṇḍa and Yaudheya coin legends, before I read Marshall's remarks on this particular seal.

Rohitaka, the country of the Yaudheyas, the *āyudhajīvi* Kṣatriyas, also known as Mattamāyūrakas, was the specially favoured residence of the god as we know from the *Mahābhārata* passage (III. 32, 45) :—*Tato bahudhanaṃ ramayaṃ gavāḍhyaṃ dhanadhānyavat | Kārttikeyasya dayitaṃ Rohitakamupādravat | Tatra yuddhaṃ mahaccāsīt surairmattamāyūrakaiḥ.* Rohitaka (modern Rohtak where B. Sahni discovered a large number of Yaudheya coin moulds) 'being specially favoured by Kārttikeya means that he was the tutelary god of the region, where there must have been many shrines dedicated to him, the cult image enshrined in them being used as a coin device.[1] As regards the name Svāmi Brahmaṇya or Svāmi Brahmaṇyadeva Kumāra, reference may be made to the Bilsaḍ stone pillar inscription of Kumāragupta I (date 96 G.E.=415-16 A.D.), which records some additions by one Dhruvaśarman to the temple of Svāmi Mahāsena already existing in the locality.[2]

[1] In the Jarāsandhavadha parvādhyāya of the *Mahābhārata* (Sabhā-parva), Kṛṣṇa, while recounting to Bhīma and Arjuna the characteristic excellence of Rājagṛha, says that in Rājagṛha was the residence of Takṣaka and Maṇināga (*Takṣakasyālayaścātra Maṇināgasya cottamā*). This means that ther were shrines of Takṣaka and Maṇināga at Rājagṛha; recent excavations in the locality by the Indian Archaeological department have brought to light many interesting evidence of the once flourishing snake-cult at that place.

[2] Fleet, CII, III, pp. 44-5; the name Brahmaṇyadeva is also ascribed here to the god :—'*bhagavatastrailokyatejassam-bhārasaṃtatādbhutamūrtter...Brahmaṇyadevasya—Svāmi Mahāsenasyāyatane*' etc., etc. Bilsad is in the Eta district of U. P. and is about 140 miles to the south-east of Rohitaka or Rhotak. The Vākāṭaka mahārāja Rudrasena I is frequently described in the Vākāṭaka copper-plate inscriptions as

The iconographic type of Kārttikeya differs on the other class of the Yaudheya coins (class 6 of Allan) of a quite late date (3rd-4th century A.D.), which show undoubted Kushan influence in style and types; the one-faced War god stands facing, his right hand holding a spear and the left resting on hip with his *vāhana* on the left (the peacock is not usually shown on the other type—a few specimens of which, however, show the god with one face radiate, *cf.* Allan, p. 272, Pl. XXIX, 22). Among the Indian museum specimens of the type with six-headed Brahmaṇyadeva, I could recognise the bird mount only on one specimen. Another elaborate iconographic type occurs on the reverse of the 'peacock type' gold coins of Kumāragupta I. It shows the god Kārttikeya nimbate riding on the peacock (Paravāṇī) holding spear in left hand over shoulder, his right hand being in the *varada* pose; his figure is placed on an elaborate *pañcaratha* pedestal, commonly found in Indian art of the late Gupta and subsequent periods. There can be very little doubt that here we find a replica of the image of the favourite deity of Kumāragupta I —probably the very image enshrined in a temple built by the Gupta King in the royal capital. The iconographic importance of the type cannot be too sufficiently noticed. Smith's description of it as 'Goddess (Kumārīdevī ?)' was corrected by Allan as 'Kārttikeya nimbate'; but a part of Allan's description will have to be modified. He writes that the god sprinkles incense on altar on r. with right hand and the peacock stands on a kind of platform. The altar appears to be nothing but two of the re-entrants of the right side of the pedestal (*pīṭhikā*) on which the god with his mount is shown and the right hand thus does not sprinkle

atyanta Svāmi-Mahābhairavabhaktasya, i.e., an excessive devotee of Svāmi Mahābhairava, evidently a terrific form of Siva.

incense but is really shown in the iconographic pose of *varada*, i.e., that of conferring a boon (Pl. X, fig. 9).[1]

Huvishka was the only foreign ruler who had this god reproduced under various names, such as Skanda, Kumāra, Viśākha, and Mahāsena, on the reverse side of some of his coins. The iconography of Skanda-Viśākha as delineated in them requires careful study. Mahāsena, another form of Skanda, is shown nimbate, clad in an undergarment covered over by a long flowing cloak (like the Saṃghāṭī to be found in the Buddha figures—not chlamys as Gardner suggests) holding a standard surmounted by a bird (rude peacock—cf. *Barhiketu* as one of the epithets of Kārttikeya-*Skanda Kumārarūpa barhiketus-śaktidharaśca, Bṛhat samhita*, Ch. 57,) and his left hand rests on the hilt of the sword which is tied to his waist-girdle (Pl. IX, fig. 7). Next we find Skanda-kumāra and Viśākha standing face to face similarly dressed, the former holding in his right hand a standard surmounted by bird (it is not clear in the reproduction; what seems a bird might be a combination of the letter M of KOMARO and part of the hair or turban of the god) while the latter or both of them hold a long spear (Pl. IX, fig. 8). On the coin, Viśākha is shown clasping the right hand of Skanda-kumāra who touches the former with his left hand (Gardner, *op. cit.*, Plate XXVIII, fig. 22). Lastly, we find a shrine consisting of an ornamented double platform with a linear representation of a super-structure having inside it three figures on the pedestal; the whole device has been described by Gardner as "Niche on basis, within which, Skanda and Viśākha standing as above;

[1] Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 113-14, Pl. XVI, 3; Allan, *CCGDBM*, pp. 84 ff. and plates. Kumāragupta was certainly in urgent need of the graces of the War god Kārttikeya, for the last period of his rule was troubled by the ruthless invasions of the Huṇas and the Pushyamitras and his special predilection for this martial god is also manifest in the name of one of his sons, *viz.*, Skanda., if not of himself.

between them Mahāsena, horned (?), facing, nimbate, clad in chlamys ; sword at waist" (Pl. IX, fig. 9).[1] Gardner's description of the three figures in the last-mentioned coin device may be correct, but the figure on the right does not seem to have any halo carved round the head, while the other two distinctly bear the traces of halo round their heads. But this point need not be stressed far, because as I have previously observed sometimes the aureole is missing from the heads of divinities on Kushan coins. The types of the three divinities enshrined, however, differ so widely from their representations on the other coins of Huvishka noted above, that they cannot but engage our attention. In any case, we have no grounds to support D. R. Bhandarkar in his assumption that on certain coins of Huvishka there are four figures corresponding to four different gods, *viz.*, Skanda, Kumāra, Viśākha and Mahāsena (*Carmichæl Lectures*, 1921, pp. 22-23). If these coins prove anything they prove that there were three gods—or rather three aspects of the same god—*viz.*, Skanda-kumāra, Viśākha and Mahāsena. The *Mahābhārata* lays down Skanda's several forms as brothers or sons, *viz.*, Śākha, Viśākha, Naigameya; among his other names are Kumāra and Mahāsena ; the very involved mythology which is presented to us by it about the origin of Skanda shows that various god concepts of an allied character were merged in the composition of Skanda-Kārttikeya. Huvishka's coins inform us that the three (or two?) gods had not lost their separate personal entities even then, though their iconography shows that they were to all intents and purposes, the same god. Patañjali's mention of Skanda and Viśākha have been noticed on a previous occasion; these coin types bear out in a characteristic manner what is incidentally observed byhim.

[1] Gardner, *op. cit.*, p. 138, Pl. XXVII, fig. 16; p. 149, Pl. XXVIII, figs. 22 and 23; p. 150, Pl. XXVIII, fig. 24.

Among the other members of the Brahmanic pantheon, whose effigies can be recognised among the early coin devices, mention may be made of Indra and Agni. Both of them appear on the reverse sides of the coins of Indramitra and Agnimitra respectively in the Pāñcāla series. Jayagupta in the same series may also show the god Indra on the reverse of his coins. On Indramitra's coins, Indra is crudely represented in two different ways; first, as standing, facing, on a pedestal, and holding an uncertain object in his right hand (*cf.* Allan's plate XXIX, 1 and 2; a club seems to hang down from the left), and secondly, he is shown inside a domed shrine ('arch way,'—Allan) where other details are absolutely lacking (these are very small coins and very much corroded). Jayagupta's coins show the latter device on their reverse, marked by the same indistinctness. The reverse of Agnimitra's coins figure a deity standing facing on a railed platform between two pillars; five flames represent his hair; his right hand is raised and the left rests on hip in the approved early Indian iconographic manner (*kaṭihasta*); some object (a sword or a club ?) seems to project downwards from his hip. Most numismatists identify him as Agni; but Mme. Bazin Foucher finds in him the representation of Ādi Nāga, the presiding deity of Ahicchatra, the capital city of Pāñcāla. She lays stress on the identity of the reverse device of Bhūmimitra's coins with the same of Agnimitra and describes the two as above. The deity on the former stands facing on a platform between two pillars, each with three cross-bars at the top. Cunningham described the figure as 'standing on Buddhist railing; head with five rays' and remarked, 'The figure is probably that of Bhūmi, or the earth personified' (*CAI.* p. 83). Allan observes about the same, 'His attitude is similar to that of Agni, but his hair is represented by five snakes (nāgas). He holds a snake in his hands. One would expect a personification of the Earth goddess Bhūmi

but as the figure is male, it is probably the king of the Nāgas representing the earth' (*CCAI*, P. cxviii). A careful inspection of the plates given in Cunningham's (Pl. VII, 12-16) and Allan's books (Pl. XXVIII, figs. 5-14) shows that the two devices seem to be almost identical and whatever may be the designation of one is the same of the other; but on certain coins of Agnimitra (fig. 11 in Allan's plate) the deity is made to stand on a lotus and rays of flames and nāgas cannot be distinguished in the coin representations. R. Burns, however, says, 'The five lines are not identical on the two coins, those of Agnimitra ending in sharper points than those of Bhūmimitra. If these two figures are Nāgas, the difference is not important; while if one is of Agni, the iconographical explanation of that of Bhūmi is difficult, and I know no other representation of the Earth.'[1] Thus, the whole question is still an open one and unless better preserved coins are available, no certainty can be arrived at. The devices, tree within railing and the undulating line, may, in some cases, represent the *Vṛkṣacaityas* (the residences of the different Yakṣas) and Nāgas, though there can be no doubt that in many more they stood for the *sthalavṛkṣas* and rivers.

Indra appears in the garb of the Greek Zeus on the coins of Eukratides, Antialkikas and a few other Indo-Greek rulers and on those of Maues. On the *kavišiye nagara devatā* coins of Eukratides, the god (usually described in the coin catalogues as Zeus) is shown seated left on throne, holding wreath in the right hand and palm branch in the left; the forepart of an elephant, rarely the whole animal, appears on the right and a conical object in the left field. The same device

[1] Mme. Bazin Foucher's article appeared in *Etudes d' Orientalisme*, Musee Guimet, vol. I., p. 145. For R. Burn's remarks quoted above, *cf. A.B.I.A.A.*, 1983, p. 24.

appearing on the reverse of several hemidrachmae of Antialkidas is reproduced in my Pl. IX, Fig. 3, where the object in the left field is, however, not distinct. Rapson definitely described the conical object as a mountain, and, to explain this type, he drew our attention to the statement of Hiuen Thsang regarding the elephant having been the presiding genius of the *Pi-lo-sho-lo* mountain, to the south-west of Kapiśa. The Chinese traveller refers to a suburban city of Kapiśa, viz., *Si-pi-to-ja-la-tzu* which is the Chinese transliteration of *Śvetavatālaya* according to Watters. Now, *Śvetavatālaya* (the residence of Śvetavat, a name of Indra) and *Indrapura* are presumably one and the same, and the *Mahāmāyūrī* tells us that Indra was the tutelary deity of the latter, a place to be located in the north-west on account of its association with Varṇu, another locality in the same region. So, on the basis of the above remarks, it is highly probable, nay certain, that we find on the above type representations of Indra in his theriomorphic as well as anthropomorphic forms—the latter being evidently identified with Zeus, the exact Greek counterpart of the Indian king of the gods (*devarāja*). On the reverse of a unique silver coin of Antialkidas in the collection of the British Museum appears the same deity standing or advancing to left with a long sceptre in his left hand and the right hand hanging down, and the elephant, with its trunk at the salute, Nike on its head and a bell round its neck, also striding to the left (Pl. IX, fig. 4). Whitehead who noticed this coin device in his ' Notes on Indo-Greek Numismatics ' in *Numismatic Chronicle*, 1923 (pp. 325-6, Pl. XV, fig. 4) remarks, 'apparently this quaint design shows the elephant-deity and his elephant indulging in a victorious march past.' Thus, we see in the devices, the simultaneous theriomorphic and anthropomorphic representations of Indra, as we have seen above the same mode of representing Śiva on the Ujjain coins and certain Kushan coins (the deity and his animal mount). On

certain square copper coins of Maues, however, we find a new orientation in the representation of Indra; on the obverse of the coins, numbered 12-13, in the British Museum (Gardner, *op. cit.*, p. 70, Pl. XVI., fig. 9), the enthroned appears with a long sceptre in his left hand, while his right hand is placed on the shoulder of a human figure. Gardner described the latter as a ' small winged female figure ' ; but the wings and the female character of the figure are not at all clear from the plate ; what he described as wings appear to be the prongs of the *vajra*. The figure, however, as has rightly been suggested by Gardner, ' seems to be an embodiment of the thunderbolt ' (Pl. IX, fig. 6). This reminds us of the Indian practice of occasionally representing the attributes in the hands of divinities as personified beings (*āyudhapuruṣas*). The iconography of Indra in these Hellenistic presentations of Indra on the above coins does partially tally with the description of his icon as given in *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* of Varāhamihira (*Suklaścaturviṣāṇo dvīpo Mahendrasya Vajrapāṇitvam | Tiryaglalāṭasaṃsthaṃ tṛtīyamapi locanaṃ cihṇam* 2—ch. 57, v. 42), if we take all of them together.[1]

The Yakṣas and Yakṣiṇīs, so frequently represented in the pre-Christian and early post-Christian art of northern India, do not fail to make their appearance on early indigenous coins, though it is comparatively rare. The Ujjain coins, again, furnish us with an important clue in this connection. Allan reproduces three coins in his *Catalogue*

[1] I am not sure whether the elephant's head which appears on the obverse of certain round copper coins of Demetrius (Pl. IX, fig. 5) and some others of Maues has anything to do with Śvetavat, the mount of Indra; Demetrius and Lysias are sometimes shown with elephant's scalp on the top of their diademed heads. All these points have been discussed by me in my article on 'Indian Elements in Coin Devices of Early Foreign Rulers of India,' in *Indian Historical Quarterly* (Vol. XIV, 1938, pp. 95-101, and the accompanying plate, figs. 1-4).

(Pl. XXXVI, figs. 1-3), the obverse sides of which bear, according to him, two draped female figures standing facing side by side, the one on the left holding an uncertain object in her raised right hand; a river with fishes is shown below (*ibid.*, p. 257). With regard to another fragmentary coin included by him in the same series, he remarks in his introduction, 'Variety *c* (of the class 4 of the Ujjain coins, the two-figure coins belong to Var. *b* of the same class) is a broken coin, but seems to have had three figures on it; the type was probably the same as the three figures found on certain punch-marked silver coins (p. 37, 1).' He further says that he has grouped together as class 4 'four varieties with deities on the obverse' (of the remaining two varieties, one has the *abhiṣeka*-Lakṣmī or Gaja-lakṣmī, the other has a standing figure and three other symbols). Now, two years before the publication of Allan's *Catalogue*, I published one square coin from Avanti or Ujjain, which is identical to the variety *b* of class 4 of Allan, just noticed. Then it was unique of its kind and I remarked that it 'differs from all the known varieties of the Ujjain coins, in so far as its obverse side bears two human figures, a male and a female one. The dress and attitude of the figures remind us of a Yakṣa and Yakṣinī from Bhilsa (Nos. 190A and 191A in the archaeological collection of the Gwalior State Museum) who are dressed similarly and represented in the same attitude.' I am certain about my description, because the male figure bears on its neck the *graiveyaka* ornament which is so frequently worn by the Yakṣas found at Mathura, Gwalior and other places. It is thus highly probable that on this variety of coins hailing from Ujjain and dateable as early as the 2nd century B.C., if not earlier, we find a comparatively early representation of the Yakṣa and Yakṣiṇī couple.[1] As regards

[1] This Ujjain coin was published by me in *I.H.Q.*, Vol. X, 1934, pp. 723-25 and plate.

the Nāga devices on coins, I may draw the attention of scholars to the cast coins (Nos. 21 and 22) reproduced in plate II of Cunningham's *Coins of Ancient India*. The author remarks about them, " Nos. 21 and 22 are cast coins, on which a snake is the prominent figure. The legend, in Aśoka characters, reads *Kāḍasa*, which may, perhaps, have some reference to the descendants of the serpents called Kadru" (p. 62). Allan distinguishes as many as five varieties of the same coins and describes one of the devices on them as 'undulating line presumably representing a snake'; but from one observation of his with regard to Var. *d* of the same series, *viz.*, 'one side is completely filled by an elephant and the other has the usual snake, taurine and legend,' it is certain that he accepts Cunningham's suggestion (Allan, *Catalogue of the Coins of Ancient India*, pp. xcii—xciii). Nāgas depicted as human beings with snakehoods attached to the back of their heads, a type often found in early and late Indian art have been recognised by Mme. Bazin-Foucher, in the reverse devices of the two Pāñcāla kings, Agnimitra and Bhūmimitra. But I have already shown above that her suggestion has not been universally accepted.

In the above survey of the devices on the early indigenous and foreign coins of India, a few points are to be noted. Some of the symbols appearing on the early punch-marked and cast coins seem undoubtedly based on the religious practices of their issuers. On the local and tribal cast and die-struck coins that are Indian in character, we find the continuation of some devices already met with in the earlier series, with this difference that now their nature is more clearly understandable than in their previous presentation. It should also be borne in mind that the same device could be equally available to the various sectaries of these days to illustrate their own religious faith and a *cakra*, which in one place might definitely represent Buddhist *Dharmacakra*, could

in another setting stand for the emblem of Viṣṇu, which, as we have seen, is based on the Sun god. Coomaraswamy rightly remarks, 'the vocabulary of these symbols was equally available to all sects, Brāhmaṇas, Buddhists and Jains, each employing them in senses of their own' (*HIIA*, p. 44), Cunningham was oblivious about it and thus he invariably described the railing, so frequently to be found on these coins, as 'Buddhist basement railing,' the tree as 'Bodhi tree,' the pillar as 'Buddhist pillar' and so on. In these early cast and die-struck coins, however, we light upon the representations of regular icons which were the objects of worship, and various gods and goddesses make their appearance with somewhat elaborate iconographic features. In the case of the oft-reproduced deity on the coins, *viz.*, Śiva, his various types show that varieties of Śivite icons were being made on which these coin devices were based. Again, such observations of previous scholars that 'the appearance of the figure of Śiva and not a Liṅga as an object of worship on the Kushan coins clearly shows that up to the time of the Kushan king Vāsudeva, Śiva worship had not come to be identified with Liṅga worship' must have to be set aside. D. R. Bhandarkar observes further in his *Carmichael Lectures* (pp. 19-21) that Śiva was certainly being worshipped in his anthropomorphic form up till the 7th century A.D., for 'Śiva recumbent on his mount' figures on the reverse of Śaśāṅka's gold coins. But on the evidence of much earlier coins as well as seals we know for certain that Śiva was also being worshipped in his phallic form. That phallicism was a part of Śiva worship in the time of Huvishka is fully proved by the ithyphallic (*urddhaliṅga*) feature of the unique figure of the god on one of the gold coins of the Kushan emperor already noted. Much earlier evidence in the shape of the uninscribed cast coin (provenance unknown) and the die-struck coins from Ujjain and Taxila has been produced. The Ujjain coins are specially

interesting from this point of view, because some of them portray Śiva in human form while others do so in phallic form, proving that Śiva was being worshipped there in both these forms simultaneously. Another point worth noticing is that though Śiva used to be represented mostly in his bull form in the Gandhāra region (*cf.*, Hesychius' statement quoted above), still by the time the Kushanas had begun their rule, that form was regarded as his mount while his human form was predominant. This is proved by the so many extant coins of the Śaiva Kushan emperor, Wem Kadphises. In the coins of Kanishka and Huvishka, it was not even thought necessary to associate his theriomorphic form with the anthropomorphic one. But with Vāsudeva, the older practice was resumed and thence forward Śiva, in particular aspects of his representations, was never to be dissociated from his mount. In the shrines which had invariably the Liṅga enshrined in the main sanctum, the bull Nandin was always given a prominent place in front of it, in order that he may always look at his lord in the symbolic form (*cf.*, my observations about Śiva and bull on one Ujjain coin). But it should not be forgotten that, by the time of Huvishka, the iconography of Śiva had attained such an elaboration as to include among its many varieties an ithyphallic one, in one of whose hands was placed the *cakra* which was the symbol *par excellence* of the other sectarian god Viṣṇu. While assigning attributes to the deity, the Kushan die-cutters were drawing also upon earlier indigenous mode, for, as we have seen, the staff and water-vessel which are the characteristic ones of Śiva in the Ujjain coins are also used by them. The three heads of Śiva are figured too after the earlier mode and most of the features are based on indigenous mythological details. The plastic execution of this deity as well as the other deities appearing on the Kushan money is no doubt Hellenistic, but the subject was purely Indian. The indigenous Śiva

in human form was unquestionably earlier in appearance, for all scholars assign the Ujjain coins to the third—second centuries B.C., which was at least a century earlier than Śiva's first appearance on the money of one of the foreign rulers of India, *viz.*, Maues. I recognised Śiva for the first time in two coin devices, hitherto unidentified, of this Indo-Scythic ruler. The staff and water-vessel carrying human figure can be traced to some of the punch-marked coins described by Allan (*op. cit.*, Introduction, XXXVI; see Pl. I, fig. 4).[1] Vāsudeva Viṣṇu, though some of his emblems, such as *cakra*, etc., are sometimes reproduced figures, though rarely, on the early indigenous coins: but it must be observed that even in the Gupta period, of which extant Viṣṇu images are known, none of the coins of the devout bhāgavata kings bear on them any effigy of Viṣṇu. The parama bhāgavatas, however, invariably used the Garuḍa emblem on most of their coins, thus showing their cult association. Of the other gods, Brahmaṇya-Kumāra was frequently reproduced on certain coins. The name Brahmaṇya was evidently the base of Subrahmaṇya, in which name this god is generally worshipped in the south. The god had several iconographic types, as the coins show, which also prove that much of the mythology about him was already in existence in the 2nd century A.D. As regards several other consti-

[1] Allan describes a symbol on some punch-marked coins closely related to those which contain the above, as 'a rudely made human figure with the dumb-bell symbols on either side, and thinks that both probably represent the same deity named Kārttikeya. But I have shown that Śiva is the god that is being figured on the other type. As regards the rudely made human figure, it might have been based on the 'golden man in the Agnicayana ceremony; the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* expressly refers to one mode of making him. 'Let him make no arms to this golden man, lest he should cause him to be redundant; for these two spoons are (in lieu of) his arms.' In the coin device, this rudely made figure is without arms and the dumb bell like symbols (spoons ?) are on either side; see Pl. I, fig. 26.

tuents of the Brahmanic pantheon, the Pāñcāla Mitra coins supply us with some useful data. It has rightly been observed that ' the reverses are of special interest to the student of Hindu iconography, as we have nothing similar elsewhere of so early a data ' (Allan). It is regrettable that their usefulness has to a certain extent been minimised by the smallness of the size of some and the imperfect state of preservation of others. The goddess Durgā-Pārvatī is not clearly recognisable in any of the early indigenous coins, though some of the female figures appearing on their reverse and usually identified as Lakṣmī, may represent her. On some coins of Azes I, she may be recognised if we are certain about the identity of the forepart of her lion mount beside her. But, without doubt, she figures on a few coins of Huvishka; Rapson was the first to identify her correctly. In one of the two figures - one male (Śiva) and the other female carrying a lotus flower in her hand—standing side by side on the reverse side of a gold coin of Huvishka in the British Museum collection, the die-cutter definitely puts down her name in four Greek letters by her side, which were correctly read by Rapson as OMMO (Umā). I read the same name by the side of a female figure appearing singly on the reverse of a gold coin of the same Kushan emperor in the collection of the Lahore Museum. But this time she is made to carry a cornucopiae, after the manner of an Ardochso or a Demeter or a Tyche (as represented on the money of the Indo-Greek and the Indo-Scythic rulers), showing clearly how these Indian deities were being presented in their Hellenistic garb. The reverses of some of the coins of Huvishka, thus like the same of the Pāñcāla Mitra coins, are of special interest to the students of Brahmanical iconography.

A line or two about the character of the art manifest in the treatment of the various figures on the coins noticed

above will not be out of place here. In this way one can with some justification appraise indirectly the standard of art reached by the artist in different localities and different periods. But a word of caution is necessary here. The early punch-marked coins which were current throughout India from c. 6th or 7th century B.C. to as late as the 1st or 2nd century A.D. do little justice to the standard of plastic art, however imperfect, that might have been reached by the indigenous artists before the Maurya period and afterwards. Sir John Marshall, after comparing the monetary technique of the Indians as manifest in the above coins with the same of another Indian ruler Saubhūtī (Gr. form 'Sophytes') by name, who was a contemporary of Alexander and who adopted Greek style in his money, observes, 'The rudimentary character of Indian art at this period is well exemplified by the current indigenous coins known commonly as punch-marked, which are singularly crude and ugly, neither their form which is unsymmetrical, nor the symbols which are stamped almost indiscriminately upon their surface, having any pretensions to artistic merit" (*A Guide to Taxila*, 2nd Edition, p. 24). This observation is true to a certain point. Long after the practice of issuing this class of coins was discontinued, coins were being issued in different localities of India, even up till modern times, that are singularly reminiscent of the former. Mention may only be made here of the crude copper pieces, usually known as *dhiṃglā* which were being manufactured by the goldsmiths of Umarda, under the orders of the Udaypur State, to supply the State coffers with small token money (W. W. Webb, *The Currencies of Rajputana*, pp. 13-14). If we are to judge the standard of the art of the locality from that manifest in this type of money, then we shall give very little credit to the former. It is a fact that the Indians, especially in their punch-marked coins did

not achieve any success in the matter of monetary technique. But they were not so unsuccessful in their cast coins and the devices which they executed in the negative moulds sometimes show faint traces of modelling. The elephant, bull and other animal devices on the early rectangular cast coins, the figure of Śrī-Lakṣmī on the uninscribed coin of Kausambi, Śiva and the Yakṣa couple on Ujjain coins, none of which is dateable later than the 2nd century B.C., some being much earlier, bear out my statement. There is no justification for tracing any foreign influence on the above types of coins and the execution of these animal or human figures follows the indigenous method as present in the contemporary carvings of the same themes. It must be borne in mind that all these coins are made of molten copper and are mostly in a very imperfect state of preservation, many of their details being obliterated owing to their long circulation millenniums ago. The figure of Śiva-Vispamitra (Viśvāmitra) on the bi-scriptual silver coins of the Audumbara chief Dharaghoṣa, however, show foreign influence, as the over-emphasis of the muscles in the body indicates; it is a fact that these silver pieces were based on the money of the Indo-Greek rulers like Euthydemos II and Apollodotos. The device, however, is taken from Indian mythology. The bi-scriptual silver pieces of the Kuṇiṇdas also, though they contain devices all of which are indigenous to India, are reminiscent of the Greek monetary technique. The figures of Śiva on the Indo-Scythian, Indo-Parthian and Kushan coins, or the very remarkable figure of Viṣṇu on a Kushan seal, justifiably attributed by Cunningham to Huvishka, are undoubtedly Hellenistic in character and there can be very little doubt that they were based on similar plastic forms of the divinities current in the extreme north of India. The deities appearing on the coins of the imperial Gupta rulers illustrate in a very characteristic manner the peculiar features of the Gupta style of sculpture.

CHAPTER V

Deities and their Emblems on Early Indian Seals

The earliest seals in India found in the Indus valley—representations of cult divinities on some of them—several composite forms—Mother-goddess cult in the Indus valley—incidental reference to several types of carved ring-stones discovered in different places of Northern India, like Taxila, Kauśāmbī and Rajghat—evidence of animism supplied by the Indus seals: Tree-worship in two different forms—its later manifestations as evidenced by the early coins, seals and stone reliefs of the historic period—the ideology probably underlying these divinities not Vedic in character but epic and purāṇic—Significance of this fact—comparative paucity of the Maurya, Śuṅga and Kushan seals—numerousness of the Gupta seals and seal-matrices from various sites like Bhita, Basarh and Rajghat—different cult divinities and their emblems depicted on them—very interesting mementos of religious conditions of the period—general observations.

Like the numismatic remains of ancient India, her glyptic ones also throw a flood of light on the mode of representing her divinities in different periods. The innumerable varieties of seals and similar objects that have been unearthed in various parts of northern India and that are dateable from the third or fourth millenium B.C. to the late Gupta period and afterwards contain numerous figures, many of which have been assumed with a great deal of justification to stand for various divinities in their anthropomorphic, theriomorphic and sometimes therio-anthropomorphic forms. On many seals of the Kushan and the Gupta periods, most of these gods and goddesses as also their emblems can be definitely recognised as belonging to one or other of the different religious creeds that were current in the period when they were manufactured. I have already drawn the attention of my readers, in the previous chapter, to the Sirkap bronze seal of Śivarakṣita, that gave me the necessary clue for the identification of Śiva on certain coin-devices of Maues. Mention has also been made by me there

of a few other metal and terracotta seals of the Kushan and the Gupta periods, which supply us with characteristic representations of such Hindu gods as Viṣṇu and Śiva, as well as a few of their emblems. I shall presently draw the attention of my readers to a good many seals of the Gupta period (a few amongst them going back to the Kushan age), that were unearthed at such old sites of India, like Bhita, Basarh and Rajghat etc. But before I begin a systematic study of some of these seals and sealmatrices, from the iconographic point of view, it will be necessary for me to refer briefly to the many hundreds of sealings that were discovered in the course of excavations at the pre-historic Indus-valley sites of Mohenjo-daro and Harappa. Whatever might have been the particular purpose which was served by them, there is little doubt that the figures which very frequently appear on their surface had some connection with the religion that was practised by these prehistoric Indians. The very interesting seal unearthed at Mohenjo-daro, which bears a three-faced horned figure 'seated on a low Indian throne in a typical attitude of *Yoga*, with legs bent double beneath him, heel to heel, and toes turned downwards', has previously been noticed by me. This particular sitting posture clearly corresponds to the Yogic *āsana* known as *kūrmāsana*, where the heels are placed under the gluteals in a manner exactly similar to the mode described above. It will be of interest here to give a fuller account about the device, so carefully studied by Sir John Marshall. The two arms of the figure, which are covered with bangles, are outstretched, and his hands with thumbs to front, rest on his knees ; on his neck and breast is placed a series of necklaces or torques in a manner similar to that of the *graiveyaka* ornament placed on the neck and breast of the Yakṣa figures of the Suṅga and the post-Suṅga period ; the lower limbs seem to be bare and the figure appears to be ithy-phallic ; his head is crowned

by a pair of horns meeting in a tall head-dress. 'To either side of the god are four animals, an elephant and tiger on his proper right, a rhinoceros and buffalo on his left. Beneath the throne are two deer standing with heads regardant and horns turned to the centre.' Just below the trunk of the elephant on the top left corner and above the tiger is the crude outline of a human figure. Marshall is justifiably sure about the divine character of the figure and from its peculiarly distinctive attributes, such as three faces, the Yogic *āsana*, its association with animals, as many as five or six in number, its deer-throne and its horns, he concludes that the figure is a prototype of the historic Śiva-Paśupati.[1] The seal just noticed at length is the same as No. 420 in Mackay's list of seals discovered by him at Mohenjo-daro. Two other seals Nos. 222 and 235 in the same list, contain variant representations of apparently

[1] Marshall, *M. I. C.*, Vol. I, pp. 52-6, pl. XII, 17. We miss, in the assembly of animals by the side of the god, Śiva's bull Nandi. Marshall has very rightly referred to the association of deer with the historic Śiva. As regards the horns, there is no need to assume that they 'took the form of the *triśūla* or trident in later days, and in that guise continued to be a special attribute of Śiva'; for the horns as such were also associated with Śiva, as is evident not only from the epic passage which reads: *Svargādutuṅgamamalaṃ viṣāṇaṃ yatra śūlinaḥ | Svamātmavihitaṃ dṛṣṭvā marttyaḥ śivapuraṃ vrajet* (*Mahābhārata*, Vanaparvva, Ch. 88, V. 8), but also from the fact that the horn as an instrument of music is very often placed in one of the hands of the popular representations of Śiva in Bengal. Hopkins thinks that the horn in the epic passage just quoted may refer to the crest of the image of Śiva (*Epic Mythology* p. 33).

Saletore recently attempted to identify the figure as Agni, in *New Review*, 55, X, 1939; but his grounds of objection to Marshall's view were refuted by Moraes in a subsequent issue of the same Journal. In one of the latest issues of *J.R.A.S.B.*, the problem of the identity of the figure has been thoroughly discussed from the ethnological point of view by A. Aiyappan who has fully endorsed Marshall's identification (Letters, Vol. V, pp. 401-06).

the same deity, though many of the details of the former are omitted there. The figure on seal No. 235 bears only one face, and the head, adorned with a pig-tail hanging down on one side, is shown in profile. The head-dresses of the figures in these two seals (222 & 235) are very similar, 'but surmounted by a plant motif with three branches in the one case and only a single branch on the other.' Mackay remarks about this head-dress, 'The larger figure on seal 420 lacks this spray of foliage, but has instead the fan-shaped ornament commonly associated with the pottery female figurines.' [1]

Marshall refers to two seals found at Mohenjo-daro, which contain figures of a god seated in *yoga* posture, on whose either side kneels a half-human half-animal form of a Nāga with hands uplifted in prayer (*M.I.C.*, III, CXVI, 29 and CXVIII, 11). It is not quite clear, however, from these two seal devices whether the snake-body is attached to the back of the kneeling human votaries of the god; in the early Kushan and subsequent representations of the Nāgas at Mathura and other sites, the whole serpent body and sometimes only its many hoods (one, five or seven) are invariably attached behind the human body (the latter mode

[1] Mackay, *Further Excavations at Mohenjo-daro*, Vol. I, p. 335; Vol. II, pl. LXXXVII, figs. 222 and 235, and pl. XCIV, fig. 20. Mackay is not sure whether there are horns on the head of the figures on seals Nos. 420 and 222; with regard to the latter, he says, 'The horns, if indeed they are horns, are definitely separate from the head; they are, moreover, represented as fastened to the base of the twig.' What has been described as a probable *urddhaliṅga* feature of the figure on No. 420 is absent on the figures on the two other seals, where they appear to be wearing a very short piece of loin-cloth comparable, according to Mackay, with *lyāṅgot*, so frequently worn by yogīs and sannyāsis of India.

A. Aiyappan has made some very useful suggestions with regard to the horned head-dress in *J.R.A.S.B.*, Letters, Vol. V, pp. 101-6.

is also adopted in the Suṅga art of Central India). But on these seals, the technique of showing the Nāgas might have been somewhat similar to the one followed by the Bharhut artist in his presentation of the scene of Elāpatra Nāgarāja's visit to the Buddha; at first Elāpatra is shown in his serpent form, then he is given the human shape with the snake hoods attached behind his head. On these Indus Valley seals, the snakes appear on the far sides while the kneeling human figurines, without any snake hood, on the near sides of the god.

Several other composite figures are also found on these seals; human-faced goat or ram, part goat or ram, part bull and part man, part ram or goat, part bull, and part elephant with human countenance,—all these are figured on seals Nos. 378, 380 and 381. These curious composite forms, so clearly reminiscent of the Pramathas or Gaṇas, the attendants of Śiva, of subsequent days, are apparently also represented in the stone images in the round, illustrated in *M.I.C.*, Vol. III, pl. C, 7 and *a*. Marshall remarks, 'Such stone images can hardly have been other than cult objects intended for worship; on the other hand, the seals which like most of the seals found in the Indus Valley, were almost certainly amulets, were used by the votaries of this curious syncretic form of deity' (*Ibid*, Vol. I., pp. 66-7). Mackay's excavations at Mohenjo-daro brought to light a few more seals with the composite animal figures. The beast on his seals numbering 24 and 494 represents 'a combination of the usual urus-like animal with two other heads, those of an antelope and a short-horned bull.' A possible explanation suggested by him about this unusual device is that 'its owner may have sought the protection or assistance of three separate deities represented by the heads of these three animals.' [1] The same archaeologist also records the

[1] Mackay, *Further Excavations at Mohenjo-daro*, Vol. I, p. 338.

discovery of four seals numbering 411, 450, 521 and 636, from the lower levels, having the curious human-faced composite animal similar to that on Marshall's seals numbering 378, 380 and 381, already noticed by me. In this figure, there is a fusion of as many as three, or possibly four, animals,— forelegs of an ox-like animal, the striped hind-quarters and feet of a tiger, short curved horns of a bull or an antelope and the lolling trunk of an elephant and its pair of tusks. Mackay observes that this composite figure perhaps represented a deity that was worshipped at Mohenjo-daro; he is also inclined to think that 'it was perhaps also portrayed in statue form, as the representation of it on the seals shows it to be wearing garlands with which it is likely that its images were adorned' (*Ibid*, 3 3). These chimaera-like creatures distinctly remind us of the human-faced winged bulls and griffins of the early Buddhist art of Central India, whose prototypes have been found by Grünwedel and others in the similar creatures of imagination portrayed in the early art of Western Asia I may, however, draw the attention of my readers to one very significant observation of Mackay, in this connection. 'Composite animals are, of course, well-known in ancient art in other parts of the world; they are supposed to have been invented, if we may thus term it, in Sumer and Elam, whence came the later "beast art" of Europe. It is not outside the bounds of possibility that the conception of a composite animal originated in India and spread from there gradually to the west by the land route.'[1] Reference may be made here to the terracotta sealing (No. 2409), a three-sided tapering prism,

[1] Mackay, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 33 ; Vol. II, pls. LXXXIII, XCIV, XCV, XCVI, XCVIII. 'These composite animals appear only on the seals of the earlier occupations,' as is evident from the fact that the latter are found only in the lower level, but the fact of their not being found in the upper strata should not be stressed too far.

unearthed from mound F at Harappa. Each of its three faces contains a standing mythical figure, the one of the left face being very interesting; it is human above the waist and bovine below. The figures on the right and middle faces also seem to be human above and animal below (Vats, *Excavations at Harappa* p. 44). I have already mentioned the name of the Gaṅas and the Pramathas, while referring to the human-faced animal forms. The Garuḍas, Gandharvas, Kinnaras, Kumbhāṇḍas and others of the epic and purāṇic literature and ancient and mediaeval Indian art of the historic period should also be considered in this connection. The base of some of the above is undoubtedly Vedic in character (Garuḍa-Garutman, Sun conceived as a bird in the *Ṛgveda*); but who can doubt that these creatures of imagination owed much for their origin and evolution to the dim memories of the remote past in the minds of the Indians of the age of the *Mahābhārata* and of the Purāṇas ?

Some of these seals also contain representations of particular scenes which seem to illustrate mythological stories current among the pre-historic people of this region. These seal devices can very well be compared with the iconographic presentation of various myths associated with different religious creeds of India in the subsequent period. A reference to a few such seal devices will not be out of place here. Vats describes a triangular prism sealing of terracotta with a blurred legendary scene on each side. One face of this seal shows a god in a standing posture; his right arm is profusely decorated, but the left one is indistinct. Its second face shows a tall, stalwart man engaged in fighting a bison which has been firmly caught by the horns. Vats observes, 'The scene may be a representation of Ea-bani fighting a bison in a jungle.' The third face shows to left a human figure, most presumably a deity, seated in a typical attitude of *Yoga* with

another figure to right seated on its haunches.[1] The same author elaborately notices an oblong terracotta sealing which contains legendary scenes on both its faces; the order of depiction on each face probably runs from left to right. It is so very interesting for the purpose of our present study, that I cannot but fully note his description of the devices on both the sides. The obverse shows first of all a man attacking a tiger from a *māchān* (scaffolding) erected on an acacia tree, then the deity seated on a low Indian throne in the well-known Yogic posture ; from behind his head-dress there is a long tassel-like appendage to right, which reminds us of a similar object on the head of a similar figure on some Mohenjo-daro seals described by Mackay (*cf.* Nos. 222 and 235 already noted by me). Of the animals to his right, the one on the enclosure may be a goat, that below the projection, a hare or kid and that above it, an indistinct animal with a long body. The reverse side of it shows from left to right a humpless bull standing by a trident-headed post, with his head bent down a little, then a standing figure, possibly a god, in front of a two-storied structure, followed by three pictograms at the right end. The structure seems to be of wood and is of unusual interest. It ' looks like a combined side elevation and perspective of a double-storied room preceded by a porch—both of open work in front, but seemingly the two-storied room is closed by lattice-work on the rear side and crowned at the corners by somewhat conical finials.' It is not certain what the bifurcated object apparently hanging down from a projection in front of the terrace stands for ; just below it, however, is placed a domical something over the porch.

[1] *Excavations at Harappa*, Vol. I, p. 129; Vol. II, Pl. XCIII, 310. The tentative explanation of the scene depicted on the first face may be correct ; but the scene depicted on the third face is undoubtedly Indian in nature.

Vats remarks, "The structure is probably of a sacred character, and in view of the trident post and bull, which are peculiarly associated with Śiva whose prototype has been found at Mohenjo-daro, the possibility of the standing figure being ultimately identified as another form of the same god may not be ruled out." [1] The scene of what appears to be a tiger-hunt is comparatively familiar in Mohenjo-daro and Harappa. Marshall suggests that 'such seals may have been used as protective amulets against tigers or other jungle animals' (*M.I.C.*, Vol. I, p. 71). This explanation holds good as regards the obverse device, but the reverse one partially reminds me of the reverse device of certain Ujjain coins, which I have reproduced in Pl. I, fig. 15; the animals are no doubt absent, but here too is some sort of a structure with conical projections (?), as well as a trident-headed post which, however, is held by the right hand of the standing figure on the right side (in the previous chapter, I have suggested the possibility of this figure representing the votary; it may as well be the cult deity in his human form). As regards 'the domical object over the porch' on the Harappa seal, it might be the same as the realistic phallus which appears on the obverse of the same types of coins (*cf.* Pl. I, fig. 14). It may be noted *in passim*, the figure standing by the humpless bull on the Harappa seal seems to hold a long staff in his left hand and a water-vessel like object in his right one, just reminiscent of similar figures on certain punch-marked coins, which I have tentatively identified as Śiva in the previous chapter (*cf.* Pl. I, fig. 4). The devices on the two seals, Nos. 279 and 510 of Mackay's book, are of great interest for our study. The former depicts

[1] M S. Vats, *op. cit.*, pp. 129-30, Pl. XCIII, 303. Both the above terracotta seals were discovered in Mound F, belonging to Stratum No. III.

a buffalo with its head so represented as to show both the rugged horns, below which is placed an apparently partitioned feeding-trough ; in the extreme left corner is shown a man with his foot upon the buffalo's nose, grasping a horn with one hand and with the other about to thrust a spear with a barbed point into the animal's back; there was a pictogram on the top right, only one letter being preserved, the others being broken off. The same scene also appears on two other sealings unearthed at Mohenjo-daro. Mackay, with a great deal of diffidence, remarks that this scene 'may represent a belief not unlike the legend of Dundubhi, the buffalo demon, whom Śiva and other gods attacked with tridents; though their weapons proved powerless against the animal, they eventually killed it by means of incantations.' [1] The parallelism noticed by Mackay is no doubt very interesting ; I remember one passage of the *Durgā-saptaśatī*, which, while describing the fight between the goddess Durgā and the evil incarnate in the shape of the buffalodemon, says, '*sāruḍhī taṃ mahāsuraṃ pādenākrāmya kaṇṭhe ca śūlenainamatāḍayat*' *i.e.*, '(the goddess appearing) to climb upon the great demon, attacked him with her leg and struck at his neck with her *śūla* (it may be a trident or a barbed spear). The purāṇic description of this fight may also be a close parallel, but the human figure in Mohenjo-daro seals seems to be a male one and the different forms of plastic representations of Durgā as *Mahiṣamarddinī* have

[1] Mackay, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 936; Vol. II, Pl. LXXXVIII, fig. 279, Pls. XCI, 4*a*, XCII, 11*b*. He quotes, as his authority for the Dundubhi legend, Oppert's *Oriental* (evidently a misprint for *Original*) *Inhabitants of India*, pp. 473-74. In the 9th chapter of the Avantīkṣetra-māhātmyam of the Āvantya-Khaṇḍam of the *Skandapurāṇa*, we find the story of the buffalo-demon named Hālāhala being killed by the Gaṇas of Śiva as well as the other gods assembled in the Rudrakṣetra near Avantī.

very little similarity to the scene on the Indus seals, just described. Mackay's seal No. 510 shows a buffalo which seems to have attacked a number of people who are lying on the ground in every conceivable position. Without excluding the possibility of its depicting 'an episode that actually occurred to some of the inhabitants of Mohenjo-daro,' Mackay observes, 'we may perhaps see in this scene a god, or the emblem of a god, attacking his enemies, a parallel to the well-known scene on the slate palettes of the First Dynasty of Egypt, where the king himself in his attribute "Strong Bull" gores a prostrate enemy.' [1]

It is time now to refer to a few more early Indus-Valley seals and incidentally to other objects of a somewhat similar nature, that seems to prove the existence of the Mother-goddess cult among the people of Mohenjo-daro and Harappa. Marshall has observed that though there is no direct proof about the existence of Śāktism in this region, yet there is enough indirect evidence in the shape of phalli, baetylic stones and ring-stones. The same author drew the attention of scholars to numbers of female figurines of terracotta, etc., that were discovered not only in this part of India but also from Baluchistan, though the ones discovered in the latter place differ from those of the Indus Valley, in that they are not full-length images.[2] The great majority of these female figurines appear as 'a standing and almost nude female, wearing a band or girdle about her loins with elaborate head-dress and collar, and occasionally with ornamental cheek cones and a long necklace.' Mackay remarks (*ibid*, Vol. I, p. 265), 'In fact, what are generally regarded as images of an Earth or

[1] Mackay, *op.cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 336 7; Vol. II, plate XCVI, fig. 510.

[2] Marshall, *M.I.C*, Vol. I, p. 48 ff. Marshall refers to the wide belt of the ancient world from the Indus to the Nile, in which these figurines have been found; he is sure that they are 'effigies of the great Mother-Goddess or of one or other of her local manifestations.'

Mother-goddess are practically always nude, save for quantities of jewellery, a wide girdle and their remarkable head-dress.' Now, an oblong terracotta seal with scenes depicted on both sides, that was unearthed at Harappa, most probably contains a representation of the same goddess with some additional traits. The right side of the obverse face is occupied by a nude female figure shown upside down with legs wide apart, and 'with a plant issuing from her womb'; her arms are shown in the same position in which those of the proto-type of Śiva-Paśupati are shown; at the left side of the same are shown a pair of tigers standing facing each other (these are regarded by Marshall as two genii, animal ministrants of the deity). The left part of the reverse side of this seal contains two human figures, one male and the other female; the latter seated, with her hair dishevelled, raises her hands in supplication to the male who stands in front of her in a threatening attitude with a shield-like thing and a sickle-shaped object in his left and right hands respectively. Marshall suggests that the ' scene is intended to portray a human sacrifice connected with the Earth Goddess depicted on the other side, with whom we must also associate the two genii. This striking and unique representation of the goddess with a plant issuing from her womb is compared by Marshall with a terracotta relief of the early Gupta age from Bhita on which the goddess is shown with her legs in much the same position, but with a lotus issuing from her neck instead of from her womb.[1] One of the most interesting

[1] Marshall, *M. I. C.*, Vol. I, p. 54, pl. XII, fig. 12. M. S. Vats, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 42, Vol. II, pl. XCIII, 304. Marshall after comparing the two animal " genii " on this sealing with those hailing from the Aegean area and Mesopotamia, remarks, ' That the conception of these animal genii arose independently in Greece, Mesopotamia and India is hardly conceivable, but whether it originated in the East or West has yet to be determined.'

seals bearing the representation of a goddess, this time a tree-goddess or spirit, was discovered at Mohenjo-daro. The tree, an *aśvattha* as recognisable from its leaves shown on the top right corner, is represented by its two branches only springing from a circle on the ground ; between the two branches stands the nude deity having long hair, a pair of horns with probably a spring of foliage in between, or *triśūla* horns, and armlets ; in front of the tree appears a half-kneeling worshipper, also with long hair, armlets and horns (between a pair of these a leaf-spray or plume is recognisable here), behind whom stands a goat with human face ; in the register below are seven ministrants or votaries, each dressed in short kilt and wearing long pig tails with a spray of leaves or a feather in the hair ; beyond the foot of the tree on the right is a square partitioned receptacle very similar in conception to the pottery dishes found in Mohenjo-daro. Marshall is of opinion that the whole scene represents the epiphany of the tree-goddess, taking the composite human-headed animal figure as a protecting local divinity of a minor type accompanying the suppliant into the presence of the tree-goddess.[1]

Though the objects now to be noted by me do not really fall in the category of sealings, still I feel a brief reference to them will be of some use to us in our present study. A large number of ring-stones, ranging from half an inch to nearly four feet in diameter, have been found in the course of excavations at Mohenjo-daro and Harappa ; the larger ones are made of stone, while the smaller ones

[1] Marshall, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 63-5, pl. XII, fig. 18. Mackay, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 337-8; Vol. II, pl. XCIV, fig. 430, pl. XCIX, A. The goddess standing between the branches of the tree is reminiscent of one of the variants of the goddess Lakṣmī, in which she is made to stand on the pericarp of a lotus flower, with lotus flowers and leaves on long stalks spreading on her either side; *cf. H. I. I. A.*, pl. XIV, fig. 52.

are of different materials such as stone, faience, shell, or imitation carnelian. 'The most typical of them have their upper and lower surfaces undulating; in others, the lower surface is flat, and the top takes a quatrefoil form' (Marshall). Two explanations were suggested by scholars with regard to the nature of these objects; according to some, the larger ones of them served as architectural members, while according to others they were stone money. But Marshall has raised very reasonable objections to both these suggestions and his own interpretation that these are to be regarded as representations of *Yoni*, the female organ of generation, as symbolising motherhood and fertility still appears to be the correct one. When they are compared to the numbers of phalli,—they are so realistic that they cannot be explained in any other way (*cf.* the realism manifest in the earliest stonephalli of the historic period discovered at Gudimallam, Mathura and other places),—that have been discovered in the same region, there remains very little doubt about the truth of Marshall's explanation. But it must be borne in mind that in the Indus Valley both the phalli and the *yoni* stones appear to have served the purpose of cult objects separately, as seems to have also been the case with the early phalli and the *yoni* stones of subsequent days. In fact, the *liṅgam* in *arghya* (or *yoni*) design is comparatively late in appearance and even then in the conventional Śivaliṅgas the spout like projection from which the *pūjābhāga* of the Śivaliṅga rises upward and which is taken by the uninitiated as symbolising *yoni*, is really a *nāla* or drain for the easy outflow of the volume of water usually poured on the top of the emblem by the numerous devotees of the god.[1] These phalli and the ring

[1] The elaborate pedestal, however, in the conventional Śivaliṅgas of the subsequent period were definitely regarded as illustrating the female principle as the iconographic texts of a comparatively late date, as well as many late Sanskrit works fully prove. It must

stones, thus appear to have separately symbolised the principles of virility and fecundity, both of which are highly esteemed by all men in all ages. Marshall has referred to his own discovery of several curious stone discs, three of which were unearthed from the Bhir Mound at Taxila, one from inside the structures uncovered near the foot of Hathial (Taxila) and one at Kosam. A fragment of a similar object was recently found in course of excavation at Rajghat near Benares. The Hathial one is described by Marshall, thus, ' It is of polished sandstone $3\frac{1}{4}''$ in diameter, adorned on the upper surface with concentric bands of cross and cable patterns and with four nude female figures alternating with honey-suckle designs engraved in relief around the central hole ' (*A.S.I.A.R.*, 1927-28, p. 66). It will be of interest now to compare with the above Taxila discs a partially broken reddish steatite circular disc about $2\frac{1}{2}''$ in diameter, found at Rajghat, which contain on the outer side of its top surface a very well-carved decorative design. The decoration consists of a palm tree with a horse by its side, beyond which is a female figure holding a bird in her outstretched right hand (there is an indistinct object beneath her right hand and a taurine near her left shoulder); then follow in successive orders—a long-eared and short-tailed animal, a crane, the goddess again with her hands this time stretched downwards, some object which is broken, palm-tree again, a bird, a small circular disc, the goddess again with the circular disc near her left shoulders, then a winged mythical animal and lastly a crane with a crab-like object near its legs. The goddess is thrice repeated with the various accessory figures noted above in between her three representations. But one thing to be noted here is that

be noted however, that these elaborate pedestals are usually absent in the phallic emblems of earlier date.

unlike the Taxila disc just described, the device appears here on the top surface instead of on the side of the central depression of the disc, and the hole is not there; the surface near the central hole of this one is filled with a beautiful scroll design. The carving is so very beautifully executed on this piece which is in the collection of the Bharat Kala Bhavan, Museum, that it can justifiably be assigned to the same age to which the Taxila, Kosam and other discs belong. The same museum has in its collection a fragment of a red steatite disc unearthed in course of excavations at Rajghat near Benares, which is more similar to the Taxila disc. This has a hole through the centre, around which as in the Taxila ones are engraved two nude female figures with their hands stretched downwards with probably a honey-suckle in between them; on the flat surface of the disc between cable designs are two monkey-like animals holding a creeper(?) with a lizard (or an alligator) in between them; there is a partially defaced inscription in early Brāhmī script on its rim, which is illegible. Another partly broken similar disc hailing from Kosam, which has been acquired by the aforesaid Museum at Benares, contains a much damaged though partially legible inscription in Aśokan Brāhmī. The inscription reads,.....*ma ṃ tha ṃ ka bhā dā ma tha lo ga tara śa a ga la*(?) *na*(*ni*?) *ka ye la ṃ ca le*.....; it is unfortunate that no sense can be made of it. The ring-stone has two bands of decoration cut in relief on one face around the hole. On one band can be seen a row of alligators below a twisted rope, and on the second band which extends into the hole are carved the nude goddess between three-pronged trees. The inscription noted above appears on the side of the disc. All the above discs can justifiably be regarded as cult objects comparable with the pre-historic ring stones of the Indus Valley on the one hand and the *cakras* and the *yantras* of the Śāktas, the *Viṣṇupaṭṭas* of the Vaiṣṇavas and the *āyāgapaṭas* of the

Jainas on the other. But their ideological association with the former, *viz.*, the *cakras* and the *yantras* of the latter day Śākta cult appears to be closer.[1] Marshall observes about the Taxila discs, ' In these ring-stones, which are quite small and used perhaps as exvoto offerings, nude figures of a goddess of fertility are significantly engraved with consummate skill and care—inside the central hole, thus indicating in a manner that can hardly be mistaken the connection between them and the female principle.' [2]

The pre-historic people of the Indus Valley appear to have been great believers in animism also, as is proved by a good many seals discovered at Mohenjo-daro and Harappa. The worship of trees or the tree-spirits is the characteristic manifestation of animistic belief. I have already referred to a seal which seems to unite in its device the worship of the female principle as well as that of the tree-spirit, where the epiphany of the female deity in the tree is

[1] The stone discs in the Bhārat Kalā Bhavan, noted above have not yet been published. Rai Shahib Krishnadas, the Curator of the Museum, kindly gave me permission to utilise them for my book. I may here refer to one cylindrical amulet like object of red steatite about 1¼″ in length and ½″ in breadth, found at Rajghat, which is somewhat similar to a few cylindrical seals (amulets?) unearthed at Mohenjo-daro. There are three shallow incuse bands, two on either side and one in the middle, the latter dividing the small cylinder in two fairly equal sections; in one of them are found, in order, a taurine, a long-eared and short-tailed animal, a two-humped camel and a lion, while the other section bears in succession a taurine, a horse, the long-eared and short-tailed animal and an elephant.

[2] *M.I.C.*, Vol. I, pp. 62-3. In the fn. No. 1 on page 63, he says, ' That ring-stones of this type had a wide vogue in ancient India is shown by the discovery of another specimen at Sahet-Mahet (ancient Srāvastī) in the U.P., and by the fact that they were copied by the Buddhists, though with this difference that the nude figures of the goddess were eliminated.'

portrayed in a half realistic, half conventional manner. Many seals in the Indus Valley sites show the presence of two different forms of tree-worship among the people of the locality: 'One in which the tree itself is worshipped in its natural form, the other in which the tree spirit is personified and endowed with human shape and human attributes.' On several sealings at Harappa (Nos. 16, 20, 21, 25, 26, *M.I.C.*, Pl. XII), various sacred trees are represented, which the artists have attempted to differentiate one from another. A few of these trees appear to be enclosed by walls or railings such as commonly surround the base of the sacred trees (*vṛkṣacaityas*) as depicted in the later reliefs of the historic period. In the fourth chapter of my book, I have drawn the attention of my readers to one of the commonest devices on the early indigenous coins of India—which is the 'tree within railing.' These enclosed trees on the Indus seals can very well be compared with the above and can justifiably be taken as distant prototypes of the *vṛkṣacaityas* and the *sthalavṛkṣas* represented in the latter. The terracotta seal (No. 2410) found at Harappa has as its obverse device 'a deity wearing a kilt or short tunic and a three-pointed head-dress (or *triśūla* horns ?), standing under an ornamental arch, which appears to be made of the bent bough of a pipal tree. The lower ends of this bough are rounded up to form loops, each enclosing a star. The head of the deity is turned a little towards the right and on both arms he wears a number of armlets' (Vats, *ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 43). The device on one of the sides of a three-sided terracotta prism discovered at Mohenjo-daro, can be described thus: On the extreme right a horned figure with arms adorned with bracelets, standing between two pipal trees; on its left, a sacred goat decorated with garlands, recalling the scene explained by Marshall as the epiphany of the tree-goddess; beyond it a kneeling horned

deity, apparently a goddess (*cf.* the long pig-tail), holding out both of its hands, a small offering table with something like a bird on it being shown on the extreme left (Mackay, *ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 351; Vol. II, Pl. LXXXII, Nos. 1 and 2). It is no doubt impossible for us at the present state of our knowledge to be sure about the exact significance of this scene, but we shall not be far wrong if we find in it also the representation of a mythology associated with a tree-spirit. The scene on an amulet noticed by Mackay (*ibid.*, pp. 354-55, Pl. XC, 23*a* and *b*) may be referred to in this connection. Two men are shown, each carrying a tree torn from the ground, with their roots clearly visible; perhaps, the men are about to transplant the trees for the abode of a spirit who is depicted in between the tree-carrying figures; the leafy nature of the arm of this spirit really represents the armlets of the divinity. Mackay has cited an interesting parallel to this scene in that of the purāṇic story of the Yamalārjjuna trees which were uprooted by the child Kṛṣṇa, thus releasing the two spirits confined in them. We find its iconographic presentation in reliefs of the late Gupta period and afterwards and it has been suggested by Mackay that it owed its origin to a similar myth of a much earlier date.[1]

The above survey of a few representative seals of the Indus Valley has partially acquainted us with the nature of the beliefs and practices of the pre-historic people of India in that region. Several conclusions have been drawn about the iconographic presentation of some of

[1] The two *Arjjuna* trees were really the two sons of the Yakṣa king Kubera, *viz.*, Maṇigrīva and Nala-Kubera, who were cursed by Nārada to be changed into trees. Kṛṣṇa released them from this accursed existence by uprooting the trees. The scene on the Mohenjodaro amulet is somewhat different from its purāṇic counterpart, inasmuch as, in the former, two persons instead of one are shown with the uprooted trees in their hands.

their gods and goddesses, after a careful study of the devices appearing on the seals and amulets; the nature of these conclusions, however, is still a tentative one to a certain extent. As I have said in the second chapter, the unravelling of the mystery of the script and language of the seals, if it is ever unravelled at all, will shed more definite light on the problem.[1] Marshall makes this interesting remark about the representation of the Indus Valley divinities of the remote past, 'the people of Mohenjo-daro had not only reached the stage of anthropomorphising their deities, but were worshipping them in that form as well as in the aniconic'; for, the highly conventionalized type of the image of what he justifiably describes as the prototype of Śiva-Paśupati, its stylized details and the fact that the kindred image portrayed on the faience sealing is being worshipped by the Nāgas clearly point to its being '*a copy of a cult idol.*'[2] The decoration (*cf.* the armlets, head-dress, etc.), the sitting posture, the mode of showing the hands, the horns on the head, etc., appear also in other figures, some of which may depict the different aspects of the same god. The nude goddess, either in association with a tree or not, with some of the above characteristics, is shown as an object of veneration. Many composite human and animal figures found on the seals and amulets very probably stand for divinities in their theriomorphic or therioanthropomorphic forms, though many others are to be regarded as mere accessories. Most, if not all, of the above types of figures appear to have been based on actual icons of cult gods which were

[1] In the second chapter of my book, I have hesitated to endorse fully the conclusions of Marshall, Mackay and Chanda. But since I wrote those lines, I went to Harappa and studied the seals and other antiquities on the spot. I have now much less hesitation in accepting many of their findings.

[2] *M.I.C.*, Vol. I, p. 56. *Italics are mine.*

being worshipped by the people in those days. But, what is most interesting in this connection is the fact that the ideology which seems to underlie many of the above divinities does not correspond to the same at the root of such Vedic deities as Indra, Mitra, Agni, Varuṇa and others. It is true we cannot describe the former as so many Hindu divinities and their representations as those of many Hindu icons, yet it can be suggested that they contributed a great deal towards the formation of the concepts underlying some of the later Hindu gods. The apparent reproductions of mythical scenes on these prehistoric objects might also have contained the germs of different mythologies of the later period. It is not suggested, however, that the myths current about many of the Vedic gods and the anthropomorphic conceptions underlying them had nothing to do with the shaping and development of a good many of their epic and purāṇic counterparts. I have already hinted about the great part which the former had to play in formulating the various god-concepts of the later times; this will also be fully demonstrated in my work on the images of the various Hindu gods and goddesses. But what I want to emphasise here is that the Vedic traits of the latter, especially in the case of some of the sectarian divinities, were really superimposed on their primitive prehistoric core. As the Vedic period was far nearer to the epic and purāṇic times and as copious literary data of the former age are available to us, we can trace out the analogies and influences with more certainty. Further researches and excavations in various old sites of India, let us hope, will supply us with more clues and links of the intervening period, that are now missing, which will enable us to connect the Indus Valley evidence with the epic and the purāṇic data with more definitenesss. Even the changes in the Vedic beliefs and practices of a date later than that of the early Ṛgvedic hymns, as has been suggested by me

in the previous sections of this book, were brought about by the rites and customs of these pre-historic people of India.

Seals and seal matrices with devices of an iconographic character on their surface dateable in the Maurya or the Suṅga period are very rare. The small stone discs with the figures of the Mother-Goddess (Earth Goddess?) carved around their central hole have already been mentioned by me in connection with the ring-stones discovered in the sites of the Indus Valley; but they cannot be described as so many seals. Numerous terracotta seals, however, with Hindu divinities and their emblems on them, have been unearthed in two of the old sites in northern India, *viz.*, Basarh and Bhita, which are of great archaeological interest; these mostly belong to the early and late Gupta period, a few being dateable still earlier. To these will have to be added the recent find of terracotta seals of the Kushan and Gupta periods at Rajghat near Benares (a few in this lot even go back to the Suṅga date, though they do not bear any iconographic device); some of them bear representations of deities and their emblems. Many terracotta seals were also unearthed at Nalanda, some of which are of unique interest from iconographic point of view; they, however, mostly date from the late Gupta period and afterwards. Different purposes were served by these seals, some being attached with a string to letter tablets; others were royal, official or mercantile guild tokens meant for the use of their servants and followers; a few of them again were undoubtedly manufactured for the use of the heads of religious establishments and their retainers while a vast number were also the sealings of private individuals. It has been suggested that as a large number of such seals (over 700) were discovered in one single spot while excavating Basarh, it is likely that the seal matrices were manufactured there; so many impressions—sometimes double, triple, and multiple on a single lump of clay—denoted that the former were being

tested in that way. The finished seals were usually made of clay, perhaps prepared according to one of the processes to be mentioned in connection with the manufacture of terracotta images in the next chapter. Most of them were burnt after they had received the impressions from the particular seal matrices, some being very lightly burnt, while a few others were merely sun-burnt. Many of the above varieties of seals bear the figures of several Brahmanical gods and their emblems; the former are comparatively rare, the latter being most numerous. Sometimes, only the name of the cult-deity accompanied with some auspicious symbol is engraved, without any impression of his iconic figure or emblems, while at other times different emblems in varieties of combinations make their appearance. In many cases, there is a characteristic connection between the name of the issuer and the deity or his emblem or emblems reproduced on the seals, as we find on some coins of the Pāñcāla series. One thing, however, is quite evident from our study of representative specimens from Bhita and Basarh, that even when the Brahmanical cult-gods were being iconically represented, they were comparatively infrequently used in the terracotta seals, where copious use was made of the varieties of their emblems. Again, it is highly probable that an emblem which, in its association with others, would belong to one particular cult, may, when depicted singly, be connected with another. Thus the conch-shell with wheel and other emblems is undoubtedly Vaiṣṇava in character, but when appearing alone may sometimes denote the Śaṅkhanidhi of Kubera, a very appropriate symbol for merchant guilds and bankers.

Śiva or his emblems are found depicted on the seals above in various ways. I have already referred to the representation of him in his *liṅga* from between two trees with the legend '*pādapeśvara*' in the field in Gupta characters, which is in the collection of Babu Dhir Sing Nahar of Calcutta. A

pointed oval seal was discovered by T. Bloch at Basarh, which bears on it a Śivaliṅga with a trident-battleaxe symbol (Bloch simply says *triśūla*, but the combined *triśūla-paraśu* is quite clear from his plate), the legend in exergue below being *Āmrātakeśvara*, meaning the lord of Āmrātaka (Pl. X, Fig. 6). Now Āmrātaka is the name of a mountain; Bloch draws our attention to the eight Guhya liṅgas mentioned in the *Matsya Purāṇa*, *viz.*, Hariścandra, Āmrātakeśvara, Jaleśvara, Śrīparvata, Mahālaya, Kṛmicaṇḍeśvara, Kedāra and Mahābhairava, which, according to him, were situated in Avimukta, *i.e.*, Benares (*A.S.I.A.R.*, 1903-04, p. 110, No. 30, Pl. XL, 2). Bloch remarks about it: 'The letter to which it was attached must have been sent by the custodians of the temple of Āmrātakeśvara.' The oval seal (No. 39) in the same series (*ibid.*, p. 111) simply bears the legend *Nama Paśupateḥ*. The square seal matrix (No. 574) discovered by D. B. Spooner at the same site (Basarh) in 1913-14, and reproduced by him in the *Annual Report* of the year (Pl. XLIX) bears three symbols on the top section and the legend *Bañjulaka* in early Gupta characters in the lower one, the sections being separated by two closely parallel horizontal lines. Of the three symbols, the middle one is a *triśūla* with a short handle, that on the right 'resembling in shape the early Brāhmī character for *dhu*' is nothing but a longish water-vessel as seen in the hands of Śiva appearing on the coins of Kanishka and Huvishka and the other on the left 'looking like *ra*' is but a short staff as is placed in one hand of the same deity on some of Huvishka's coins. So, what we have here is really the three attributes in the hands of Śiva. A fragmentary sealing or seal impression of the early Gupta period found by Spooner at Basarh (*ibid.*, pp. 121, 150, Pl. L, No. 672) shows 'a very roughly sketched bullock running to right with the crescent moon above' (the suggested reading *Māradatta* cannot be supported if one refers to the plate and I can suggest no other reading as the

plate is too indistinct); this is, of course, nothing but Śiva with crescent moon (Śaśāṅkaśekhara) in his theriomorphic form. The unique seal impression (*ibid*, p. 129, No. 84, Pl. XLVI) shows on the upper edge of its slightly concave surface a small conventional *śaṅkha* in outline and a very good humped bull recumbent to left in the middle of the field; the legend is *Rudradevasya*. The former may have no Viṣṇuite association here and may simply stand for the '*Śaṅkhanidhi*.' The humped bull appears on several other seals from Spooner's find at Basarh, the name of the owner, such as Rudrarakṣita, etc., in them (a good many of them are inscribed) showing its cult connection; on some there is a globular object placed between the horns of the animal, which shows, according to some scholars, Sassanian influence. But one very fine large temple seal in Spooner's list (*ibid.*, p. 142, No. 369, with one duplicate, Pl. XLVIII) requires notice here, for it bears five interesting emblems in a row on its top section; Spooner describes them as '(1) a tall vase with radiating rays or flower-stalks; (2) something that looks like a tall and slender tree, such as a poplar, not that I suppose it is a poplar in reality; (3) the central figure, which has the outline of a stouter tree with spreading base; (4) a battleaxe to left surmounted by a trident; (5) a *kalasa* with rays or flower-stalks.' The legend in Gupta characters reads *Aramikiśvarasya, i.e.*, (seal of the temple) of Aramikiśvara. The seal is undoubtedly Śaiva in character as the inscription on it shows, and of the five emblems, the trident-axe particularly belongs to this cult; the vase, represented twice, one on each end, in different forms, may stand for *maṅgalaghaṭa* with twigs on both or on one of them—the slender one on the left side may be a variant of an water-vessel as is sometimes placed in the hands of Śiva on Kushan coins; the central device may represent, though in a schematic way, the somewhat realistic *liṅga* on a spread base, while the one to its immediate proper

right is nothing but a *śakti* (spear) with a long flat blade. There is thus, not much difficulty to define the five objects, as Spooner thinks; an interesting detail which has been missed by him is that all these five emblems are placed on separate pedestals on 'the ribbon-like horizontal band a little below the true centre,' thus indicating their sacred character. The fine seal No 764 (*ibid.*, p. 152, Pl. L) contains a device which has been described by Spooner as follows—'a tall female figure standing facing, with the upper part of the body bent considerably to the proper left, left hand on hip; right extended toward the right as in the *varadamudrā*. The figure is seemingly nude, but there are draperies floating to left and right from the level of the waist, and some garland or drapery pendent in front, as though suspended from a girdle around the waist;.....the most curious feature of all is the head-dress which she wears, like a single high horn with streamer floating to the (proper) left' I had to quote the above description at some length, for the correct understanding of the iconography of the figure; the seal is very imperfectly reproduced in the plate, a reference to which will enable us to add some features unnoticed by Spooner and tentatively explain their nature. The left breast of the figure is abnormally large in proportion to the right one, which holds a staff-like object in its right hand; 'the curious head-dress like a single high horn' is most probably nothing but the longish coil of *jaṭā* shown on the heads of Śiva figures, and it should be noted, it is deliberately placed on one,—*i.e.*, the right—side of the head; lastly, there seem to be traces of the *ūrdhaliṅga* feature on the front part of the waist. Now, if these observations of mine are accepted, there can be no hesitation about the identity of the figure; it thus represents the Arddhanārīśvara aspect of Śiva, in which the left half is that of Umā, and the right that of the god himself. The staff in the right hand, the longish coil of *jaṭā* placed on the right side of the head,

the prominence given to the left breast (the right breast is much smaller than the left one and belongs to a male figure) and the probable *ūrddhaliṅga* feature—all these go to support the suggestion. The legend could not be fully read by Spooner and its hazy reproduction does not help us to improve the reading which is...*tipurakṣaṣaṣṭidattaḥ*. It may be observed here that this is one of the earliest representations of the Arddhanārīśvara aspect of Śiva in art; I have already drawn attention to Bardasanes' mention of it. V. S. Agravala draws our attention to a miniature relief depicting the same theme, which belongs to the Kushan period; it is in the collection of the late Pandit Radhakrishna of Mathurā (*J.I.S.O.A.*, 1937, p. 124, Pl. XLIV, 2). The concave impress of a seal (No. 422, *ibid.*, p. 143, Pl. XLVIII) has a battleaxe, with a long handle laid lengthwise of the seal, as its device. The long legend in very small characters is not legible, but seems to end in *dattasya*. The battle-axe is a Śaiva emblem and it is very frequently found in Śiva images of later period (cf. *Paraśumṛgavarābhayahastam*); the Śiva figure of the Guḍimallam liṅga, one of the earliest sculptures of Śiva, carries in one of its two hands a battle-axe.

Of the interesting religious seals unearthed by Sir John Marshall at Bhita, a good many show undoubted Śaiva features; not only various Śaivic emblems like the *liṅga*, the trident-axe, the *nandipāda* and the bull (the bull in some instances has a sphere of disc between horns as appearing on Śātavāhana coins) are clearly recognisable on them as well as on those of the officials, localities and private individuals, but also, there appear human representations of Śiva, though in extremely rare instances. Some of the religious seals bear the different appellations of Śiva such as Kāleśvara, Kālañjara-bhaṭṭāraka, Bhadreśvara, Maheśvara (?) and Nandī—the last the name of his mount. One of the oval seals in Marshall's list (*A.S.I.A.R.*, 1911-12, p. 47,

Pl. XVIII, No. 14) has a trident-axe flanked by a diagram of dots, realy a hill symbol, and an unidentified emblem on its left; the legend in eastern Gupta characters is *Kāleśvara priyatām* ('May Kāleśvara be pleased'). Marshall observes that Kāleśvara is the name of a Śivaliṅga according to *Skanda Purāṇa*, and this tablet would seem to have been presented as an offering at some shrine of Śiva at Bhita. The seal next in the list is also Śaiva in nature; it bears a realistic Śivaliṅga with an umbrella on one side and a trident on the other. The liṅga is placed on a hill in the form of a well-arranged pile of round balls, below which is a waved line probably standing for a river; the legend in northern Gupta characters is *Kālañjara-bhaṭṭārakasya*, *i.e.*, 'of the lord of Kālañjara.' Kālañjara, according to Cunningham, is the name of a hill in Bundelkhand, the favourite resort of Śaiva tapasvins from very early times (*A.S.R.*, XXI, p. 20 ff.). The manner in which the *Mahābhārata* refers twice to the Śaiva shrines at Kālañjara in its Tīrthayātrā Parvādhyāya of the Vanaparvam definitely proves their importance.[1] This seal was evidently issued from a Śaiva shrine on the Kālañjara hill, though no remains of a temple exist on the hill at present. The seal No. 16 bears also a Śivaliṅga of an extremely realistic nature, placed on

[1] Ch. 85, Verses 56-57: *Atra Kālañjaraṃ nāma parvataṃ lokaviśrutam | Tatra devahrade snātvā gosahasraphalaṃ labhet || Yaḥ snātastarpayet tatra girau Kālañjare nṛpa | Svargaloke mahīyeta naro nāstyatra saṃśayaḥ ||* Thus the waved line below the hill, evidently the Kālañjara hill, is the river or *devahrada* near it where a dip is specially recommended. Again, *cf.* Chapter 87, verse 21—*Hiraṇyavinduḥ kathita girau Kālañjare nṛpa.* In the *Matsya Purāṇa* we find mention of Kāliñjaravana as one of the places very much sacred on account of Śiva's presence; *Kāliñjaravanañcaiva śaṅkukarṇaṃ sthaleśvaram | Etāni ca pavitrāni sānnidhyāddhi mama priye ||* —Ch. 181, V. 27. The Great Epic places the hill somewhere near Prayāga and Citrakūṭa. The Kāliñjaravana of the *Matsya Purāṇa* is evidently the same as Kālañjara of the Epic and of the seals.

a pedestal with the representation of a hill on one side and a trident-axe on the other, having a legend *K(ā)la(ñ)jara* in north-eastern Gupta characters (Pl. X, Fig. 4). But the next seal—that numbered 17—is of unique iconographic interest; it bears a two-armed male figure seated in *lalitāsana* pose on a *pādapīṭha* with uncertain objects in his hands. There appear to be foliage(?) or flames over head and shoulders; the legend in northern characters of the 4th or 5th century A.D. is *Bhadreśvara* (Pl. X, Fig. 5). Marshall says that 'this is the name of the Śivaliṅga of Kalpagrāma (not identified up to date) according to the *Vāmanapurāṇa* (Ch. 46). The male figure may, therefore, be Śiva in the Bhadreśvara aspect.' The figure is unmistakeably Śiva and this shows the simultaneous phallic and human mode of representing the divinity. If the reading of the legend on seal No. 23 as *Bhagavato Ma(h)eśvarasya* is upheld—Marshall says that it is problematic—then the two-armed male figure standing facing with right hand outstretched and left hand on hip, with folds of drapery falling on both sides, may also represent Śiva. The three Bhita seals numbering 26-28 described by Marshall in *A.S.I.A.R.*, 1911-12 (p. 51 and Pl. XVIII) require notice in this connection. The first bears on it a bull standing to left with a crescent under its neck; a woman stands in front, with her right hand outstretched and left hand on hip; a post or a thunderbolt appears behind the bull; bow with arrow and pile of balls (*i.e.*, the symbol for mountain), similar to those in Kolhapur series of the Andhra coins, are shewn in exergue. The same figures are present on the second (No. 27) though in a transposed manner and on the third (28), the latter being much worn. The legend on No. 26 is *Mahārāja Gautamīputrasya Śivameghasya* in characters of the 2nd-3rd century A.D. while the legend in similar characters on No. 27 is *Vāsasu (Vāśiṣṭhi) putrasya Śrī Bhīmasena(sya)*. Marshall

remarks about the first that 'the bull and crescent point to the king's leaning towards Saivism;' the bow and arrow as well as the mountain are also characteristic emblems of Śiva. The female figure on the seals very probably stands for Durgā, the consort of Śiva, her standing posture and the handpose closely coinciding with the same on seal No. 23, where we may find the god himself in human form.[1] The Bhita seal No. 44, of an official, showing bull standing facing, with round object between horns is interesting, because in it the main device is flanked by a wheel in side elevation and 'an uncertain symbol' (Marshall); their sacred character is fully emphasised by the fact that all three are placed on altars. The early Gupta legend in northern characters is *Daṇḍanāyaka-Śrī Śaṅkaradattasya*; the name of the official is no doubt Śaiva, and so the animal form of Śiva in the centre of his seal is quite appropriate; but to this sectary, Viṣṇu is also an object of adoration, for his two emblems (we shall see presently that 'the uncertain symbol' is a Vaiṣṇava one) are allotted honoured, though subordinate, positions in his seal. The devices of particularly Śaiva connection that are to be found on the other seals of officials or of private individuals at Bhita are bull, trident, trident-axe, *nandipāda*, etc.

The unique seals of the late Gupta and early mediaeval period that were discovered at Nalanda contain some figures of Śiva and his emblems, interesting both from the artistic and iconographic point of view.

It will be of interest here to refer to a few terracotta seals of the Gupta and the pre-Gupta periods which

[1] The king Śivamegha of the Bhita seal is very likely identical with the same mentioned in inscription No. II, from Kosam edited by D. R. Sahni in *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. XXVIII, pp. 159-60, noticed also by Sten Konow in *ibid*, Vol. XXIII, pp. 245-8. For the coins of Śivamegha, reference should be made to Motichandra's article on 'A Hoard of Kausambi coins from Fatehpur,' *J.N.S.I.*, II, pp. 95-108.

have been discovered at Rajghat near Benares, and which contain the representations of some Śaivic emblems.[1] A large Gupta seal impression has a bull to left with a combined trident-axe in front; the legend below reads—*Avimukteśvara-bhaṭṭāraka*. A fragmentary circular seal with the legend *Rājño Abhayasya* in the 1st and 2nd century A.D. Brāhmī script bears a bull to the left with the three-arched symbol (a hill) in front; there appear also traces of a *cakra*, a *śankha* and a spear. This shows a combination of Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva emblems. A sealing with the legend *Phalgunimitrasya* in 1st century B.C. Brāhmī script bears a bull standing to left facing a standard (trident?). A circular seal with indistinct legend in Gupta characters bears a Śivaliṅga flanked by a combined trident-axe on left and a double-faced thunderbolt on right. A lenticular sealing with the legend *Yogeśvara* in Gupta script has a serpent device with a trident on one side and a rosary on the other. The circular sealing bearing the legend in early Gupta script, *Śrī devadeva svāmi* (*naḥ*), is of unique interest, for it undoubtedly shows one mode of representing Śiva in human form, the *devadevasvāmī* of the inscription. The god stands facing on an elaborate pedestal with outstretched arms holding a wreath (or a noose?) in right and flask in left hands, a serpent being shown to his left. One can compare this variety of Śiva figure with the Bhadreśvara one on the Bhita seal noticed above. The device on another seal with legend *Śrī-Avi(mu)kteśvara* in Gupta script can be usefully compared with the large Gupta seal noticed first in this series (one with the legend *Avimukteśvara-bhaṭṭāraka*).

[1] These seals have not yet been published and I am much indebted for this notice of mine to the courtesy and kindness of Rai Shahib Krishnadas, the Curator of the Benares Bharat Kalabhavan, and his assistant Mr. Vijaykrishna; I studied the seals on the spot and checked the reading of the legends and the description given in the museum records.

Here also, the bull is seated to left, but it is flanked by a trident to the left and a *tridaṇḍi* to the right. A circular seal of black clay shows an *aṅkuśa* (elephant-goad) on a pedestal with the legend *Sauridharmmaḥ* in Gupta characters below. A circular seal has the device of a bull seated to left on pedestal; the legend below in the Brāhmī script of the Suṅga period reads *Gopasenasa*. Another circular black clay seal impression shows a bull standing to left with a *yūpa* standard in front and a *cakra* standard behind; the legend below is *Nāgārjunasa* in early Kushan Brāhmī script. An oval seal with bull seated to left has the owner's name as *Caṇḍeśvaradāsa* in Gupta characters; it means 'the slave or devotee of Caṇḍeśvara. Caṇḍeśvara is one of the names of Śiva and is also the name of one of the principal Śivagaṇas (*cf.* the Caṇḍeśānugrahamūrti of Śiva).

As regards Viṣṇu and his emblems in the various terracotta seals, a seal from Basarh, numbered 31, described by T. Bloc in *A. S. I. A. R.*, 1903-04 (pp. 110-1, Pl.XL. 3), is highly interesting. Bloch describes it as follows: 'Ornamental *triśūla* in the centre, to right staff consisting of seven dots, *śaṅkha* and solar disc; to left symbol for moon and ornamental wheel; horizontal line below which the two-lined legend is 1)*Śrī-Viṣṇupādasvāmī-Nā-* 2)*rāya(ṇa)*', meaning 'Nārāyaṇa, the lord of the illustrious Viṣṇupāda.' Bloch further remarks that 'This looks as if the seal came from the authorities of a temple of Viṣṇupāda, perhaps the famous shrine at Gaya. If I am right the seal would prove the existence of this temple in the 4th century A.D.' (*ibid*, p. 104). The seal being thus without doubt a Vaiṣṇava one, the central position given to a Śaiva emblem is queer; but the symbol is certainly not ornamental *triśūla*, but an ornate variant of the much simpler one which is sometimes described as 'nāga' symbol, (*cf.*, figs. 11 and 12 in Pl. II). The Bhita seal No. 36, as described by Marshall (*A. S. I. A. R.*, 1911-12,

p. 53, Pl. XIX), has symbols of wheel and conch with a variant of the above symbol named 'uncertain symbol' by him, between the two; Marshall rightly remarked that the other two symbols being Vaiṣṇava, the intervening one must also be a Vaiṣṇava one, but he was unable to identify it. All these different symbols are originally derived from the so-called Nāga symbol just mentioned, in which D. R. Bhandarkar recognised the *Kaustubha maṇi*, the jewel par excellence which adorns the breast of Viṣṇu (*kaustubhamaṇibhūṣitoraṣkaḥ-Bṛhat-saṃhitā*); he saw the sign on the breast of the Viṣṇu figure sculptured in the verandah of the cave at Udayagiri, bearing the date 82 (Gupta era) as also on the breast of the Garuḍa which crowned the Besnagar column (*A. S. I. A. R.*, 1913-14, p. 211). A. C. Coomarswami, on the other hand, would identify it as the *Śrīvatsa* mark, one of the eight auspicious signs (*aṣṭamaṅgalā*) in Jain literature and art, which is also a Vaiṣṇava symbol; Varāhamihira describes the image of Viṣṇu as *Śrīvatsāṅkitavakṣa* (*Ost-Asiatische Zeitschrift*, 1927-28, pp. 183-4); this is more probable of the two suggestions. In many cases, there is no doubt about the Vaiṣṇava character of the symbol and its variants in its present association and we have seen how one form of it appears on the Bhita seal of Śaṅkaradatta. Now the symbol on the Viṣṇupāda temple seal described by Bloch as 'a staff consisting of seven dots' (Pl. I, Fig. 12) is nothing but the peculiar club we have found in the hands of Śiva on Maues' coin and biscriptual copper seal of Śivarakṣita, as also in one of the hands of the four-armed Vāsudeva Viṣṇu on the Kushan niccolo seal tentatively attributed by Cunningham to Huvishka. This peculiar kind of club (*gadā*) is placed on the back right hand of another four-armed Viṣṇu image of late Kushan or still later period, that was recently discovered at Taxila (*A. S.*

I.A.R., 1935-36, Pl. XLa) and it is similar to the handle of a trident placed in the front left hand of a late mediaeval image of the Īśāna aspect of Śiva, belonging to eastern school of Indian sculpture (these will be noticed in detail in my book dealing with Viṣṇu and Śiva icons). Thus, though in the early representations, numismatic as well as sculptural, the emblem in question is associated with Śiva as well as Viṣṇu,—still there is no doubt about its closer association with the latter in the later times, though in a changed manner;—in its Viṣṇuite association it is to be described as a variant of *gadā*, while in its Śivaite one as a form of *daṅḍa*. Now the remaining symbols on the seal in question, *śaṅkha* on one side and *cakra* on the other are undoubtedly Vaiṣṇava emblems, the sun and moon being shown as adjuncts on the top; and in a temple seal of Śrī Viṣṇupāda-Svāmi Nārāyaṇa all these are quite appropriate.[1] The seals numbering 32 and 34 described by Bloch (*A. S. I. A. R.*, 1903-04, p. 111, pl. XLI) bear ornamental wheel on altar with two *śaṅkhas* one on either side; the former bears the legend in two lines below the horizontal line with its ends turned up, 1) *Jayaty-ananto bhagavān s-Āmbaḥ*, translated by him as "Victorious is the lord Ananta (Śiva) with Ambā (Dūrgā)." But the emblems being Vaiṣṇava, Ananta and Ambā here refer to Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu (*cf. Bhagavadgītā*, VI, 16—Arjuna describes the Lord—*Paśyāmi tvāṃ sarvato'nantarūpam, Nāntaṃ na madhyaṃ na punastavādim* ; temples of god Ananta Vāsudeva are known from mediaeval times onward) as also of his consort

[1] Coomaraswami's description of this seal reproduced by him as fig. 16 on Tafel 27, of *O.Z.*, 1927-28 requires modification, after what has been written above. He has not noticed the *śaṅkha*, and the left symbol should be properly named as *gadā* and the right one is not fan as has been so hesitatingly suggested by him. His suggestion that the central emblem is *Śrīvatsa* seems to me correct.

Lakṣmī (standing for Ambā which also means mother). The seal No. 37 has the *śrīvatsa* (wrongly described as shield by Bloch) on altar flanked by two *śaṅkhas*, with two line inscription, *Jitaṃ bhagavato-nantasya naṃde (śva)rīvara-svāmina(ḥ)*, the reading of which is doubtful; Bloch translates it thus, 'Victorious is the Lord Ananta (Śiva), the chosen husband of Nandeśvari (Dūrgā).' The same remark as has been made with regard to Bloch's interpretation of the legend on No. 32 is applicable here; Nandeśvarī is no doubt another synonym of Dūrgā, but it could also mean Lakṣmī, the consort of Viṣṇu (in the lexicons Nanda is given as another name of the god)—the character of the emblems supporting the above suggestion. Spooner's excavations in the Basarh site in 1913-14 brought up among others a few seals which are unique from the stand-point of Viṣṇuite iconography. The seal No. 54, without legend bears on its oval area a finely executed figure of a boar recumbent to left; the boar may represent the Varāha *avatāra* of Viṣṇu. But the oval seal No. 191 is one of the most interesting in the series, for it shows the figure of Nṛsiṃha, the man-lion incarnation of Viṣṇu, seated facing in the *lalitāsana* pose on a high pedestal; his right arm is raised, while the left rests on hip; the legend, however, is extremely faint, no certain reading of it can be offered. Spooner rightly remarks, that 'it provides us with our oldest dateable representation of the deity Nṛsiṃha in India;' the sealing is certainly of Gupta date. This device is very important, for it definitely shows that as early as the period when it was manufactured, this particular incarnatory form of Viṣṇu had acquired the appearance of the regular cult-picture to be placed in the main sanctum of a temple; it is distinct from the elaborate reliefs illustrative of the mythology underlying this incarnation, which were usually prominently placed in the subsidiary shrines in a Vaiṣṇava temple.

Of the many religious seals that were unearthed by Marshall at Bhita, only one bears the name of Vāsudeva; the much worn, nearly oval seal No. 21 in the series contains the legend in northern Gupta characters—(*Namo Bhagava*) *te Vāsude* (*vasya*). Marshall says that the sealing is interesting, for it shows that Bhita possessed a temple of Vāsudeva in the Gupta period. The male figure on the seal No. 22, standing facing with its right hand outstretched below which is the variant of the *Śrīvatsa* mark (Marshall describes the latter as a mark identical with the one figuring in a lead coin of Puḷūmāyī, reproduced by Rapson in *C.C.A.W.K.T.B*, Pl. V, 105) and left hand on hip with a conch-shell near left foot, is undoubtedly that of Viṣṇu. The sacred character of the figure and the symbols is fully proved by the fact that all the three are placed on pedestals; the legend, however, is defaced. Among the seals of officials and private individuals are to be found emblems which are Vaiṣṇava in character, the names of the former in many cases showing Vaiṣṇava features. Thus, the *Śrīvatsa* mark on seal No. 86 is accompanied with a legend, tentatively read as *Vāsudevasya*, the wheel mark on No. 88 with *Padmanābha* etc.; Marshall remarks about the latter, 'The device of wheel may have been selected in allusion to the fact that Padmanābha is also an epithet of Viṣṇu, who wields the wheel' (*A.S.I.A.R.*, 1911-12, pp. 50, 58; Pls. XVIII, XX).

The number of seals found at Rajghat bearing Vaiṣṇava emblems is small. One circular seal of black clay with the legend (*De* ?) *varātasvāmin* (*ī* ?) in Guptā script bears a *cakra* flanked on either side by a *śaṇkha*. Another such seal has the same Vaiṣṇava emblems, the Gupta legend reading as *Dharmanaddha*. An oval seal bears the legend *Buddhasya* in the Brāhmī script of the Kushan period in the middle, flanked on either side by standards with a *cakra* and a fish-tailed lion as capitals. The

owner's name in association with the above emblems is interesting.

Lakṣmī very appropriately occurs several times in the sealings dug up at Basarh and Bhita. I have shown how frequently the type was utilised in Indian art of the pre-Christian and early post-Christian period. With regard to the identity of a particular variety of this figure in early Buddhist monuments, there has been some difference of opinion among scholars. Marshall, in his latest monumental work on Sanchi (p. 96, f. n. 1) has reconciled this difference; he says, 'Some of the Māyā figures on the balustrades and gateways are identical with the familiar type of Śrī-Lakṣmī, standing or seated on lotus, which the Buddhists evidently appropriated, along with so many other formulae and motifs, from the current art of the period, since it can hardly be doubted that the Śrī-Lakṣmī type goes back to a more remote age than Buddhism.' Now, there can be very little uncertainty about the character of this particular motif and its variants in the Gupta seals of Bhita and Basarh; in the Gupta coins, she is figured in different ways, one of which being an exact Indian counterpart of the foreign Ardochso motif. The terracotta figurine of the Maurya-Suṅga period (No. 550 in Spooner's list, *A.S.I.A.R.*, 1913-14, p. 116, Pl. XLIV) very probably presents us with a variety of the same goddess, in which she is distinguished by a pair of wings of a very unusual type, a scanty costume of the usual archaic type and ornaments like a huge pair of ear-rings, heavy bracelets and torque. Certain very finely executed seals from Basarh of the Gupta period that were noticed by T. Bloch in his notes on Excavations at Basarh (*A.S.I.A.R.*, 1903-04, pp. 107ff., Pls. XL and XLI) bear on them the Gaja-Lakṣmī figure and a few of its variants. The seal of the *Kumārāmātyādhikaraṇa* (*ibid*, p. 10 No. 3; 3 specimens were found) shows Lakṣmī standing in the midst of a group of

trees with elephants pouring water over her ; two dwarfish attendants holding objects like money bags. Seal No. 4 of which as many as 28 specimens were found has the same goddess (*ibid*, Pl. XL, 10), but here the attendants are absent; No. 5, of which 9 specimens were discovered, shows the Gaja-Lakṣmī type, its left hand holding the stalk of a six-petalled flower, the two dwarfish attendants pouring out small objects from round pots; No. 6, of which 12 specimens are known, shows Gaja-Lakṣmī as above, but here the elephants stand on flowers, attended by a kneeling male on each side with a knob on his head; money bag in front of each of these attendants, from which he throws down small round objects which are coins (Pl. X, Fig. 2 ; the shape of the money bag is exactly similar to that of the several bags shown under the *Kalpadruma* capital found at Besnagar and noticed by me in detail in chapter III). Many such figures more or less similar to one another were found by Bloch and it will not be necessary to define each of the types in detail. Bloch's suggestion about the attending figures of Lakṣmī in these seals that these were figures of Kubera, throwing down coins or pouring them out of round pots is not wholly correct ; for these are not really Kuberas, but the Yakṣas who are the custodians of riches. The combination of Lakṣmī, the goddess of wealth and prosperity and the Yakṣas connected with riches is certainly not inappropriate, the idea being that these custodians dole out riches to those who are specially favoured by this goddess. Bloch remarks, 'The combination of Lakṣmī and Kubera, however, is not known to me to occur anywhere else in Indian art, and my theory should, therefore, only be regarded as hypothetical.' I may, however, refer here to the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa* passage, already quoted by me while explaining the Kalpadruma capital at Besnagar in chapter III ; in connection with the enumeration of eight *nidhis*, the *Purāṇa* says, *Padminī*

nāma yā vidyā Lakṣmīstasyādhidevatā | Tadādhārāśca nidhayastān me nigadataḥ śṛṇu.' Thus, the eight *nidhis* which are particularly associated with Kubera are the *ādhāras* of *Padminī vidyā* whose presiding deity is the goddess Śrī. The unique seal No. 93 dug up at Basarh by Spooner (*A.S.I.A.R*, 1913-14, pp. 129-30, Pl. XLVI) bears the figure of a goddess, nimbate, facing, with her left hand on hip and right hand raised, standing on a high pedestal placed in the central part of what looks like a barge covering the entire area of the sealing. The presence of a small naturalistic *śaṅkha* to the left in the exergue above (the small standing animal cannot at all be clearly distinguished from Spooner's plate) discloses her probable identity and if we are justified in describing her as Lakṣmī then her appearance in a barge, though unusual, is quite appropriate; for does not the goddess of wealth and prosperity reside in trade and commerce (*cf.* the oft-quoted saying—*Vāṇijye vasati Lakṣmīḥ*) and did not many of the owners of these seals belong to the order of the *Śreṣṭhi-sārthavāha-kulika-nigama*? Spooner remarks about the seal, 'There are no duplicates of this most peculiar and interesting seal, and there is no trace of any legend by which its origin and meaning could be learned. I should judge it to be the seal of some temple, and of a temple to some goddess of the waters.' But he is far too conjectural in his next observation, 'In the light of our Persian fire-altars and our winged terracottas at this site, is the cult of Anahita not perhaps suggested?' In the magnificent large official seal No. 200 (*ibid*, p. 134, Pl. XLVII), however, there can be no doubt about the identity of 'the central figure of Lakṣmī standing on a low pedestal, facing, with the two customary elephants above pouring water over her from jars held in their trunks.' There is a *śaṅkha* to her proper left while the uncertain object in the opposite side may be a variant of the *śrīvatsa* mark or the so-called '*nandipāda*' symbol in an inverted

manner. The legend read by Spooner as '*Veśālināmakuṇḍe-kumārāmātyādhikaraṇasya*' is interesting; Spooner is surprised at this form of the legend and cannot be sure whether the *kuṇḍa* here means a sacred spring as usual or not. But it might refer to the *markaṭahrada* or the monkey-tank at Vaisali, which, according to H. Thsang, commemorated the miracle of Buddha's life associated with the locality. The long narrow oval sealing No. 208 (*ibid*, p. 134) bears a female figure with right hand out-stretched and the left on hip, seeming to clasp a lotus stock; the nimbus and the legend are defaced, and it may represent the Indian goddess of fortune. The impression of an oval seal, No. 312 (*ibid*, p. 140, Pl. XLVII) bears the device of a standing female figure, facing, with her right hand extended and the left clasping a tall lotus which rises above her shoulder; the one numbered 446 is a duplicate of this, and there is every reason to believe that in both Lakṣmī is represented.

A brief reference to the seals that were unearthed by Marshall at Bhita will show that figures of the goddess Śrī, more or less similar to the above types, are found on them. The seal No. 32 (*A.S.I.A.R.*, 1911-12, p. 52, Pl. XVIII) bears Gajalakṣmī, the elephants dousing her are placed on lotuses; the right hand of the goddess is raised above elbow, while the left rests on a bird (?) which is perhaps Garuḍa, according to Marshall. But the latter may also be identified as a *chaurie* held downwards, its handle looking like the neck of a bird; a *cakra* is placed to the immediate right. The name Viṣṇurakṣita among the long legend in eastern Gupta characters as well as the *cakra* shows the Viṣṇuite association of this seal. The seal No. 35 in the same series shows Gaja-Lakṣmī on lotus with a dwarfish figure seated on lotus with folded hands, on each side of the goddess; we have just discussed similar types at Basarh. The seal or token No. 42 (*ibid*, p. 54, Pl. XIX) shows on its upper part the same goddess standing on a full-blown lotus, her both

hands being raised above the elbows, her right hand holds *śaṅkha*, while her left, probably Garuḍa or the *chaurie*; vases are shown on either side containing water or flowers, according to Marshall, but these little dots may stand for coins or treasure. Coomaraswamy has discussed at great length the symbolism underlying the concept of Śrī-Lakṣmī, and the attending elephants in his article on Early Indian Iconography (*Eastern Art*, Vol. I, pp. 175-189), wherein he has utilised these seal representations along with various other data concerning the subject. The circular seal No. 18 found at Bhita (*ibid*, p. 50, Pl. XVIII) contains a vase (*bhadraghaṭa*) on pedestal; below it is written in northern characters of the Gupta period, *Sarasvatī*. The goddess of learning is thus represented here by means of the *ghaṭa* emblem. It has been suggested that the female figure standing by the side of a bull on the seals of Śivamegha and Bhīmasena found at Bhita may stand for Durgā; the oval seal No. 75 (*ibid*, p. 57, Pl. XX) with legend that could not be read may also bear the same goddess in the person of the female figure which stands facing by the side of the bull recumbent to left, her left hand being placed on hip, while the right one is out-stretched towards the erect trident-axe. Marshall compares it with the goddess standing by the stag on Kuṇiṇḍa coins. The lion standing facing on many seals hailing from Bhita and Basarh could have been explained as representing the Śakti cult, lion being the mount of Durgā; but one cannot be sure as most of the particular names associated with them, are associated with Viṣṇu who also has some very intimate mythological association with lion (*cf.* the Narasiṃha aspect of Viṣṇu, and Hari, another name of Viṣṇu, means also a lion).

Several Rajghat seals bear on them a few very interesting goddess figures. A circular sealing with a two-line legend, *Vārāṇasyādhi(ṣṭhā)nādhikaraṇasya* in Gupta script, shows a goddess standing facing on lotus; to her proper right

is a radiate disc on an elaborate pedestal and to her proper left, an indistinct object; from her hands held downwards, treasures appear to trickle down. Another oval seal of sun-burnt clay bears a two-armed goddess standing facing, on a long pedestal, holding a wreath in left hand and a four-pronged object in right hand; her hair is braided; a snake with its face downwards is shown on her right; legend below in Gupta script is *Durggaḥ* (does the *devī* stand for Durgā, the consort of Śiva?). A round seal with pot and foliage on pedestal and Gupta legend *Śrī sārasvata* reminds us of the Bhita seal No. 18 noted in the previous paragraph. Another oval sealing of the early Kushan period shows a goddess standing facing with hands akimbo; the legend on her proper right is *Saghamita* (ā) : she may, however, belong to the Buddhist creed.

A few other Brahmanical deities and their emblems can be recognised in the medley of seals and seal impressions found at Basarh, Bhita and Rajghat. The very fine temple seal No. 607 discovered by Spooner at Basarh (*A.S.I.A.R.*, 1913-14, pp. 118-120, 140, Pl. XLIX) contains a very perfect example of a fire-altar with probably the solar disc placed above it; the legend in Gupta characters is *Bhagavata Ādityasya*. I recognised on the coins of Pāñcāla Bhānumitra the same deity, *viz.*, sun placed on an altar; but here there may be some justification for Spooner's suggestion that the altar is a Persian fire-altar. The association of sun and fire in this instance may be directly due to the fire and sun-worshipping Iranian Magii who must have influenced the local north-Indian sun-worship in the early centuries of the Christian era. Rapson, while writing on a similar device on a seal with Indian legend found at Sunet (*J.R.A.S.*, 1901, p. 98) suggested that it might be due to the Sassanian influence; the fire altar occurs on much earlier Kushan coins, *viz.*, on those of Wema Kadphises and others. Thus, this will not prove Spooner's contention that,

'this particular form of the fire-altar in Indian Archaeology, without attendant figures, is not due to any modification of Sassanian coinage through Kushan influence, but rather to the survival, in India itself, of the older, more original Persian tradition in such matters, which antedates the Sassanians themselves by many centuries.' A part of his other suggestion, that this particular seal with the legend above noted 'must be the seal of some temple, presumably in Eastern India, to the divinity of the Blessed Sun as worshipped in the cultus of the Persians domiciled in India,' is more acceptable ; but in place of the Persians domiciled in India, we are to understand eastern Iranians who migrated to India in large numbers with their cultus in the early post-Christian period. Block illustrated a seal found by him at Basarh (*A. S. I. A. R.*, 1903-04, Pl. XL, No. 9) with the significant legend *Ravidāsa* (*ḥ*), 'the slave of the sun.' Marshall found a seal at Bhita (*A. S. I. A. R.*, 1911-12, p. 58, No. 98), which bears the same device with the legend *Ādityasya* ; he rightly says that 'this emblem occurs on the coins of the Kushanas, Guptas, Indo-Sassanians as also on a Gupta seal from Sunet,' the last one was described by Rapson whose remark about it has just been quoted. All these fairly prove that by the 4th and 5th centuries A.D., the eastern Iranian fire-sun cultus was thoroughly acclimatised in northern and eastern India and the north Indian sun icons of the Gupta period and afterwards show unmistakable evidence of it. Among other cult-deities whose emblems or names can be found on those interesting terra-cotta objects, mention may be made of Skanda and Dhanada. An oval seal bearing a peacock standing to left with uplifted tail and the legend *Śrī Skandaśūrasya* was found by Marshall at Bhita (*op. cit.*, p. 58, No. 83) ; the oblong seal, No. 14 discovered by Spooner at Basarh bears a 'fantail peacock' facing, the emblem peculiar to the eastern mintage of Gupta silver coins, issued by Kumāragupta I and some other

successors of his; the name of the banker, issuing it, is Vyāghrabala (*A. S. I. A. R.*, 1913-14, p. 125, Pl. XLVII, No. 271; several impressions of this seal were found at Basarh). An ivory seal matrix found at Rajghat shows a fantail peacock with legend *Śūragupta* in Gupta Script; the name and the emblem associate it with Kārttikeya. Another oval seal of the Gupta period, from the same place, shows two soldiers standing, holding spear in their right hands and with their left hands akimbo; the legend on the right reads—*Mahāśi*(a mistake for *śū?*)*rasya*. This seal device reminds us of the figures of Skanda-Komaro and Bizago on some coins of Huvishka already noted and the standing Dioscuroi on the coins of such Indo-Greek kings as Diomedes, Archebius and others. Seal No. 722 unearthed at Basarh (Spooner, *ibid*, p. 151, Pl. L) 'is exceptional, in that the device a small, naturalistic *śaṅkha* occurs below the legend, which is in very raised *akṣaras* and reads (*Śrī-*) *Dhanadakasya*.' Now, Dhanada is a name of Kubera and the conch-shell here may justly stand for the *śaṅkhanidhi* of that god after whom the issuer of the seal was named. Some other unrecognisable figures, most probably of divinities, and unassignable emblems are found on these seals. One or two can be noticed here. A very interesting seal was discovered by Bloch at Basarh, which has for its device a man seated in Indian fashion, his raised left hand holding probably a branch of a tree and the long slender object placed in his right hand stretched over the knee is unrecognisable; the legend in Gupta characters in *Udana-kūpe pariṣadaḥ* (*A. S. I. A. R.*, 1903-04, p. 109, Pl. XL, 12). The device, man with tail (?) holding down a bull by its horns with uncertain legend on a seal that was also unearthed at Basarh by the same scholar is unidentifiable; Bloch says 'it looks like an adoption of some classical design' (*ibid*, p. 106, Pl. XLI, 17). The identity of the female figure standing between two trees appearing on an indifferently

preserved seal found there cannot be ascertained (*ibid*, p. 119, Pl. XLII, 56). A human figure, standing facing, right hand holding a staff and left hand hanging down (it distantly resembles the Śiva figures on the Ujjain coins, though the water-vessel is not present and the style is different) with an uncertain object to his right and defaced legend in exergue, appears on the seal impression (*b*) on No. 109, discovered by Marshall at Bhita; he suggests that it is a 'representation of some sort of a *grāmadevatā* of the village.' The impression (*a*) on the same lump of clay (No. 109) bears a vase on pedestal and legend in early Gupta characters—*Vicchigrāma*, the ancient name of Bhita (*A. S. I. A. R.*, 1911-12, p. 59, Pl. XIX). 'The fish on side on an oblong seal of Bilvedāsa' dug up in the same place may be an auspicious symbol of general application, as many other symbols, not definitely assignable to any of the cults, can be assumed to be. But when there is such uncertainty in the determination of the iconography of the device appearing on the seal, we shall not be justified in arriving at any far-reaching conclusions on the basis of this very feature. Spooner's conclusions based on this (*cf.* his lengthy dissertation on seal impression No. 572 A, *A. S. I. A. R.*, 1913-14, pp. 146-47, as also on pp. 120 and 129-30—the character of the last two has been determined in a different way) were thus easily challenged by others who could not see eye to eye with him.

The rapid survey of the terracotta seals from the cult point of view has enabled us to collect some fresh data which are eminently useful for the study of Brahmanical Hindu iconography. Bloch observed in connection with his excavations at Basarh, 'The evidence of the emblems on the seals, so far as they have any connection with religious worship, together with the names occurring in the inscriptions and the seals bearing benedictory formulas, rather lead me to conclude that most of the persons to whom the seals

belonged were followers of the Brahmanical creed or Jainas, not Buddhists '— (*op. cit.*, p. 105). Bloch was not aware of the identity of the *śrīvatsa* mark which he described as an ornamental *triśūla*, though he rightly remarked that he names it thus ' without pretending to have found the true name of the symbol ' ; now the very same mark, though it may be connected with the Jaina cult, cannot be assigned this character, when associated with such symbols as ornamental wheel, knotted club (*gadā*) and conch-shell which when taken together will have to be regarded as Vaiṣṇava ones. The two human feet which so frequently appear on the sealings discovered by him and less so on those dug up by Marshall and Spooner can no doubt be explained as Buddha-pāda or Jina-pāda ; but in consideration of the symbols on the host of the other seals they can much better be interpreted as Viṣṇu-pāda. Similarly, the *kalasa* on so many seals in association with the particular legends and other emblems may mostly be the Brahmanical auspicious sign. Moreover, the appearance of several Śivaliṅgas more or less realistic in character, the different varieties of the goddess of fortune, the highly probable representations of Umā and Arddhanārīśvara, the earliest figure of Narasiṃha as a cult deity, etc., on these seals and seal impressions, greatly enhances our knowledge of Brahmanical Hindu iconography.

CHAPTER VI

Icono-plastic Art in India—Factors contributing to its Development

Discovery of extant images of the pre-Christian and early post-Christian period in India not commensurate with what we know about the prevalence of the practice of making images and other objects for worship during the period, from literary and archaeological data—paucity of actual finds to be accounted for—explanation of this paucity to be sought in the significant practice followed by ancient Indian artists of using perishable materials like wood and clay for the making of images, as in early Vedic times, the ritual implements used to be mainly made of wood and clay—evidence of post-Christian texts like the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, the Purāṇas and the Āgamas in support of it—its special bearing on the growth and development of Indian iconoplastic art.

Methods of manufacture of images—bronze casting—evidence of texts—early bronze images—other metal images—stone images—stuccos and frescoes—pictorial representations—(not only on canvas with brush and paint but also on raised platforms before the main sanctum of the shrine with coloured rice-powder)—but the latter are mainly decorative.

Contributory factors leading to the development of icono-plastic art:—(*a*) wide prevalence of sectarianism—multiplicity of sects—sectarian rivalries and jealousies; (*b*) gradual increase of the pantheon—its necessary corollary, the development of mythological stories in order to explain the origin of the new creations—construction of reliefs illustrative of these myths and legends—their purpose, however, primarily decorative; (*c*) foreign contact—an incentive and impetus to the creation of new art forms—an estimate of the nature and extent of the Hellenistic influence on Indian iconic art; (*d*) evolution of the Tantras; (*e*) gradual canonisation of the modes for the making of icons facilitates the icon-makers' art—stereo-typed icons produced in large numbers from their workshops—reputed art-centres of ancient India like Mathura, Gandhara, Amaravati etc.,—their art productions in great demand in various parts of India; (*f*) the patronage of the ruling powers and other important personages of early and mediaeval India—their excessive temple-building activity—they not only built temples but funerary structures in the shape of shrines—monastic establishments and *Gurvāyatanas*.

The data which have been gathered together and presented by me in the three preceding chapters prove that the construction of images and other objects associated with the worship of the deity with deep loving faith was fairly well prevalent

in India during the few centuries preceding the Christian era and the ones immediately succeeding it. From the multiplicity of evidence in support of the above hypothesis it would be natural for us to expect a large number of very early images belonging to the various sectaries, both orthodox and heterodox from the Brahmanical standpoint, from the various parts of India. True it is that several free-standing Yakṣa statues, or relievo-figures principally associated with early Buddhist funerary monuments have been discovered, which can go back to two or at most three centuries before the Christian era; it is also true that many Buddhist, several Jain and Brahmanical images and sculptures have been discovered in stray groups from distant parts of India like Gandhara, Mathura and Amaravati that belong to two or three centuries after its commencement. But when we consider the vastness of the Indian continent and think of the religious needs of the majority of her untold millions of people, we cannot but be struck with the fact that the actual discovery of the extant images going back to these earlier times is very much incommensurate with our expectations. The reasons for this extreme paucity have been briefly mentioned by me *in passim* in the last part of the introductory chapter of this book. The iconoclastic zeal of the image-haters of alien faith, the ever active spoliation of ancient religious structures for building materials by the utilitarian vandals of mediaeval and modern times and the natural causes of decay and destruction were no doubt responsible to a great extent for this comparative infrequency of early finds of images. The ancient practice of making images in such perishable materials like wood and clay is also one of the main reasons which explain the above fact. In the Vedic times, in the fashioning of the ritual implements that were necessary for the correct performance of particular sacrifices, wood was the principal material that was used, and the altars of variour shapes and

kinds were made of clay and bricks. In referring to the materials out of which the god Viśvakarmā could have created the universe the one that comes foremost to the mind of the Vedic seer is wood. The hymnist asks, 'which was the forest and what was the tree out of whose wood the heaven and earth were made?' (*R. V.*, X, 81, 4—*Kiṃ svidvanaṃ ka u sa vṛkṣa āsa yato dyāvāpṛthivī niṣṭatakṣuḥ.*) It is natural that wood should be easily thought of in the construction of structures and other objects, for it is not only one of the easily procurable materials but also is an important one among such, which is the easiest to work upon. It is no wonder then that we find so many passages in early Indian iconographic texts expatiating on the selection of wood to be used in the construction of images. Some of these are taken notice of here; attention of the reader, however, needs be drawn *in passim* to the extreme care and consideration which is enjoined by the writers of these texts, to be followed by the image-makers in the cutting of the particular trees whose wood should be employed by them for the shaping of the *arcā* of the god.

Writers on Indian iconography and iconometry have discussed the importance of chapter 57 on *Pratimālakṣaṇam* of Varāhamihira's *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* (Sudhakar Dvivedi's edition) and have utilised its contents in various ways; but very little notice has as yet been taken by them of the next chapter, *viz.*, *Vanasampraveśādhyāya* and its bearing on the art of image-making in ancient India. The latter lays down details regarding the ceremony of securing wood from the forest trees, and bringing it home for the purpose of making images of gods and goddesses. We are first told that the image-maker should enter into the forest on an auspicious day selected by the astrologer and be careful about the omens which he would see on his way to it. Then a list of trees which are to be avoided in the search for proper wood is given; trees which grow in cremation

ground, by the side of roads, near temples, or on ant-hills, in gardens and hermitages, *caitya* or *sthala vṛkṣas*, those growing by the confluences of rivers, or which are planted by human hands, extremely bent ones, trees growing very close to other trees or overgrown with creepers, trees struck by lightning or broken by storms, falling by themselves or damaged by elephants, dried or burnt trees, or those on which bees make their hives, these are not to be selected by the sculptor. Next are given the names of those the wood of which is to be used for making images; *deodar, candana, śamī, madhuka* for images to be set up by Brahmins; *ariṣṭa, aśvattha, khadira, vilva*—for those to be made for the Kṣatriyas; *jīvaka, khadira, sindhuka* and *syandana* are auspicious for images to be enshrined by the Vaiśyas, while *tinduka, keśara, sarja, arjuna, āmra*, and *sāla* are so for the Śūdras.[1] Before the selected tree is to be felled by axe certain rites are to be performed by the sculptor. First he is to mark off on its trunk the various sections of the *Liṅgam* or image to be made out of it in order that the top, bottom and the sides of the object to be fashioned may correspond to those of the trunk of the tree.[2] Next he will propitiate the tree with various offerings and worship the gods, manes, Rākṣasas, Nāgas, Asuras, Gaṇas,

[1] *Suradāru-candana-śamī-madhukataravaḥ śubhā dvijātīnām |*
Kṣatrasyāriṣṭāśvattha-khadira-vilvā vivṛddhikarāḥ ||
Vaiśyānāṃ jīvaka-khadira-sindhuka-syandanāśca śubhaphaladāḥ |
Tinduka-kesara-sarjārjunāmraśālāśca śūdrāṇām || (Verses 5-6)

The same list is given by Kāśyapa in his work; Utpala quotes three couplets from it in his commentary.

[2] *Liṅgaṃ vā pratimā vā drumavat sthāpyā yathā diśaṃ yasmāt |*
Tasmāccihnayitavyā diśo drumasyordhvamathavādhaḥ ||
(Verse 7).

Kāśyapa says:—
Vṛkṣavat pratimā kāryā prāgbhāgādyupalakṣitā |
Pādaḥ pādeṣu karttavyaḥ śirṣamūrdhve tu kārayet ||

and Vināyakas at night and utter the following *mantra*, touching the tree with his hands :—

> Oh, thou tree, salutation to thee, thou art selected for (being fashioned into) the icon of deity; please accept this offering according to rules. May all the spirits which reside in this tree transfer their habitation elsewhere after accepting the offerings made according to rules; may they pardon me today (for disturbing them); salutation to them.[1]

Lastly, in the morning after sprinkling water on the tree and smearing the blade of his axe with honey and clarified butter, he should cut round the trunk rightwards, beginning from the north-east corner. In the last verse of the chapter the author states that further details about the felling of the tree omitted by him in this chapter, have been described in his chapters on Indradhvaja and Vāstuvidyā, and the same should apply in this case also. The information which we gather from a study of this chapter is also supplied to us in various other texts like the sections on architecture and sculpture of the Purāṇas like *Bhaviṣya*, *Viṣṇudharmottara*, *Matsya* and others and such works as *Mānasāra*, etc. Of these the chapter of *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* on *Pratimāvidhi* (Ch. 131) in the Prathama Brāhma Parva which begins just after the chapter on *Prāsādalakṣaṇa-varṇanam* gives details more or less similar to those noted

[1] *Arcārthamamukasya tvaṃ devasya parikalpitaḥ ।*
Namaste vṛkṣa pūjeyaṃ vidhiva tsampragṛhyatām ॥
Yānīha bhūtāni vasanti tāni valiṃ gṛhītvā vidhivat prayuktam ।
Anyatra vāsaṃ parikalpayantu kṣamantu tānyadya namo'stu
teb hyaḥ ॥ (Verses 10-11).

The same *mantra* is to be found in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* chapter on *Pratimāvidhi*; a few other passages common to both can be found in the two.

above. Nārada, while explaining to Sāmba rules for the construction of images of gods in general and Sūrya in particular, mentions that seven kinds of images tending to the welfare of the devotees are known; *viz.*, those made of gold, silver, copper, earth or clay, stone, wood and the ones that are drawn (on canvas and other objects); of these Nārada selects those made of wood as deserving special notice.[1] This shows that wood was the most frequently used material for image-making from very early times. In the *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa* a whole chapter entitled *Devālayārtha dāruparīkṣaṇam* (Bk. III, Ch. 89) is devoted to the details of procuring wood for temple-building and image-making activities, and rules similar to the above for marking off the different sections of the images and building posts on the trunk of the tree are incorporated.[2] The next two chapters deal with *Śilāparīkṣā* and *Iṣṭakāparīkṣā*, in the former of which rites enjoined are somewhat similar to those mentioned in connection with *Dāruparīkṣā*. The *Mānasāra*, a work giving details of architectural construction

[1] *Atha te sampravakṣyāmi pratimāvidhivistaram* ।
Sarveṣāmeva devānāmādityasya viśeṣataḥ ॥
Arcā saptavidhā proktā bhaktānāṃ śubhavṛddhaye ।
Kāñcanī rājatī tāmrī pārthivī śailajā smṛtāḥ ॥
Vārkṣī cālekhyakā ceti mūrtisthānānī sapta vai ।
Vārkṣividhānaṃ te vīra varṇayiṣyāmyaśeṣataḥ ॥

Bhaviṣya Purāṇa, Bk. I, Ch. 131 Verses 1-3.

[2] *Agraṃ mūlaṃ prayatnena kartavyaṃ tasya cihnāni—*
Agraṃ devasya mūrdhānaṃ pādaṃ mūlaṃ tu kārayet ।
Arcākṛtā viparyastā tiryagvā māraṇāvahā ॥
Agramūlaṃ viparyāsaṃ stambhānāṃ ca vivarjayet ।
Agramūlaviparyāse kṛte veśmakṣayaṃ vrajet ॥
Pūrvāgrā cottarāgrā vā drumā yojyā gṛheṣu ca ।
....
Tasmāt sarvaprayatnena cihnaistaṃ kārayed drumam ।
Agre mūle ca dharmajña tataḥ samyak praveśayet ॥

its foremost consideration, deals at great length with the topic of *Dārusaṃgrahaṇa* in lines 251-347 in the chapter on *Stambhalakṣaṇam* (P. K. Acharya's Edition, Ch. XV, p. 103 ff.). These particulars are of the same nature as the ones gleaned from the other texts, but here they apply chiefly to the construction of wooden columns. A formidable list of *śakunas* is given in lines 260-94; in lines 295-304 are mentioned rules about sacrifices to the various kinds of evil spirits, the eight Dikpālas beginning with Indra and ending with Īśāna, to eight Rākṣasas like Mukhya, Mṛga, Aditi, Udita, Vitatha, Antarīkṣa, Bhṛśa and Pūṣan and lastly to the Vanaspati.[1] The whole of the chapter 257 entitled *Vāstuvidyānukīrtanam* of the *Matsya Purāṇa* deals with the *Dārvāharaṇavidhi* in a succinct way; the next few chapters (258-263) discourse on details of iconometry and iconography, incidentally referring to different kinds of materials used for image-making. Thus, while recording the characteristic signs of the pedestals (*pīṭhikā*), the author remarks that stone, earthen, wooden and mixed pedestals are to be assigned to images which are made of stone, earth, wood and mixed materials, respectively.[2] In the next chapter on *Liṅgalakṣaṇam*, the author expressly mentions in the last verse that 'Liṅgas should be made of (such materials) as precious metals,

[1] A few other details are recorded here; one such refers to three sex groups among the trees. The last lines in this section, *viz.*,

Vṛkṣasya mūlaṃ mūle ca agre cāgraṃ tathaiva ca |
Bhūmisparśamukhaṃ jñātvā tadūrdhvaṃ parabhāgataḥ ||

have been translated 'The base of the column is (to be marked) on the lower part of the trunk and on the upper part of the capital; the part other than these (*i.e.*, the middle part) is known to be that which touches, (*i.e.*, makes) the body, *i.e.*, the shaft of the column.

[2] *Saile śailamayīṃ dadyāt pārthive pārthivīṃ tathā* |
Dāruje dārujāṃ kuryānmiśre miśrāṃ tathaiva ca ||

crystal, earth and wood in the manner laid down in the previous lines.' [1]

It will be of interest to refer in this connection to the different classifications of images on the basis of materials out of which they were made, mentioned in a few other texts. Gopala Bhatta purporting to quote from the *Matsya Purāṇa* and *Hayaśīrṣa Pañcarātra* supplies us with two such groupings in his *Haribhaktivilāsa*. The first is that images can be divided into four broad divisions, *viz.*, *citrajā* (*i.e.*, those that are painted on canvas, wall or *pātra*), *lepajā* (made of clay), *pākajā* (made of molten metal, *i.e.*, cast images) and *śastrotkīrṇā* (carved by metal instruments). The second list includes seven different varieties, *viz.*, *mṛnmayī*, *dāru-ghaṭitā*, *lohajā*, *ratnajā*, *śailajā*, *gandhajā* and *kausumī*. It will be seen that with the exception of the last two in the second list (or one, *viz.*, *kausumī*, because *gandhajā* may come under *lepajā* in the first list), which are evidently *kṣaṇika* images, all the others in it can very well come under the first one. The *Śukranītisāra* refers to eight kinds of materials thus :—*Pratimā saikatī paiṣṭī lekhyā lepyā ca mṛnmayī | Vārkṣī pāṣāṇa-dhātūtthā sthirā jñeyā yathottarā* ॥ (IV, 4, 72). In this list several new materials occcur, such as *sikatā* (sand) and *piṣṭa* (substance ground and then mixed with water into a dough); the latter evidently refers here to such a material as rice powder mixed with water (in Bengali colloquial, it is called *piṭuli*) and not to the compound which make up stucco. Each succeeding material in this list is more durable than the preceding one and the metal images are described as the most permanent (*sthirā*) among them. The *Samarāṅganasūtradhara*, a late anthology by king Bhojadeva, also refers in these lines to the seven kinds of images :—*Pratimānāmatha brūmo lakṣaṇaṃ*

[1] *Evaṃ ratnamayaṃ kuryāt sphāṭikaṃ pārthivaṃ tathā | Śubhaṃ dārumayañcāpi yadvā manasi rocate ॥*

dravyameva ca | Suvarṇa-rūpya-tāmrāśma-dārulekhyāni śaktitaḥ || Citraṃ ceti vinirdiṣṭaṃ dravyamarcāṣu saptadhā | (Gaekwar Oriental series, Vol. II, Ch. I, v. 1). This list is practically the same as that in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, noticed above, with this difference only that it omits reference to clay images while mentioning pictorial representations twice under the heads *lekhya* and *citra*. That clay was undoubtedly one of the most commonly used media for making images (as it is so used now in Bengal for the making of *kṣaṇika* or impermanent ones) is fully borne out by a very interesting passage quoted by Gopala Bhatta from *Hayaśīrṣa Pañcarātra* which lays down rules about preparing clay for this purpose. It can be freely translated thus :—'Members of all castes, from the highest downwards, should collect earth from river banks, cultivated fields or sacred places; then equal portions of powdered stone, *karkarā* (sand) and iron should be mixed with it and the whole mixture should be pressed with some astringents; extracts of *khadira*, *arjjuna*, *sarjja*, *śrī*, *veṇṭa*(?) and *kuṅkuma*, *kauṭaja* and *āyasa* wood, and curds, milk and clarified butter should be repeatedly stirred up with the above; the whole compound should then be left over for a month till it is ready to be shaped into images.' [1] This mode of the preparation of clay, however, shows that the material thus prepared was used for making images far more durable than ordinary clay ones, some of its constituents being powdered

[1] *Mṛttikāvarṇapūrveṇa gṛhṇīyussarvavarṇinaḥ |*
Nadītīre'thavā kṣetre puṇyasthāne'thavā punaḥ ||
Pāṣāṇa-karkarā-lohacūrṇāni samabhāgataḥ |
Mṛttikāyāṃ prayojyātha kaṣāyeṇa prapīḍayet ||
Khadireṇārjjunenātha sarjjaśrīveṇṭakuṅkumaiḥ |
Kauṭajairāyasaiḥ snehairdadhikṣīraghṛtādibhiḥ ||
Ālodya mṛttikāṃ taistaiḥ sthāne sthāpya punaḥ punaḥ |
Māsaṃ paryuṣitaṃ kṛtvā pratimāṃ parikalpayet ||
Haribhaktivilāsa. 18th vilāsa.

iron and stone. This compound is similar to the material known as stucco which was so copiously used by the Hellenistic artists of Gandhara from the third to the fifth century A.D.; if we are to understand that limestone is meant by the word *pāṣāṇa*, then the similarity becomes greater. This seems to be the substance which was so frequently used in making many figure sculptures on the towering *gopuras* of many of the south Indian temples. We are further informed in the same text that a central wooden frame designated here as *pratimāśūla* of a length of 120 or 125 *aṅgulas* (*daśatāla* or *uttamadaśatāla* measurement) and made of *khadira* or *yajñīya* (*yajñaḍumbura*) wood is to be set up on the *ratnanyāsa* (*ratnavedī* or altar on which the image is to be placed), whereon the different limbs of the image are to be modelled according to the proportions laid down in the text.[1] Reference has already been made to the *Matsya Purāṇa* passage where there is mention of mixed materials used for image-making; evidently the compound just noted falls under this category. The text is of unique importance; it not only gives the formula for the preparation of the stucco-like substance, but also shows how wood, clay and such other perishable materials were mixed up to make images of a comparatively durable nature.

The above extracts fully prove how in ancient and mediaeval times, wood, as well as clay, was one of the

[1] *Sthāpayet pratimāśūlaṃ ratnanyāsasya copari |*
Śūlañca khādirādīnāṃ yajñīyānāṃ prakalpayet ||
Viṃśottaraśataṃ śūlaṃ kuryādvā pañcaviṃśatiḥ |
Pratimāṅgulamānena kṛtvā saṃsthāpayed budhaḥ ||
Haribhaktivilāsa, 18.

This wooden core (*pratimāśūla*) in modern clay images of Bengal is described as *kāṭhāmo* in Bengali language; the word is derived from *kāṭha* or *kāṣṭha* meaning wood. At present, it is made of bamboo slits and straw.

commonest media for the making of images in India. Texts like the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* and the chapter 58 of the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* which lay special stress on wood as the material for image-making are of comparatively early date, because they take stock of earlier traditional practice. Some of the later texts like *Agni Purāṇa*, though mentioning it among other materials, chiefly expatiate upon the use of stone. Scholars after a careful study of the early extant architectural remains throughout India came to the conclusion long ago that much of the form and technique of their construction was influenced by their earlier and commoner prototypes of wooden structures. It can very well be presumed that some of the characteristic features of the few extant early Indian sculptures in the round and many relief carvings show their intimate connection with carved wood sculptures which were common in ancient times. From this it does not necessarily follow that the indigenous artists of India first learnt to use stone for architectural and sculptural purposes after their contact with the foreigners. But the data collected above prove that stone, though certainly in use from a very early date, was much less frequently employed than wood and clay. In the 6th chapter of *Antagada Dasāo*, a Jaina text, we find a clear reference to the wooden statue of the Yakṣa Moggarapāṇi in a shrine outside the city of Rājagṛha. Even long after stone began to be principally used for image-making, wooden images were also made by the artists. The finely carved wooden pillar bearing figure sculptures and decorative motifs on it discovered at Arial near Dacca and now preserved in the Arial Museum, and the weather beaten standing Viṣṇu and several other objects of carved wood in the collection of the Dacca Museum show that wood remained as one of the principal media for image-making. The wooden images of Jagannātha, Balarāma and Subhadrā enshrined in the main sanctum at Puri are renewed every

twelve years and the old ones are buried underground in an unfrequented part of the extensive temple compound. Very few wooden images, however, of any antiquity have so far been discovered; the reason is obvious. In this tropical country with its humid climate, and infested by destructive agencies like the white ants and rats, wooden objects seldom attain to any age. Herein lies one of the explanations of the extreme paucity of the extant images in the pre-Christian period of the art-history of India. References to images in the literature and inscriptions of India datable in the 3rd century B. C., if not earlier, are to be found; but few, if any, are the images discovered up till now which can be confidently dated back to this period. Two other interesting deductions can be made from the data collected above. The first is that the wide celebrity of the artists of such centres as Mathura, Gandhara and Sarnath might have been greatly due to the fact of their making more systematic and constant use of such durable materials as red sandstone, black slate and Chunar sandstone. The second is that the method of colouring stone images with appropriate paints, so much practised in earlier times, was due to their wooden prototypes which were surely coated with paint in ancient days (it is still the custom in Burma).

Of the seven different kinds of *mūrtisthānas, i.e.*, materials for the making of images, several others such as metal, stone and paint, etc., require to be considered at some detail. The metal images especially the bronze ones fall under the *pākajā* class as it has been mentioned above and discovery of some early specimens fully proves that the Indian artists were quite adept in the art of bronze casting. In fact, the skill they display in the casting of the beautiful bronze Buddha of the early Gupta period found at Sultanganj and now in the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery is unique; it can surely rank as one of the best specimens. The gold plated bronze image of Mañjuśrī recovered from the

Balai Dhap mound, close to the ruins of Mahāsthān and now in the Rajshahi Museum, is another fine specimen of the same art, though of a slightly later date. It is unfortunate that very few, if any at all, earlier images have so far been found, but the discovery of the above proves that the Indian artists had long experience in this branch of fine arts. The uninscribed and inscribed cast coins of the pre-Christian period, some of them going back to an age as early as the 2nd or 3rd century B. C., if not earlier, do not portray, it is true, that excellence which is evinced by the bronze images of later date. But it should be borne in mind that the Indians in their early efforts at coinage both in the issues of the punch-marked and cast coins especially the former, were never very successful and the crudeness with which some of the purely indigenous money were being manufactured up till recent times should be noted.[1] The metal-casters' art especially in the fashioning of divine images on the other hand remained at a high level throughout and the mediaeval bronze statues and statuettes from Nalanda, Kurkihar, Jhaveri (Chittagong) and other places of eastern India, and Chamba, Rajputana, etc., from northern India and the ones from Negapatam, Madura and various other parts of Southern India characteristically testify to the truth of the above remark.

It is however interesting to note that though a few texts contain detailed descriptions of the method of casting images, there are many others which remain silent about it. The earliest of the latter, as we have shown, lay down rules for making images in wood and clay, which materials are

[1] The copper coins of Udaipur, Mewar, now known as *dinglā* and some of them formerly known also as *triśūliāñ* on account of their bearing on them a trident, can be mentioned as an example. W. W. Webb informs us that these coins were still being manufactured as late as the sixties of the last century; *The Currencies of Rajputana*, p. 13.

comparatively inexpensive and easily acquired. A devotee who wished to give some sort of permanency to the image of his god would naturally think upon stone of various kinds; and texts incorporated in the Purāṇas and Āgamas give minute details about the method of stone carving. But the casting of large-sized metal images was an elaborate process and required a great deal of expense and so could be practised only occasionally. This is borne out by the significant observation of T. A. G. Rao that 'metal is rarely employed in the making of *dhruva-beras*; this material is almost exclusively used for casting *utsava*, *snapana* and *bali* images,' the latter being usually small ones cast solid. The compilers of the second group of the iconographic and iconometric texts usually incorporated rules and canons which would be mostly in demand for supplying the religious needs of the general class of devotees belonging to the various sects. But rules on the method of casting for the use of the more skilled technicians were no doubt collected by some of the ancient and mediaeval iconographers of India. A few comparatively late compilations, thus, base their description of this method called the '*Madhūcchiṣṭa-vidhānam*,' on these collections. The word *madhūcchiṣṭa* means bees' wax, what is left over (*ucchiṣṭa*) after the honey is strained. In this process which is known to the western artists as 'cire perdue' or the 'lost wax', the molten metal is left over in the earthen mould to congeal after the wax is gradually melted away by heat, and the bees' wax played the most important part; thus, the process acquired the above name. Gopinath Rao quotes three passages from *Kāraṇāgama*, *Suprabhedāgama* and *Viṣṇusaṃhitā*; the first two merely testify to the use of bees' wax in the metal casting while the last mention briefly the process thus, ' if an image is to be made of metal, it must first be made in wax and then coated with earth; gold or other metals

are purified and cast into (the mould) and a complete image is thus obtained by capable workmen.' [1] The *Mānasāra* (P. K. Acharya's Edition) devotes a complete chapter (LXVIII) for describing the method of casting images in metal. S. K Saraswati rightly points out, however, that the whole chapter is concerned chiefly with the ritualistic side of the subject; and the meagre information regarding the technique of the process is very little explicit in character, on account of the extremely corrupt form of the text. Saraswati has drawn our attention to the first *prakaraṇa* of the *Abhilaṣitārthacintāmaṇi*, also known as *Mānasollāsa Śāstra*, said to have been composed by king Someśvara Bhūlokamalla, of the Western Cālukya line of Kalyani who came to the throne in 1124-25 A.D. In connection with the topic of ' adoration to the gods ' (*devatā-bhakti*) the *prakaraṇa* consisting of 21 verses gives a succinct and by far the best account about the process of manufacture of metal images.[2]

The text first refers to the preparation of the image (*i.e.*, the model, evidently made of wax, though not expressly said so here) complete with all the details, according to the *navatāla* measurement; then instructions are given about the placing of wax-tubes on its back, shoulders and the neck or crown and besmearing it with refined clay in three layers. Rules for the preparation of the clay are given in detail and it is needless to say that it is much different from the one mentioned in the *Hayaśīrṣa Pañcarātra*. The clay coatings should be made in regular intervals and be

[1] T. A. G. Rao, *Op. cit.* Vol. I, Part I, Introduction, p. 51: *lohe sikthamayīm arcāṃ kārayitvā mṛdāvṛtaṃ suvarṇādīni saṃśodhya vidrāvyāṅgāravapunaḥ-kuśalaiḥ kārayed yatnāt sampūrṇaṃ sarvato ghanam. Viṣṇu saṃhitā*, Paṭala, XIV, a Pāñcarātra text as quoted by Rao.

[2] *J.I.S.O.A.*, Vol, IV, No 2, p. 139ff, S. K. Saraswati on ' An ancient text on the casting of metal images.'

carefully dried up in the shade. The textual injunction is to be noted that the amount of wax used to prepare the model should be weighed in the very beginning by the wise artist (*sikthakaṃ tolayedādāvarccālagnaṃ vicakṣaṇaḥ*). Then the particular metal out of which the casting is to be done should be measured according to certain proportions; if the image is to be made of brass or copper, the metal should weigh ten times (or eight times according to a variant reading), if of silver, twelve times, and, if of gold, sixteen times that of the wax model, according to the specific gravity of the metals. Then the measured metal should be encased in a cocoanut shaped earthen crucible (*nālikerākṛtiṃ muṣām*) and the wax from the clay-coated mould should be melted away by heating the image in fire. The crucible with the metal within ought to be so heated as the latter should form a liquid mass and after puncturing the top of the crucible with an iron rod, the whole molten metal should be carefully poured down the mouth of the tube. When the molten metal has congealed after cooling down, then the clay coating should be broken up very carefully. Any superfluous metal and the tubes adhering to the fully-fashioned metal image should be filed away with a *cāraṇa* (a file?) and lastly the whole should be brightly polished (*paścādujjvalatāṃ nayet*). When this is all done in the manner prescribed above, the king should instal it on an auspicious day according to the usual rites and should offer daily worship to it.[1] Saraswati remarks that the above text 'does not say whether the model would have to be made of solid wax or with an inner core.' But a perusal of the text will show that it does seem to refer to solid casting which was the general rule in case of small images. In the case of bigger images, the method of hollow casting seems to have been followed on account of their cost and weight.

[1] The above is a summary of S. K. Saraswati's translation of the text under observation.

Several of the earliest big metal images of India, Mahasthan Mañjuśrī and the Sultanganj Buddha mentioned above, exhibit a core still sticking tightly to their inside. From this it seems that the wax model was worked over an inner compound probably consisting of charred husk, finely rubbed clay, thoroughly carded cotton and powdered salt—the same ingredients that were used in the preparation of the clay for applying to the outside of the wax mould. Saraswati has not referred to another edited text on metal casting, *viz.*, that contained in the *Śilparatna* of Śrīkumāra who flourished in the 16th century A.D. It consists of twenty-two verses incorporated in the second chapter (verses 32-53) of the printed edition of *Śilparatna*, Part II, by T. Ganapati Sastri. The text, though corrupt, seems to lay down details which are concerned with hollow casting. The first verse (*Madhūcchiṣṭena nirmāya sakalaṃ niṣkalaṃ tu vā | Baddhvā mṛdā dṛḍhaṃ śuṣkamadhūcchiṣṭaṃ bahiḥ sṛjet*, and verses 42ff. speak of a process in which the inside of the image remains hollow after the wax inside and the one outside is melted away by heat. The last verse (No. 53, *viz.*, *Ghanaṃ cellohajaṃ vimbaṃ madhūcchiṣṭena kevalaḥ | Kṛtvā mṛllepanādīni pūrvavat kramataścaret*) does nothing but refer to the casting of *ghana*, *i e.*, solid images. That hollow cast metal images were made is fully proved by writers on Smṛti works like Manu and others who refer to such images heated from within which an adulterer would have to embrace as a sort of punishment. The Ṛgvedic passage *sūrmyaṃ suṣiramiva* (VIII. 69, 12), though not referring to an image of the god meant for worship, seems also to refer to the practice of hollow casting.

Elaborate details are laid down in early and late texts about the selection of proper kind of stone for the making of images. The earlier ones, however, have special preference for wood as we have already shown from such texts as

Bhaviṣya Purāṇa, Bṛhatsaṃhitā and the *Matsya Purāṇa*. The *Viṣṇudharmottara* does not only lay down elaborate rules for the selection of wood, but also for that of stone to be used in making durable images of gods. The whole of the ninetieth chapter entitled *Śilāparīkṣā*, of the third book of the *Viṣṇudharmottara*, deals with this topic and the details mentioned there closely follow those enjoined in connection with *Dāruparīkṣā*. In the first few verses it is laid down that the *sthapati* will go to a hill and select the particular stone for image. White, red, yellow and black stones are used for the Brāhman, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya and Śūdra devotees, respectively. Stone that is suitable for such images should be one-coloured, smooth, imbedded in earth, without any grains of sand in its layers, good to look at, washed by spring water or merged in water, shaded by trees and hailing from sacred tīrthas, of good length, breadth and thickness (*āyāmapariṇāhāḍhyam*). Stones, that are not so, are those that are burnt by sun-rays, which are used for other works, which contain alkaline water, which are very much rough, which are marked with minute spots or patches of different shape and size (*Tilaiḥ sambhūṣitā yā tu vicitrair vindumiśritā*) and so on (on this authority the spotted red sandstone of Mathura will be unsuited for image-making). Then mention is made of various modes of testing the selected stone,—the tests consisting of different kinds of *śilālepas*, a few recipes of which are given; the application of this test to the stone and the reactions which will follow will show whether the stone is worth collecting for images or not. After being fully satisfied on all these points, the artist will take the selected stone according to rules to the temple for being fashioned into the divine image. The last part of the eighteenth *vilāsa* of Gopal Bhatta's *Haribhaktivilāsa* entitled *Śilāgrahaṇam* is devoted to the consideration of the same subject. He quotes extensively from the section of the *Hayaśīrṣa Pañcarātra*, which elaborately deals with the rituals connected

with entrance in the forest, selection of flawless one-coloured stone, worshipping the god Viṣṇu, offering of *bali* to the guardians of the quarters, worshipping the selected stone with sandal paste, flowers and *naivedya* and propitiating the various Yātudhānas, Guhyakas and Siddhas who may reside in the stone or in its vicinity and asking their permission to use the stone for the image of Viṣṇu and entreating them to go to reside in another place with these words—' *Viṣṇuvimbārthamasmākaṃ yatraiṣā Keśavājñayā | Viṣṇvarthaṃ yadbhavet kāryaṃ yuṣmākamapi tad bhavet || Anena balidānena prītā bhavatha sarvathā | Kṣemeṇa gacchatānyatra muktvā sthānamidaṃ punaḥ ||* .' The Pāñcarātra text also refers to the significance of the various dreams which the selectors of the stone might dream while sleeping at night near it. Then early in the morning of the next day, after the performance of the daily rites and paying respects to the stone and the stone-cutting implements, the sculptor with the *tańka* (stone-mason's chisel) in hand (*śilpī tańkahastaḥ*) should commence his work. The stone for the image should measure a little more than the image to be fashioned out of it. After cutting it out and raising it up, it should be brought near the temple and expert artists then should begin their work on it (*Tataḥ pravarttayet karma vidvān vijñaistu śilpibhiḥ*). In the section under *Śilālakṣaṇam*, the Hayaśīrṣa refers to various kinds of stone that are to be avoided.[1] A list of different kinds of stone fit for being fashioned into the images of Vāsudeva Viṣṇu is now given. Those stones which are procured from sacred places, which are to be found merged in rivers, on shady hills or under ground, not burnt

[1] *Kṣārāmlasevitā yā ca nadītīrasamudbhavā | Puramadhye sthitā yā ca tathāpi tu vane sthitā || Catuṣpathe sthitā yā ca mṛcchilāpakkaṇe ca yā | Uṣare ca tathā madhye valmīke vāpi yā sthitā || Sūryaraśmi-prataptā yā yā ca dagdhā dāvāgninā | Anyakarmmopayuktā yā anyadevārthanirmitā | Kravyādādyanupahatā varjyā yatnena vai śilā | Yena kenacid ānītā varjjanīyā tathā śilā ||*

by sun-rays, which are of one pleasing colour like pale brown, red yellow or black (*pāṇḍurā cāruṇā pītā kṛṣṇā śastā ca varṇinām*) are recommended. Then details are given about different types of stones such as *yuvā* (youthful), *madhyā* (of middle age), *bālā* (very young) and *vṛddhā* (old) of which the first two only are to be used for images (these refer to the geological age of particular varieties) ; stones of masculine, feminine and neuter gender are to be distinguished with the help of their characteristic signs such as their ring and their glaze. The main image should be made of masculine stone, the pedestal of feminine, while the *piṇḍikā* (lowermost base) of the neuter (*Puṃliṅgaiḥ pratimā kāryā strīliṅgaiḥ pādapīṭhikā | Piṇḍikārthaṃ tu sā grāhyā dṛṣṭvā yā ṣaṇḍalakṣaṇā*). This injunction would mean that these above three were made of separate stones; but in most cases, the actual practice was different, the three being made out of one single block of stone. If the stones in the time of being cut and dressed show circular patches inside them they are to be avoided as far as possible, for the different kinds of such patches (many are enumerated) bring forth various kinds of misfortunes, if they are worked upon. The *Hayaśīrṣa* then goes on to describe the characteristic signs of the *piṇḍikā* and *pīṭha* of the image proper. Elaborate details are given and as many as ten different kinds of the former, such as *sthaṇḍilā, yakṣī, vedī, maṇḍalā, pūrṇacandrā, vajrā, padmā, ardhaśaśī* and *trikoṇā* (the name of the tenth is not given), are enumerated. As regards the height of the image and its pedestal, it is expressly laid down here that the shrine door should be divided into eight equal units; the image proper should measure two of these units, while the *piṇḍikā*, one part of the height of the image divided into three equal parts.[1] The *Matsya Purāṇa* distinctly

[1] *Dvārocchrāyasya yanmānamaṣṭadhā tattu kārayet | Bhāgadvayena pratimāṃ tribhāgīkṛtvā tat punaḥ | Piṇḍikā bhāgataḥ kāryā*

says that all this work connected with the fashioning of the image in all its minute details should be done in a covered secluded place by the image-maker in pious and well-controlled manner and while engaged in his work he should always meditate on the god whose image is being fashioned by him.[1] Detailed instructions are incorporated in most of the texts dealing with Brahmanical iconography about the actual proportions to be followed in the carving of the entire image and its various sections and sub-sections; a reference to the eighth chapter of this book where some of these iconometric texts are discussed will testify to the thoroughness and accuracy of the ideal which was set before the ancient and mediæval iconographers of India.

Pictorial representations of divinities were also much in vogue in ancient and mediæval India; this custom still persists in present times, but the background on which the

nātinīcā na cocchritā | The distinction between *piṇḍikā* and *pīṭhikā* or *pīṭha* is not very clear; in the text, under *piṇḍikālakṣaṇam*, we are told that the former should measure half the height of the main image in its altitude and be equal in its width to the same of the image—*Ucchrāyaṃ pratimārddhañca dairghyeṇa pratimāsamā* | Then after enumerating the ten different kinds of *piṇḍas* noted above, the text lays down some interesting details in the following lines some of which I quoted from the *Matsya Purāṇa* in a previous chapter:—*Saile śailamayīṃ piṇḍīṃ pārthive pārthivīṃ tathā* | *Dāruje dārujāṃ kuryānmiśre miśrāṃ tathaiva ca* | *Nānyayonistu kāryā vai sadā śubhaphalepsubhiḥ* | *Arccāyāmasamaṃ dairghyaṃ liṅgāyāmasamaṃ tathā* | *Yasya devasya yā patnī tāṃ pīṭhe parikalpayet*; then it adds, *Evameva samākhyātaṃ samāsāt pīṭhalakṣaṇam.*

[1] *Vivikte saṃvṛte sthāne sthapatiḥ saṃyatendriyaḥ* |
Pūrvavat kāladeśajñaḥ śāstrajñaḥ śuklabhūṣaṇaḥ |
Prayato niyatāhāro devatādhyānatatparaḥ |
Yajamānānukūlena vidvān karma samācaret |

All the quotations from the *Hayaśīrṣa-Pañcarātra* and the *Matsya Purāṇa* are here taken from the 18th *vilāsa* of Gopal Bhatta's *Haribhaktivilāsa.*

image is now painted mainly consists of paper. When it is found inconvenient and expensive to worship his god in stone, bronze or even clay icons, a sectary would often worship him in '*ghaṭa*' and '*paṭa*,' *i.e.*, in an water vessel with vermilion and sandal or other paints on it and in a paper picture of the deity encased in an wooden frame (this custom is mostly in vogue in Bengal, where it is called in local dialect—'*ghaṭe paṭe pūjā* '). In earlier times, cloth or canvas was the principal medium and the word *paṭa* which originally signified cloth acquired the sense of pictorial representation of a deity or some mythology connected with it. This is *citra* in a more restricted sense of the term, another of its wider significance being sculptures fully in the round. It is used in the former sense in many of the texts dealing with iconographic matter and when the *Matsya Purāṇa* refers to the first of the four different kinds of images it undoubtedly uses the word in the former meaning. But the scope of these *citrajā* images, as we have seen, is much wider, for it does refer not only to divine images painted on cloth but also on walls and vessels (*Paṭe kūḍye ca pātre ca citrajā pratimā smṛtā*). Not only colour drawings on the bare surface of mud walls, but also frescoes that are painted in variegated colour on some kind of plaster fixed to the surface of stone walls as in those of rock-cut caves of Ajanta are included in this group of icons. The *pātras* are evidently water-vessels, *ghaṭas* mentioned above, made of clay or metal and painted in colour on their outer surface with the figures of divinities. The *Viṣṇudharmottara* gives a detailed account of the rules of painting which is of unique interest and importance for a thorough appreciation of the great advance that the Indian artists of ancient and mediæval times made in the art of painting.[1] The *Hayaśīrṣa-Pañca-*

[1] *Viṣṇudharmottara*, published by the Venkateśvara Press, Book III, chs. 2, 27, 35-43. Translation with introduction and notes by

rātra expressly eulogises the pictorial representations of Hari and says that he who draws beautiful *rūpas* of Viṣṇu (on cloth or other objects) enjoys one thousand yugas of blissful residence in the Viṣṇuloka ; as Hari is always manifest in frescoes (*lepya citra*), so he should always be worshipped in his *lepya citra* forms ; as beauty, ornament and expressions are clearly discernible in his painted forms, so Janārddana approaches them ; so the sages ordain that hundred-fold virtue accrues to the worshippers of the lord in these forms; seeing Puṇḍarīkākṣa in picture, full of grace and illusive excellence, one is freed from sin hoarded through untold numbers of births ; therefore the god Nārāyaṇa should be worshipped in pictures (*paṭasthaḥ*) by those who want spiritual welfare and piety.[1]

Stella Kramrisch, Calcutta University Press, 1928, pp. 1-20, 31 62. Several emendations of this translation were made by A. C. Coomaraswamy, in *J. A. O. S.*, 1932 pp. 13-21. The *Citralakṣaṇa*, said to have been composed by Nagnajit, now available only in its Tibetan version, deals extensively with the rules of painting. The *Śilparatna* also has a section which deals with painting. The sections on *Paṭa-vidhāna* in *Arya Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* (edited by T. Ganapati Sastri, in the Trivandrum Sanskrit Series) also contain some useful information on this art; but it is more concerned with the iconographic presentation of the Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna divinities. M. Lalou in her work on *Iconographic Des Etoffes Peintes* (*Paṭa*) has translated these chapters in French, given their Tibetan version and written a very useful introduction (Paul Geuthner, Paris, 1930).

[1] *Hayaśirṣa-Pañcarātra* in connection with the installation of *citrajā* images, as quoted by Gopal Bhatta: *Yāvanti Viṣṇurūpāṇi surūpāṇīha lekhayet* | *Tāvadyuga-sahasrāṇi Viṣṇuloke mahīyate* | *Lepye citre Harirnityaṃ sannidhānamupaiti hi* | *Tasmāt sarva-prayatnena lepya-citragataṃ yajet* | *Kāntibhūṣaṇabhāvādyaścitre yasmāt sphuṭaṃ sthitaḥ* | *Ataḥ sānnidhyamāyāti citrajāsu Janārddanaḥ* | *Tasmāccitrārccane puṇyaṃ smṛtaṃ śataguṇaṃ budhaiḥ* | *Citrastha Puṇḍarīkākṣaṃ savilāsaṃ savibhramam* | *Dṛṣṭvā vimucyate pāpair-jjanmakoṭī susañcitaiḥ* | *Tasmācchubhārthibhirdhīraiḥ mahāpuṇya-jigīṣayā* | *Paṭasthaḥ pūjanīyastu devo Nārāyaṇaḥ prabhuḥ* |

Reference ought to be made here, for completeness' sake, to various other modes of representing the deity. The āgamas enumerate several kinds of precious and semi-precious stones like *sphaṭika* (crystal), *padmarāga* (lapis-lazuli), *vajra* (diamond), *vaidūrya* (cat's eye), *vidruma* (coral), *puṣya* and *ratna* (ruby). That crystal could be very skilfully handled and fashioned into beautiful forms is proved by the discovery of the excellently carved crystal bowl with fish handle on the lid among the relics of Buddha inside the big monolithic chest at Piprawa. This class of images really falls under the *ratnajā* group of the *Hayaśīrṣa* and the *śastrotkīrṇā* one of the *Matsya Purāṇa*, the latter also including images made of wood and stone. To the *śastrotkīrṇā* class will also go those metal plaques gold and others—which bear on them the effigies of gods. Mention has already been made of the Lauriya Nandangarh and Piprawa gold plaques bearing the representations of a nude goddess; among the several other tiny gold leaves discovered inside the big relic casket at Piprawa, a few other figures in outline—an elephant, a crude human figure, etc., can still be recognised, whose character cannot be determined with certainty. The unique representation of Śiva-Pārvatī embossed on a concave plaque of pure gold, 2½ inches high, found on the site of the Patna fort is one of the most interesting finds of this nature that have recently been made.[1] Metal plaques containing

[1] K. P. Jayaswal, 'Pataliputra Śiva-Pārvatī Gold Plaque' in *J.I.O.S.A.*, Vol. II, 1934, p. 1. Jayaswal writes: 'Below the *jaṭā* knot of the male figure, there is a crescent-like band. Its left hand touches the bosom of the female figure. It is undoubtedly a figure of Śiva-Pārvatī The figures are not nimbate; the style of the female figure is that of the Didarganj Yakṣī and that of the male figure of the Patna statues. The absence of nimbus and general treatment assigns it to the Maurya or Pre-Maurya times.' If this dating is accepted then it becomes the earliest joint representation of these two deities in the historic period, the second in point of date being that on the coins of Huvishka, noted in the previous chapter;

the figures of Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu and his incarnations, described by some scholars as Viṣṇupaṭṭas (these were also made of stone), as also those of various other divinities are to be grouped along with the above. There was not much of technical nicety and elaboration that was wanted in the fashioning of such objects of worship and the texts are usually silent about the methods of their manufacture. As regards the *ratnajā* class of images, little or no details about their manufacturing technique are to be found in the general body of the iconographic literature for the obvious reason that these images being expensive ones were seldom in demand by the common class of devotees and even when a few wealthy ones were in need of them, the highly skilled jewellers and ivory-carvers of ancient and mediaeval India were never handicapped for lack of instructions in meeting their wants.

Cast images have been placed by me under the *pākajā* class; another class of images which can also very well come under the same are the numerous terracotta-figurines that have been discovered in untold numbers from various parts of India and datable from the remotest times onwards. Some of them have undoubtedly cult significance, while others are children's toys; numerous others, again, are clay seals which were stamped with the particular signs of royalties, court officials, trade-guilds, religious establishments and others, and lightly burnt afterwards. These latter classes sometimes bore on their surface the various Brahmanic deities and their emblems which were certainly based on the contemporary mode of their representation. Terracotta plaques bearing figures of cult-deities as also mythological stories associated with them were very

but it is doubtful whether it can be dated so early. The Didarganj Yakṣī has been assigned by Marshall to as late a date as 1st century B.C. or later, in his latest work, *viz.*, *Monuments of Sanchi*.

frequently used in Bengal and such other parts of India as outside decorations of *stūpas, vihāras* and temples for the pious edification of various sectarian devotees. These were comparatively cheap and easily available and so the potters' art was extensively patronised by the sectaries. Attention has already been drawn to the terracotta objects described by Mackay as images of gods in the Indus valley sites ; Mackay expressly tells us that the numerousness of such finds shows that they were manufactured in the factories of image-makers of these regions. Excavations in the historic sites of Vaiśālī, Bhita, Srāvastī, Kausāmbī, Somapur (Pāhārpur), Puṇḍravarddhana (Mahāsthān) and others have brought to light large numbers of the terracotta objects belonging to the different categories noticed above, and some of them are particularly useful for the study of Hindu iconography. Thus the variant representations of a nude female figure in burnt clay dating from a few centuries before the Christian era have been taken by Coomaraswamy to stand for the mother goddess whose cult seemed to have been much in vogue not only among the original settlers of India, later finding an wider currency there, but also in the countries of the near East and eastern Mediterranean. As regards the seal impressions, reference has already been made in Chapter V to those found at Mohenjo-daro, Harappa, Basarh, Bhita, Rajghat, etc., which are of unique interest for the purpose of the study of Hindu iconography. It has often been said that these were ordinary clay objects which were either sunburnt or burnt in kilns after they had received the impression of the device from the seal matrix, the negative of the plaques, and the other moulds. But it is possible that some sort of preparation was necessary for the ordinary clay and a few other ingredients had to be mixed with it. I have already referred to the formula laid down in the *Hayaśīrṣa* for preparing clay for image-making; but this was not ordinary clay, but *stucco* and when the image was made out of it, it was not

burnt. Brief reference has also been made by me to the clay compound which was used in the casting of metal images as written in the *Mānasollāsa* ; it may be mentioned now in detail. 'To clay should be added charred husk finely rubbed, cotton severed a hundred times and a little salt finely powdered. All these (when mixed with clay) should be finely ground on a smooth stone.' [1] The *Śilparatna*

[1] Saraswati's translation of the original which runs thus: *Masīṃ tūṣamayīṃ ghṛṣṭvā kārpāsaṃ śataśaḥ kṣatam* | *Lavanaṃ cūrṇitaṃ ślakṣṇaṃ svalpaṃ saṃyojayenmṛdā* | *Peṣayet sarvvamekatra suślakṣṇe ca śilātale* | Evidently this compound was also used in the making of the crucible in which the metal lump was melted on fire The *Śilparatna* refers to five kinds of clay compounds with their constituents, used in metal casting, in these lines:—*Kaṭhinā mandakaṭhinā mṛdvī mṛdutarā tathā* | *Muṣākaraṇayogyetipañcadhā mṛttikā smṛtā* || *Pūrvoktāṃ nākujāṃ vātha mṛtsnāmādāya yatnataḥ* | *Mṛlloṣṭ(ṛ)acūrṇasaṃyuktāṃ yathāyukti vimardayet* || *Śuddhāmbhasā pūgacarmasāraṃ yuktyā suyojayet* | *Kārayet kaṭhinamevaṃ śilāmuṣalatāḍitam* || *Tasmin gomayasaṃyukte syānmandakaṭhinā punaḥ* | *Mṛdbhāṇḍacūrṇasaṃyuktaṃ tatpādāṃśakamṛttikām* || *Peṣaṇyāṃ peṣayed yāṃ sā mṛdvīti kathitā purā* | *Tadeva gomayayutā mṛtsnā mṛdutarā smṛtā* || *Tūṣādyaṅgāracūrṇena saṁyuktā ghaṭamṛttikā* | *Kārpāsapaṭacūrṇena samaṃ muṣalapīḍitā* | *Eṣā muṣāmṛdākhyātā kartavyā sānayā dṛḍham* | *Yatkiñcidīpsitaṃ taṃtu kiñcinnyūnā pramāṇataḥ* || It can be summed up in English as follows: The five kinds of clay compounds are: *kaṭhinā* (hard), *manda-kaṭhinā* (medium-hard), *mṛdvī* (soft) *mṛdutarā* (softer) and *muṣākaraṇayogyā* (clay fit for making crucibles); the first is made of ordinary clay or that from ant hills (*nākujā*) thoroughly mixed with finely powdered brick-dust, pure water and extracts of betelnut husks (*pūgacarmasāra*); when the above compound is mixed up with cowdung, it constitutes the second variety ; finely powdered dust of earthen pots mixed with clay in proportion of one to four makes up the third, while cowdung added to the same, the fourth ; lastly the fifth is made by mixing charred husk, earthen pot dust and desiccated cotton cloth all in equal proportions and all finely powdered. It will be seen that the fifth compound is more or less the same as that given in the *Mānasollāsa*.

refers, in connection with making of terracotta *liṅgas* (*pakvaliṅga*), to the mode of preparing the clay which has special bearing on this question. It says good earth fit for use should be procured and well ground; then it will be left over for a month in *pañcagavya* (*i.e.*, milk, milk-curd, clarified butter, urine and dung of the cows) and afterwards burnt in fire.[1]

T. A. G. Rao mentions, on the basis of an unnamed śilpa text, that brick, *kaḍi-śarkarā* and *danta* (ivory) as a few other materials which were used for making images. The main ingredient in the preparation of *kaḍiśarkarā*, according to him is limestone, the others are not named by him; I shall not be surprised if the compound be something like the other described by me on the basis of the *Hayaśīrṣa* as quoted by Gopala Bhatta, in which as we saw powdered limestone was one of the main constituents. The text there

[1] *Śilparatna*, T. Ganapati Sastri's Edition, Pt. II, p. 6, verses 49-50: *Athavā kevalaṃ mṛtsnāṃ karmayogyāṃ vicūrṇitām | Marditāṃ pañcagavyādbhirmāsamātraṃ tathoṣitām || Gṛhītvā kārayelliṅgaṃ sapīṭhaṃ tviṣṭamānataḥ | Vipacet kuśalairagnau pakvaliṅgaṃ tu tad bhavet ||* The other clay compound which is mentioned in the same text in verses 44-48, for making durable clay images (without being burnt) differs from the one mentioned in the *Hayaśīrśa* in as much as it mentions four different kinds of clay, *viz.* white, red, yellow and black; among the other ingredients are grains of barley, wheat, a kind of pulse (*māṣa*), bdellium (*guggula*) and extracts of lac, pumpkin, *syāma* and *kuṇḍuru* (a kind of aromatic plant), *pañcagavya* and oil. In this there is no mention of powdered iron, stone and sand and so this is the real clay compound and not the stucco-like substance mentioned in the other text. The method of manufacture was—*Tāṃ mṛdāṃ marditāṃ pakṣaṃ māsamātroṣitāṃ punaḥ | Gṛhītvā kārayelliṅgaṃ sapīṭhaṃ lakṣaṇānvitam | Māsaṃ tu śoṣayed gharme ||*; *i.e.*, the clay should be kneaded for about a fortnight and left over for a month; after that *liṅga* with the *pīṭha* and its characteristic signs should be made out of it; then the *liṅga* with its *pīṭha* should be dried for a month in the sun.

refers to *karkarā* as another of the materials and *karkarā* and *śarkarā* probably denote the same thing, *viz.*, little stone-chips, perhaps lime-stone chips; the *Śabdakalpadruma* records that *karkaram* means *cūrṇajanakṣudra-pāṣāṇa-khaṇḍam, kāñkara ghuṭiṃ iti bhāṣā* and *śarkarā* also is explained as 'a pebble,' 'gravel' and 'small stone.' Rao further informs us, 'Brick and mortar or *kaḍi-śarkarā* images are also occasionally met with in several temples; in the famous temples at Śrīraṅgam and Trivandrum (Ananta-śayanam), the main central images are understood to be of this kind.' [1] As regards brick and mortar images, the same author refers to one instance found by him in Vatiśvarankoyil (Tanjore District) image of Mahāsadāśivamūrti. This image corresponds to the textual description (as given in the *Mānasāra*) that this form should have twenty-five faces—each of the five aspects of Śiva (Vāmadeva, Sadyojāta, Aghora, Tatpuruṣa and Īśāna) being represented by five faces and fifty arms. 'The heads are arranged in tiers in arithmetical progression—thus the top-most tier has only one head, the next one below has three, the next five and so on till the last tier has nine heads.' [2]

The above presentation of the manufacturing technique followed by the iconoplastic artists of India will show how great was the demand for the cult images, as also their emblems and accessories throughout India of the post-Christian period. The services of the wood carver, the potter, the stone mason, the painter, the jeweller, and the metal caster were utilized by the numerous religious-minded

[1] T. A. G. Rao, *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, Introduction, p. 49.

[2] T. A. G. Rao, *Op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 374, Pl. CXIV, fig. 2. Reference may be made *in passim* to the similar arrangement of heads of the multi-headed Avalokiteśvara figures belonging to the Vajrayāna pantheon of Tibet and Nepal. One such eleven-headed standing figure has been illustrated by Grünwedel in his *Buddhist Art*, p. 203, fig. 148.

people of India in greater or lesser degrees. In fact, the divine images and their worship had come to be the most potent factor and the commonest manifestation of the inner religious experience as inculcated in *bhakti*, in the lives of the majority of the Indians. Some of the intellectual thinkers, as we have seen in a previous chapter, were not much in love with this religious practice, but they could not ignore it altogether and, however grudgingly, allowed it a place of importance in their works. Texts, often in a curious manner, refer to this acceptance when they say that the gods were visible to men in *satya*, *tretā* and the *dvāpara yugas*, but with the advent of *kali* they are not so and they are now to be found in their images.[1] The *Viṣṇudharmottara* tells us that the gods were worshipped in their visible forms, not images, in the *satya yuga*; in the *tretā* and *dvāpara yugas*, this was done both in the former as well as in their images. In the *tretā yuga* these were worshipped in households and in the *dvāpara* in the forest; in *kali yuga*, however, the practice of building houses of gods (*i.e.*, temples) in town was begun. The enshrinement of the gods (*i.e.*, their images) should be done in land suitable for such purpose, which should be given according to the rules followed in gifts of lands. The above is a free translation of the following:—'*Satyayuge devānāṃ pratyakṣapūjanaṃ—tretādvāparayoḥ pratyakṣapūjā pratimāsu ca—tatrāpi tretāyuge gṛhe dvāpare cāraṇye kalau ca devāyatananirmitirnagareṣu samārabdhā, bhūmidānaṃ vidhāyaiva devāyatanapratiṣṭhā kāryā, devālayayogyabhūmi*' (*Viṣṇudharmottara*, Bk. III, Ch. 93, Vv. 1-9).

Several factors will have to be taken into consideration which collectively contributed to the phenomenal rise to

[1] *Kṛtatretādvāpareṣu narāḥ paśyanti devatāḥ |*
Tiṣyaṃ prāpya na paśyanti pūjāstvaiccāgatā yataḥ ||

importance of this practice and the consequent development of the icono-plastic art in its various phases. The first and foremost of them was undoubtedly the wide existence of sectarianism that prevailed in India in this period and which was ever becoming more and more important and all embracing. The Indians were now divided into multiple numbers of sects and if we leave aside the Buddhists and the Jains, and their various sub-sects, which were heterodox from the Brahmanical point of view, there were still the five stereotyped sectaries—the followers and worshippers of the Pañcadevatās, *viz.*, Viṣṇu, Śiva, Śakti, Sūrya and Gaṇapati. Over and above these well-known five principal sectaries, there were a host of others which had grown up and had found their particular places under the ever-expanding shelter of the composite Hinduism. In the chapter on the installation of images, Varāhamihira gives a list of several sects which were flourishing since a long time before his work was composed. He says that the image of Viṣṇu, Sūrya, Śambhu (Śiva), Mātṛgaṇas, Brahmā, Buddha and the Jinas should be duly consecrated and installed by the Bhāgavatas, the Magas, the ash-besmeared twice-born ones (*i.e.*, the Pāśupatas), those well-acquainted with the *pūjā* of the Mātṛgaṇas, the Brahmans versed in the Vedic lore, the Śākyas and the unclad ones, respectively, according to the rites particular to the worship of the individual gods.[1] The list may not

[1] *Bṛhat Saṃhitā*, S. Dvivedi's Edition, Ch. 59, V. 19.
Viṣṇorbhāgavatān magāṃśca savituḥ śambhoḥ sabhasmadvijān ।
Mātṛṇāmapi maṇḍalakramavido viprān vidurbrahmaṇaḥ ॥
Śākyān sarvahitasya śāntamanaso naynān jinānāṃ vidu- ।
Rye yaṃ devamupāśritāḥ svavidhinā taistasya kāryā kriyā ॥

Utpala elaborately comments on the above; a part of his commentary is quoted here for our better understanding of the text :—
'*Dvijān brāhmaṇān sabhasma bhasma-sahitān pāśupatānityarthaḥ ।*
mātṛṇāṃ brāhmyādīnāṃ (sapta mātṛikāḥ) maṇḍalakramavido ye

be an exhaustive one but is highly significant; the Gāṇapatyas as a sect are not included here and it is presumable that though the worship of Gaṇapati-Vināyaka was in vogue from a time much earlier still the sect of his exclusive worshippers had not then been organised. The Iranian element in the worship of the sun especially in northern India had been long acclimatised; the Bhāgavata (known also as the Pāñcarātras) and the Pāśupata were still the authorised way of referring to the sects centering round Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu and Rudra-Śiva; the worship of the Mātṛgaṇas (the Sapta mātṛikāḥ) was the chief manifestation of the Śakti cult. The Vedic section of the Indians had not even at that time given up the fight for the inclusion of

maṇḍalakramaṃ pūjākramaṃ vidanti jānanti | .....*Sarvahitasya buddhasya śāntamanaso jitendriyasya śākyān raktapaṭān viduḥ* (it seems the Bauddhas in Utpala's time used to wear red robes); *Jinānāmarhatāṃ nagnān nagnakṣapaṇakān viduḥ* |

The last part of the commentary is very interesting:

Ye narā yaṃ devamupāśritāḥ śaraṇyaṃ bhaktibhāvena prāptāstairnaraistasya devasya svavidhinā ātmīyadarśanoktena vidhānena | *Pāñcarātravidhinā viṣṇoḥ* | *Sauradarśanavidhānena savituḥ* | *Vātulatantroktenānyatantroktavidhinā vā śambhoḥ* | *Mātṛiṇāṃ svakalpavihitavidhānena brāhmaṇairvedavihita-karmaṇā buddhasya pāramitakrameṇa* | *Arhatāṃ taddarśanavidhinā kriyā kāryā iti.*

It can be freely translated thus:—'The installation of different divinities who are worshipped by different groups of people with *bhakti* should be done according to their respective tenets; thus, the images of Viṣṇu should be installed according to the *Pāñcarātra*, those of Sūrya according to the Saura, those of Śiva according to the rites mentioned in the *Vātulatantra* (evidently the *Pāśupataśāstra*, the means or doors mentioned in which are such mad acts as *krāthana*, *spandana*, *maṇḍana*, *śṛṅgaraṇa*, *avitatkaraṇa* and *avitadbhāṣaṇa*) the images of the Mātṛgaṇas, according to their individual tenets, that of Brahmā according to Vedic rites, of Buddha according to the Pāramitā rules, of the Arhats (Jinas) according to their own system.

Prajāpati-Brahmā, the Vedic-Brahmanic god *par excellence* as one of the sectarian divinities, though we know they were fighting for a lost cause ; eighth century sculptures in illustration of the mythology of Śiva's curse on Brahmā for his immorality (falsehood—*cf.* the Elura Liṅgodbhava-mūrti of Śiva) show that Brahmā had no chance against his powerful and virile rivals like Śiva and Viṣṇu. There can be no doubt about the existence of feelings of jealousy and rivalry between these sectaries, though, as we have shown in the first chapter, this ill-feeling and bitterness might not have been as keen and destructive as in other countries of Europe, long after this period; still these were there and helped to create new iconic forms for the edification of and worship by the individual sectaries. I have already drawn attention to the particular type of the Śaiva image known as Śarabha which was a direct counterpart of the Vaiṣṇava one, Narasiṃha, itself pre-eminently sectarian in character. Our attention to this particular type was first drawn by T. A. G. Rao who also emphasised the nature of the Trimūrti icons of Southern India in which Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu is the central figure with Brahmā and Śiva half issuing from his either side with their hands in the *añjali* pose. It is not a simple presentation of the later Brahmanical triad Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva, but is a direct sectarian rejoinder to a type of Śiva image known as Ekapādamūrti. The latter represents Śiva standing on one leg (this type evidently based on the Vedic Aja Ekapād regarded in the epic times both as one of the eleven Rudras and an epithet of Śiva), the figures of Viṣṇu and Brahmā projecting from his left and right sides respectively, with their front hands in the *añjali* poses. Rao remarks, 'In opposition evidently to this Śaiva view, and with an equally strong Paurāṇic authority on their side, the Vaiṣṇavas have similarly represented the Supreme God as Viṣṇu with Brahmā and Śiva proceeding from

him.'[1] Many of the mythological stories connected with one or other of these sects have this bias underlying them and reliefs in illustration thereof were carved in large numbers and put into prominent parts of the temples where icons of the different sectarian divinities were worshipped. Rao, in the same connection, has noted that 'often in the Purāṇas, Śiva is said to have paid homage to Viṣṇu and equally often is Viṣṇu said to have paid homage to Śiva.' The presence of sectarian bias in the origin of these myths and in the manufacture of sculptures thereof is undoubted, and a study of such stories and reliefs, connected with Viṣṇvanugraha or Cakradānamūrti of Śiva, Viṣṇu offering redemption to Śiva from the sin of Brahmahatyā for the Brahmaśiraśchedaka aspect of the latter, the Dāśarathi Rāma and Jāmadagnya Rāma *avatāras* of Viṣṇu (the last also basically illustrates in a way the struggle between the Brāhmaṇas and the Kṣatriyas) etc., will fully prove the hypothesis. Rao thinks that the fanciful rendering of the Tamil name Kacchiyappa, meaning the lord of Kacchi (Tamil for Kancipura—Conjeevarum) has given rise to a new god and his image, *viz.*, Kacchapeśvara where Viṣṇu in his tortoise incarnation is seen bathing a Śivaliṅga (*ibid.*, pp. 42-3, pl. D.). But in this we do not find the creation of a new god or a new image, but a novel presentation of a theme, in which also sectarian prejudice is clearly discernible, by a Śaiva devotee who took advantage of the phonetic similarity between Tamil *Kacchiyappa* and Sanskrit *Kacchapa* (the latter meaning a 'tortoise'). Rao has not noticed the other class of images which show definite efforts towards a rapprochement between the different sects. I have already referred to several plastic forms in which this tendency is definitely present in the introductory chapter of this

[1] T. A. G. Rao, *Op. cit.*, Vol. I., Introduction, p. 45, pl. F; for the Śarabha image and Rao's remarks on them, see *ibid.*, p. 44, pl. E.

work and such images as Hari-Hara, Dattātreya (Hari-Hara-Pitāmaha), Arddhanārīśvara, etc., are evidently of this class.

The phenomenal increase in the number of divinities constituting the Brahmanic pantheon, which were highly venerated by the different sectaries necessitated the construction of sculptures for representing one or other of them. The Vedic Indo-Aryans no doubt believed in multiple gods; an attempt is made in many of the early and late Vedic texts to fix the aggregate of thirty-three gods divided into three groups of eleven each, one connected with heaven, the second with earth and the third with waters or sometimes with the *antarīkṣa* region equated with the last. But this number is never strictly adhered to and Yāska's enumeration of three orders based on the above, *viz.*, *pṛthivīsthāna*, *antarīkṣasthāna* or *madhyamasthāna* and *dyusthāna* centering round three principal deities, *viz.*, Agni on earth, Vāyu or Indra in air and Sūrya in heaven contains a number of minor deities and deified objects which far exceeded the stereotyped list. It may be argued that as these gods were not iconically represented, the question of their number does not arise at all. But, many were the Vedic divinities who came to be intimately associated with one or other of the later sectarian deities and lent their characteristic traits to the latter in their multifarious iconic representations. An epithet which served to emphasise one particular trait of a Vedic god, later gave rise to the composition of an elaborate story for emphasising that trait of the same deity in his Purāṇic setting, and reliefs illustrating it were constructed in large numbers. To refer to one particular instance: Rudra in the Vedas, especially in the *Śatarudrīya* section, is given an epithet called *kṛttivāsa* which means one that has a skin for his garment. Now, there can be little doubt that here was the nucleus of the elaborate story of Gajāsurasaṃhāramūrti

in illustration whereof so many images of Śiva were made, in which he is shown as using the hide of the slain elephant demon as his outer covering. In the Vājasaneyī recension of the *White Yajurveda* (III. 63), Rudra the fearful is being described as *Śiva*, thus, 'Thou art gracious by name; the thunderbolt is thy father; reverence to thee; destroy us not' (*Śivo nāmāsi svaditiste pitā namaste astu mā mā hiṃsīḥ*). In the *Ṛgveda*, Rudra is described as *Kṣyad-vīra*, generally accepted by scholars in the sense of ruler over heroes, as the wise, but his terrific aspect is much emphasised; thus the hymnist prays to the god, 'Oh Rudra, do not, out of thy anger, injure our children and descendants, our people, our cattle, our houses, and do not kill our men, we invoke thee always with offerings' (I. 114, 8—*Mā nastoke tanaye mā na āyau mā no goṣu mā no aśveṣu rīriṣaḥ | Vīrānmā no Rudro bhāmito vadhīrhaviṣmaṃtaḥ sadamittvā havāmahe*). In the *Mahābhārata* (Anuśāsana Parva,) Kṛṣṇa praises the god before Yudhiṣṭhira thus, 'Brāhmaṇas versed in the Vedas know two bodies of this god, one awful, one auspicious; and these two bodies again have many forms' (*Dve tanū tasya devasya brāhmaṇāḥ vedajñāḥ viduḥ | Ghorām anyāṃ śivām anyām te tanu bahudhā punaḥ*). Now, this idea is consistently given expression to in many of the multifarious reliefs of Śiva where the great god is depicted as the destroyer (*cf.* his so many Saṃhāramūrtis) or as the bestower of favour (*cf.* his multifarious Anugrahamūrtis). Viṣṇu in the early Vedic texts is simply mentioned as Trivikrama and is often extolled there for his feat of having taken three strides and thus covering the whole universe (*tredhā nidadhe padam*). Subsequently, elaborate mythology grew up round this, and interesting sculptures in illustration thereof were made which were classed as the transformed phase of his Vāmana incarnation. It will be needless to multiply instances here, as this will be discussed in my study

and description of the different sectarian icons. But one point should always be borne in mind, *viz.*, the purpose of these reliefs and sculptures in many cases was decorative and subsidiary; thus, it being the general order to enshrine the Liṅga of Śiva as the principal cult object in the main sanctum of Śaiva shrines, many of the mythological stories connected with him were plastically represented and put in as so many accessories for the edification of the devotees in the different parts of the same. But, in the case of Viṣṇuite icons, the same theme which could in one place serve as a Pārśvadevatā (*i.e.*, a deity serving as an accessory and placed in a side niche of the main sanctum), in another shrine could be the principal object of worship. Thus, the Śeṣaśayanamūrti of Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa—that again a mythological elaboration of the *Ṛgveda*, X, 82, 5 and 6—is used in one of the three niches of the Deogarh temple (Lalitpur subdivision, Jhansi district); but in most of the South Indian Vaiṣṇava shrines, the chief icon in the main sanctum is Raṅganātha which is one of the names of the above type of Viṣṇu images in South India.

Many divinities again, were new entries into the orthodox hierarchy; they must have existed in some form or other as objects of veneration by particular classes of people, but they could not but be recognised by the orthodox thinkers and given the stamp of this recognition in various ways. The Brāhmaṇas also in a very interesting manner incorporated the principal deities associated with other cults into their ever-increasing pantheon. Thus, Buddha and Ṛṣabha, two principal gods of the rival sects, were recognised by the Viṣṇuites as so many *avatāras* of Viṣṇu and *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* glibly suggested that Viṣṇu incarnated himself as Buddha to delude and thus destroy the *asuras* with false doctrines. Further, particular doctrinal tenets of a cult had to be emphasised and represented in concrete forms for the benefit

of the sectarian devotees; thus, the Twenty-four forms of Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu (*Caturviṃśatimūrttayaḥ*) and the Pañca-brahmā forms of Śiva (*Iśānādayaḥ*) are really meant to represent in a concrete manner two of the cardinal tenets of the Pāñcarātra and Śaiva systems, *viz.*, those centering round the *Vyūhavāda* and Śiva's five *śaktis* (*Ādiśakti, Parāśakti, Icchāśakti, Jñānaśakti* and *Kriyāśakti*), respectively. Innumerable icons were made in illustration of the above and this gave a great impetus to the activities of the iconoplastic artists of India.

Another important factor which contributed to the development of iconographers' art in India was undoubtedly her contact with the foreigners, especially with the Greeks in the centuries immediately preceding the Christian era. The exact character of the influence which was exercised by the Greeks on the cultural activities of this country has been a much debated question and controversy was specially keen as regards the indebtedness of the Indians towards the Hellenistic Greeks for their own icon-making art. Discussions concerning the latter generally centred round the problem about the origin of the Buddha image and incidentally the wider aspect of it, *viz.*, the iconical representation of the cult gods and worshipping them in those vehicles, was brought in. It is not necessary here to refer at length to different views of well-known scholars about the above; it will be sufficient to observe, however, that, though images were made and worshipped in certain places in ancient India,—for which we have cited numbers of early texts in the second and third chapters of this book, the image-making activity of the early Indians received a new impetus after they came in contact with the Greeks. Images were being made of the intermediate divinities, really the objects of worship among the general mass of the people and the previous settlers of India, and therein lay the root cause of the recognition of this practice by the higher section of the

people; but that one of the prime factors contributing to its development was the example set up by the Hellenistic Greeks of Gandhara can be fully demonstrated with the help of the coins. It has been shown in the previous chapter that Śiva was being worshipped in Gandhara in his bull form at the time the region was being ruled over by the Bactrian Greeks; shortly afterwards, during the Indo-Parthians and the Kushans the god began to be anthropomorphically represented, though his theriomorphic form was not altogether forgotten. Now, this human as well as animal representation of Śiva was certainly not unknown in other parts of Central and Northern India, as is proved by the coins of much earlier times. In fact, the Hellenistic die-cutters must have made themselves familiar with the staff and water-vessel carrying Śiva figures of the latter and utilised this iconographic knowledge in giving shape to the Gandhara Śivas. But, the plastic treatment and new orientation they gave to them on the coins show to what extent the theme was transformed. This is the reason why several scholars were sceptic about identifying Śiva on the reverse side of some coins of Gondophares and why the treatment of this deity on some of the tribal and Kushan coins forcibly remind us of a Herakles of the Indo-Greek and the Indo-Scythic coins. The striking figure of Viśvāmitra, really Śiva as Viśvāmitra, on the obverse of certain biscriptual silver coins of Dharaghoṣa cannot but convince us of the truth of the above remark; there is, no doubt, some thing that is Indian in the iconography of the figure, but much there is also in its whole presentation that is Hellenistic in character. Cunningham characteristically describes it thus, 'Śiva, standing to front with right hand raised to head, and leopard's skin over left arm; similar to figure of Herakles crowning himself' (*CAI.*, p. 67); the very style and treatment of the whole coin itself is Hellenistic and a comparison can profitably be made

between the Śiva figures on indigenous coins of Ujjain in Central India with this Viśvāmitra-Śiva type on the coins hailing from an area roughly corresponding to ' the valley of the Beas, or perhaps the wider region between the Upper Sutlej and the Ravi.' A contrast made between the iconographic presentation of two other gods, *viz.*, Indra and Sūrya, on early indigenous coins and the same on the Indo-Greek and Kushan coins will enable us further to substantiate our hypothesis. Reference has been made to the figure of Indra enshrined on the coins of Indramitra in the Pañcāla series; the same deity appears veritably in the garb of a Zeus on the coins of Eukratides and a host of other Indo-Greek and Indo-Scythic rulers of the extreme north-west of India. Nay, in the latter region, there is no doubt that Indra used also to be represented in his elephant form as has been shown in a previous chapter ; but, a Zeus type could very conveniently be utilised to represent the god who was the city-deity of Kapiśa. In the numerous sculptural representations of the same god in Gandhāra, however, he appears in the rôle of a worshipping attendant of Buddha, but still the type reproduced there is in striking contrast to another indigenous one presented by the figure of the same god in the Bhaja facade. As regards Sūrya figures on early indigenous coins, we have seen what was their mode of representation; the Indians were quite justified in reproducing him as he is visible to all (*pratyakṣa*), but they also represented him in human form as the Bhaja, Udayagiri and Bodh Gaya reliefs show. But the type of the north-Indian Sūrya image which came to be regularly worshipped by the Sauras was certainly stylistically connected with the one so often represented on the coins of Kanishka and Huvishka. The association of the latter with the Hellenistic sun-god as also many other matters concerning the former will be treated at some length in my book on the Hindu images. But it will be sufficient to

note here that in this case a very striking example is produced to show how some of the plastic features of an image type, that survived till a very late period, were undoubtedly influenced by their Hellenistic counterparts. This was the nature and extent of the contribution that was made by this art of north-western region—and in fact it was at its apogee during the rule of the Kushan emperors—to the development of icono-plastic art in India. The themes were in most cases Indian, but the technique of presentation of some varieties of them at least was greatly influenced by these alien motifs. Even when the former was in a decadent stage as is proved by the stone sculptures of the third and fourth centuries A.D. in the north-west (but the art was still flourishing in stucco as has so ably been demonstrated by Marshall), the Ardochso type of the late Kushan coins (*cf.*, those represented on those of Vāsu Kushan) could influence the Lakṣmī type on those of the early imperial Guptas; but the latter, undoubtedly far more cultured than the late Kushans, soon gave it a character which was far nobler and more artistic than the crude schematic figure, its prototype.

The evolution of the Tantras and the gradual canonisation of the modes for icon-making were also important factors conducive to the development of Indian icono-plastic art. Mention has already been made, in the first chapter, of the Pāñcarātra, Śaiva and Śākta *saṃhitās*, *āgamas* and *tantras* incorporating elaborate instructions for the use of the temple-builder and the image-maker. It would be doing an injustice to the compilers of these practical guidances actually based on the experience of generations of artists, if we remark that ' the most potent cause that injuriously affected Indian icono-plastic art is the hard and fast rules laid down in the Āgamas and the Tantras for the making of images' (Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I., Introduction, p. 31). It is like suggesting that the canonisation of the

rules of speech and writing would adversely affect the language of a people. In the hands of an expert worker these rules, even if they were meticulously followed, would, instead of being so many impediments, serve as useful guides. The far-famed artists of Hellas had also certain stereotyped canons before them which were really derived from the works of the early masters. Greek sculptors closely followed ratios of proportions and we have statues of various schools which are distinguished by fixed proportions of parts such as the Old Attic, Old Argive, Polyklitan, Argive-Sikyonian or Lysippan, etc. " An oft-quoted saying of Polyclitus is to this effect that, 'successful attainment in art is the result of minute accuracy in a multitude of arithmetical proportions.....' Polyclitus not only published his theory of sculpture in a work called ' The Canon,' but also having taught in that treatise all the proportions of the body, he carried his theory into practice by constructing a statue according to the prescriptions in the treatise." [1] That is the attitude of the compilers of these Indian iconographic and iconometric texts, which is summed up in a very characteristic manner by the author of the *Śukranīti-sāra*. He writes: 'That image is called beautiful which is neither in excess of correct proportions nor short of it..... The limbs of those images which have been praised by sages (*i.e.*, experts in iconography) never exceed or fall short of the correct proportions and thus are to be regarded as beautiful. All the limbs that are neither too fat nor too lean are pleasing from all points of view. One in one hundred thousand images is excellent in all its parts; so that image which is so according to the śāstric proportions is really beautiful, others are not. Those images which go against the above are not good to the

[1] E. A. Gardner, *Six Greek Sculptors*, pp. 118 and 120.

sages.' [1] In this view of the case, Rao's statement about the 'handicap of the artist' and about his 'loosing freedom of action' requires modification. The icons no doubt became to a certain extent stereotyped ; but it should never be forgotten that they were not being made for art connoisseurs' criticism, their primary purpose being to serve as so many aids to the religious efforts (*sādhanā*) of the innumerable devotees (*bhaktas*) and not as drawing-room or museum specimens to be judged chiefly for their artistic merits or demerits. Rao himself says, 'Like all art, the Indian icono-plastic art also has to be judged from the standpoint of its motive. To those who cannot appreciate this motive, the very ideal of the art remains hidden and inexplicable.' These rules therefore facilitated to a very great extent the work of the image-maker and helped immensely the development of the icono-plastic art in this country. There are good and indifferent artists in every country and in particular periods the artistic activities of its inhabitants seem for various reasons to reach a very high level or in other times sink

[1] *Sukranītisāra*, IV, 4, 75, 102-05 :—*Mānato nādhikaṃ hīnaṃ tadvimbaṃ ramyamucyate | Tadvijñaiḥ prastutā ye ye mūrtteravayavāḥ sadā | Na hīnā nādhikā mānāt te te jñeyāḥ suśobhanāḥ || Na sthūlā na kṛśā vāpi sarve sarvamanoramāḥ | Sarvāṅgaiḥ sarvaramyo hi kaścillakṣe prajāyate | Śāstramāncna yo ramyaḥ sa ramyo nānya eva hi.* But the author was also aware of the existence of a certain class of opinion according to which 'that image is beautiful in which one's heart is attached'—*Ekeṣāmeva tadramyaṃ lagnaṃ yatra ca yasya hṛt.* It is not clear, however, whether in this statement the author refers to his own appreciation of his work by the icon-maker or it simply means that whatever may be its execution, the image is beautiful, if the heart of one (*i.e.*, its devotee) is attached to it. If the latter is meant, then it signifies that the beauty of the image depends on the *bhakti* of its worshipper. Then the author's express observation that as very few are the images which are really beautiful in all its limbs, it will be better if the image-maker follows strictly the authorised canons of proportions.

down to a low one; but to make these injunctions mainly responsible for the latter condition is not scientifically correct. We should never minimise the very common advice to be met with in such compilations that the *śilpin*, though he should closely follow the rules, must try to make the image as beautiful as possible, for have not the gods a special liking for beautiful images (*ābhirūpyācca vimbānāṃ devaḥ sānnidhyamṛcchati*)? The reputed art centres of ancient India, such as Mathura, Gandhara, Sarnath, Amaravati, etc., were the homelands of the master workers whose works served as standards on which these canons were probably based. The images fashioned by their chisel were in great demand in various other parts of India as is proved by early epigraphic and monumental evidence. It is unfortunate we know so little about them who generally hid themselves behind the names of such mythical artists as Viśvakarmā, Maya and others. We have no means of identifying an Indian Phidias, a Polyclitus or a Lysippas. It is quite accidentally that we light upon the names of a few individual artists from some inscribed sculptural and architectural fragments of early period. The ivory carvers of Vidisa might or might not have been responsible for the actual carving of a section of the railing of the Great Sanchi Stupa, which was their gift; but a Nāka, pupil of Kunika, was the maker of the so-called statue of Manasā Devī at Mathura (really the image of Yakṣī Layava, as the epigraph informs us), the stone mason (*śilārūpakāra*) Śivamitra was responsible for the early Kushan image of a Bodhisattva discovered in 1908-09 at Śrāvastī by Marshall (only the lower portion of the statue with the inscription was found) and Dinna a resident of Mathura fashioned a statuette of the Gupta period as also of the famous Nirvāṇa statue, both discovered at Kasia (the former was found by Vögel).[1] One

[1] *A.S.I.A.R.*, 1922-23, p. 165; if Vögel's reading of the pedestal inscription of the Parkham Yakṣa is correct, then we find the name of

of the two Sūrya images of the Gaudian school in the collection of the British Museum bears on its pedestal an inscription in very corrupt Sanskrit in Nāgarī characters of the tenth century A.D. It reads '*Oṃ Indranīlamaṇiśiṣyaḥ śilāya buddhiḥ sālinā | ghaṭitāya kritajñena Amṛtena su-śi(l)pinā*. It has thus been translated by R. P Chanda: "(This image) has been carved in stone by the wise, grateful, and good artist Amṛta, pupil of Indranīlamaṇi" (R. P. Chanda, *Mediaeval Indian Sculptures in the British Museum*, p. 66, Pl. XX). Here we get the names of two good sculptors of eastern India, *viz.*, Amṛta and Indranīlamaṇi; the work of the former bears undoubtedly the stamp of an artist of consummate skill and ability who can well claim to be designated as a *suśilpin*. One other interesting fact to be noted in the above epigraph is this; Amṛta does not fail to express his gratitude for the artistic ability which he acquired from his preceptor. More of such inscriptions on the extant images would have been of great use to students of Indian icono-plastic art. We wish we could get many such personal names and had an Indian Pausanias who could have given a systematic record of the activities of such Nākas, Kunikas, Śivamitras, Dinnas, Amṛtas and Indranīlamaṇis of the remote past.

The last, though not the least, important factor contributing to the development of Indian religious art was certainly the systematic patronage which was given by the ruling powers of early and mediaeval India. The growth

another pupil of Kunika, *viz.*, Bhadapugarin—Gomitaka—*Bhadapugarina(ka)...(ga) atha...pi...Kuni(ka) te vāsina (Gomitakena) katā*. But the inscription is extremely fragmentary and various readings have been suggested; still all agree in reading Kunika and so evidently this Yakṣa statue was also the handi-work of another pupil of Kunika, *Mathura Mus Cat.*, p. 83. *Māthureṇa śilārūpakāreṇa Śivamitreṇa Bodhisattvā kṛtā*; *kṛti(r)-Dinnasya* in the Gupta statuette and *Pratimā ceyaṃ ghaṭitā Dinnena Māthurakeṇa*, in the other one.

and development of these sectarian religions were largely due to the activities of the ancient sovereigns; the religion of Buddha could certainly not have been as great as it came to be in later times, had there been no Aśoka to espouse its cause and try his level best for its propagation in India, as well as outside India. The Brahmanical sectaries too found their champions not only in the persons of indigenous rulers, but also in those of foreign ones who held sway over particular parts of India. The great Kushan emperor Wema Kadphises was an ardent devotee of Śiva and in the spirit of a true sectary only used the figure or rarely the emblem of the god of his choice as his coin device; it will not at all be presumptuous to suppose that many Śaiva shrines were erected in the different parts of his empire under his imperial patronage. His successors were probably eclectic in spirit, and they equally patronised the various religious cults flourishing in their dominions.[1] The imperial Guptas were devout Bhāgavatas and it is certain that excessive patronage was given by them to this particular cult, though it is also proved by archaeological data that other sectaries, both orthodox and heterodox, from the Brahmanical point of view, flourished side by side. The imperial Pālas of Bengal were Paramasaugatas and the Senas were worshippers of Sadāśiva. Many other such instances can be shown in which the royalties extensively patronised one or other of the cults and those that were not professed by them did also prevail in their kingdoms. The temples and religious

[1] The earlier view about the eclecticism of the Kanishka group of kings has been challenged by Rapson (who himself once held the view) and Kennedy. But the explanation which is given by Rapson of the varied reverse, if accepted by scholars, would also support my hypothesis. His latest view as expressed in his *C C A W K T B*, p. XII, f.n., is, 'The coins, no doubt, reflect the particular form of religion which prevailed in the district in which they were struck.'

structures which were built by them or the rich and the influential citizens in their realms had to be decorated with numbers of subsidiary figures and other forms. Images were also necessary for the primary purpose of enshrinement in the main sanctum. Not only were the shrines of these gods built, but also funerary structures in honour of their departed ancestors were erected by the royalties and rich magnates, and shrines with images of gods and goddesses were invariable adjuncts to them. Then monastic establishments, associated with one or other of the Brahmanical sectaries would contain different *devagṛhas* and *daivatas* (temples and images). Lastly, *Gurvvāyatanas* were erected by particular sectarian clericals, which also contained shrines and images of gods. One of the earliest *Gurvvāyatanas* that we know of is the one referred to in the stone pillar inscription of the time of Chandragupta II (year 61 of the Gupta Era), which records the establishment of two images (Śiva-liṅgas), called Kapileśvara and Upamiteśvara, in such a one, by Pāśupata Uditācārya, in the names of his gurus. The base of the inscribed pilaster contains a three-eyed human figure holding a club in right hand, an unidentified object in the left shown akimbo (*cf.*, the early Śiva figures on Ujjain coins), correctly identified by D. R. Bhandarkar as Lakulīśa, the founder of the Pāśupata sect.[1] All these different religious and funerary structures contained numbers of divine images and emblems and served as a great incentive to the development of icono-plastic art in India. These temple-building and image-making activities received a rude check in the hands of many of the Muslim rulers of India after her invasion by the Muhammadans. The relative prevalence of these activities in the different parts of

[1] *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. XXI, pp. 4-8. Further interesting data deducible from this remarkable Gupta inscription will be discussed in my book on Hindu images.

India shows the truth of the above remark. The part which was last to be affected by the Islamic conquest retained in a remarkable manner these active manifestations of the religious instinct of its people to a late period and this explains why in the extreme south of India magnificent temples and innumerable images of substantial proportions and detailed carving were being built when such activities were already much restricted in the north. Muslim rulers on account of their creed could not patronise them as the Hindu ones did before, and thus their Hindu subjects had to satisfy their pious needs with much smaller images and emblems in stone and bronze for worship in private chapels of their individual households.

CHAPTER VII

Iconographic Terminology

Technicalities about iconographic representation of deities—Handposes (*hastas* and *mudrās*)—their association with ritualism—a smaller proportion among them used in early images—some of these handposes already stereotyped in early art—different postures in which the main image and its accessories are shown : *sthānaka-*, *āsana*, and *śayana mūrtis* –different types of standing poses—various kinds of sitting postures—most of them yogic in character—reclining postures in image very few,—the *Śeṣa-śayana* or *Nārāyaṇamūrti* and the *Mahāparinirvāṇa* figure of Buddha—the basic idea of the former—supposed connection of the former with the Endymion figure—*Nṛtyamūrtis*—Śiva in various dance poses—Flying pose of the Gandharvas and Vidyā-dharas, conventional representation of the clouds.

Ornaments on the images—their excessive use hampering the free display of the physical form—different kinds of ornaments, head-gear, etc.—various modes of dressing the hair—representation of costume—nudity in Indian art—the nimbus behind the heads of images (*Śiraścakra*) and the stela or back slab (*Prabhāvalī*)—the relievo character of the images emphasised by the above two.—The pedestals (*Pīṭhikā*).

Varieties of objects held in the hands of the Hindu divinities—the ideology underlying them.

It is indispensable for one studying Indian Iconography to know the meaning of certain technical terms, in order to understand correctly the images of divinities and their accessories. As these are mostly depicted in anthropomorphic form, it follows that the dress, ornaments, weapons, implements, etc., used by a people are also shown by them on the images of their gods. I have already drawn the attention of my readers to Varāhamihira's dictum about the close juxtaposition between the dress and ornaments worn by the people of a country and the same shown on the bodies of the gods worshipped there (*Deśānurūpa-bhūṣaṇaveśālaṅkāramūrttibhiḥ kāryā*). I have also suggested in the first chapter of my book how an intensive study of

images current in a particular locality will help one to throw much light on her social history. I now propose to explain the nature of some of these technical terms which are used to denote one or other of these various forms of dress, ornaments, weapons and implements; the various gestures and postures in which the different limbs of the images are shown by the artist will also be explained. These terms are very often used in the iconographic texts which, as every student of this subject knows, serve as the guide-books of the iconographer. In the course of explaining some of them, I shall refer, whenever possible, to their early and late forms of representations in art. T. A. G. Rao, while supplying his readers with a full account of these technicalities, hardly ever touched on this point.

One of the most interesting items, in this connection, is the various poses in which the hands of the images and their accessories are shown by the artist. The technical term, which is used in the texts to denote them, is *mudrā*; sometimes the word *hasta* is also used to denote one or other of these handposes. The latter is generally used in cases where the whole of the arm along with the hand is shown in a particular pose (cf. *daṇḍahasta*, *gajahasta*, *kaṭihasta*, etc.), while the former usually denotes the peculiar posture in which the palm with the fingers is shown (cf. *jñāna-mudrā*, *cinmudrā* or *vyākhyāna-mudrā*, *yoga-* or *dhyāna-mudrā*, etc.). It must be observed, however, that sometimes, though comparatively rarely, both the terms are used in the texts to signify particular hand postures; thus, in iconographic parlance, *abhaya-mudrā*, *varada-mudrā* as well as *abhaya-hasta* and *varada-hasta* are equally appropriate. It is true that the term *hasta* can also be used in association with an emblem or weapon in the hand of the deity; thus *padma-hasta*, *pustaka-hasta*, *gadā-hasta*, etc., would mean a hand which holds a lotus, a book or a mace, respectively. But sometimes, confusion is likely to arise, if in explaining such

a term, an inappropriate synonym is chosen; thus, *sūcī* means a 'sewing needle,' but it has also various other meanings, one of which is 'the act of pointing.' Now when a god or a goddess is described as *sūcī-hasta*, we are not to understand that he or she holds a sewing needle in his or her hand, but we are to know that a particular hand of the god or the goddess is shown in a pointing pose.[1] Again, the term like *daṇḍa-hasta* may mean one holding a club in hand, but it is also the name of a peculiar hand pose which will shortly be explained.

Hastas and *mudrās* thus usually indicate some action in which the god or his accessory is shown as engaged. The action consists in the expression of an idea by means of a particular gesture. Man, himself a rational animal endowed with the power of speech, often finds it necessary to use such gestures for expressing his ideas with more clarity and emphasis; sometimes, a mere gesture with a hand or any other limb of his body will contain a volume of ideas otherwise imperfectly expressed.[2] How absolutely necessary it will be for him to endow his mute gods with

[1] The term was thus explained by the late N. N. Vasu in his *Archaeological Survey of Mayurbhanj*. T. A. G. Rao first corrected the mistake in his *Elements. etc.*, Vol. I, p. 15.

[2] In India, many of the handposes were long stereotyped. Coomaraswamy observes, "such motions must have been elaborated and codified at a very early date; and later on we find that the art of silent communication by means of signs, which is in effect a 'deaf and dumb language,' and just like the American Indian hand-language, was regularly regarded as one of the 'sixty-four arts' which every educated person should have knowledge of." He refers to Jātaka No. 546 (J. text, VI, 364) where the Bodhisattva judges the suitability of a woman for being his wife by communicating to her through the medium of a particular hand-sign (*hattha-muddā*); she understood it correctly and replied to him with another of her own. Coomaraswamy and Gopālakrishnāyya, *The Mirror of Gesture*, p. 24.

such suggestive action poses in order that the idea or ideas which he wants to be symbolised by his deities will be correctly explained. Herein—in this very act of showing the images belonging to the various Indian religious creeds with the different gestures and postures—lay one of the marked and significant differences between the fetish of a Polynesian tribe and the developed image worshipped by the highly civilised Indians. In India of the pre-historic times, as we shall presently see, a few of the highly expressive poses were being used to characterise the representation of the divinities on seals, amulets and other figurines. Some of the conventional handposes that were common in early and late mediaeval iconographic art of India, can be definitely recognised in the central Indian art of the Suṅga period.

It should be noted here that the fully developed and highly technical *mudrās*, that are described in the Indian works on dramaturgy such as *Nāṭyaśāstra*, *Abhinaya-darpaṇa*, etc., have not much application in our present study. It is true that some south Indian types of dancing Śiva of the mediaeval period or the Vajrayāna deities of the same age in the north, specially the latter, are endowed with a good many of the above; but very few are the Hindu gods and goddesses, especially in the early period, whose hands are shown in any of the highly technical poses. Such *mudrās* as are reproduced by me in Plate V from a late Buddhist text on ritualism procured by P. C. Bagchi from Nepal (it contains many more such handposes) are usually adopted by a *bhakta* or a *sādhaka* in the Tāntric form of worship or *sādhanā*. R. K. Poduval distinguishes between 'three broad divisions of *Mudrās*, *viz.*, Vaidic, Tāntric and Laukik (*Mudrās* in Art).' He says that he has recognised as many as '64 *Mudrās* in Art and 108 in Tantra. The Vaidic *Mudrās* are more or less finger signs or indications employed to regulate the stress, rhythm

and intonation in the chanting of Vedas by Brahmins.'[1] Poduval has reproduced as many as 45 *mudrās*, which are described by him as *añjali, vandanī, yoni, vaināyakī, hṛdaya, śiras, śikhā, kavaca, astra, netra (-dvaya, -trayа), garuḍa, galini(?), surabhī, abhivāhinī, stāpini (sthāpanī?), sannidhāpanī, sammukhī, avakuṇḍanī (avaguṇṭhanī ?), prasādanī, sannirodhinī, śaṅkha, gadā, padma, paraśu, hariṇa, abhaya, varada, śūla, kapāla. cakra,* five types of *prāṇāhuti* (perhaps symbolising the offering of five vital breaths or *pañca prāṇāḥ, viz., prāṇa, apāna, samāna, udāna* and *vyāna), śara, cāpa, kūrma, jala, gandha, puṣpa, dhūpa, dīpa, nyvedya (naivedya),* and *matsya.* A careful analysis of the above names shows that some are connected with the deities to be worshipped, while others with the worshipper, a third set again symbolising the *upacāras* used in worship. In the outline drawing of the above *mudrās,* Poduval wrongly describes the two well-known ones, *viz., abhaya* and *varada*; what is really *varada* is described by him as *abhaya* and that which is *abhaya,* as *varada.* A glance at his plate will show that there is a close parallelism between the pose outlined by the position of the hands and fingers, and the name by which the pose is described. To refer to one or two instances: the *vaināyakī-mudrā* characteristically outlines the elephant head of Vināyaka with its lolling trunk, the *śaṅkha-mudrā* a conch-shell, the *hariṇa-mudrā* a deer head with its antlers, the *kapāla-mudrā* a skull with its concave side shown up, *matsya-mudrā* a fish and so on. But most, if not all, of these, as I have already observed, were adopted by the devotee or the aspirant after salvation in the ritualistic performance of his *pūjā* or *sādhanā.* Reference should also be made, in this connection, to Poduval's diagrams of several *mudrās* which are used by the Nambudiri

[1] *Administration Report of the Archaeological Department,* Travancore State, 1107 M.E., pp. 6-7, and plate.

chanters of the Sāman hymns in Kerala; he has photographed as many as twenty-five of such handposes from actual life, assigning no name to any of them.[1]

Among the forty-five Tāntric *mudrās* illustrated by Poduval, we can recognise only a few that were also depicted in the early representations of the Indian divinities and their attendants; these are *abhaya, varada* and *añjali* (*cāpa-, śara-* and *kapāla-mudrās* may also come under this category, if we note that the hands of the deity holding the above objects, *viz.*, a bow, an arrow and a skull are shown in the postures illustrated in the plate). Many more *mudrās* or *hastas* in which the hands of the images were usually depicted, such as *dhyāna* or *yoga, jñāna, vyākhyāna, dharmacakra, katyavalambita, kaṭaka* or *simhakarṇa, gaja* or *daṇḍa, sūcī, tarjjanī, vismaya, bhūsparśa*, etc., are not included in the list. But, as it has been observed above, the list is more concerned with the practice of the ritualist himself than with the depiction

[1] R. K. Poduval, *op. cit.*, 1109 M.E., p 8 and plate. He refers to a Sanskrit work on histrionics and dramaturgy, *Bālarāmabharatam* by name, written by king Bālarāma Kulaśekhara Vañci Bhūpāla of Travancore. The work deals with, among other things, the *aṅgas, upāṅgas* and *pratyaṅgas* in Nāṭya, and classifies them each under six subdivisions. 'The *aṅgas* include the movements of the head, hands, breast, sides of the body, hips and feet; the *upāṅgas* those of the eyes, eyebrows, nose, cheeks, chin and lips; while under the *pratyaṅgas* come the movements of the neck, arm, abdomen, loins, thighs and the shanks.' There is hardly any doubt that this portion of the work is based on works on histrionics and dramaturgy of much earlier date. 'The poses of the hand are classified into *asaṃyuta* and *saṃyutahastas*,' as many as forty of the former and twenty-seven of the latter are described in the book. See *infra* about 23 former and 13 latter types of handposes adopted in dancing, as mentioned in the *Viṣṇudharmottara*.

Mr. P. O. Matthai, M.A., Librarian of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, has kindly drawn my attention to the Administration Report of the Archaeological Survey of Travancore.

of his deity. The *abhaya-hasta* is the same as *śāntida* which latter term has been used by Varāhamihira in his description of the two-, four- and eight-armed images of Viṣṇu (*Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, ch. 57, vv. 33-5). This pose has been very characteristically explained by Utpala as 'the hand turned towards the visitor (*i.e.*, turned to front) with fingers raised upwards' (*draṣṭurabhimukha ūrdhvāṅgulih śāntidakarah*). One cannot improve upon this description and a glance at the right hand pose of the Mathura Buddha figure of the Kushan period sketched in Fig. 5 of Plate III of my book will show that it fittingly illustrates the description. The right hand of the Śiva-Viśvāmitra figure (on the coins of Dharaghoṣa) sketched in Plate I, fig. 20 of my book is also in the same posture. Fig. 20 in Plate II is based on the representation of King Brahmadatta in the illustration of the Mahākapi Jātaka at Bharhut; the right hand of the king is shown also in the same pose, the artist thus typifying the protection assured by the king to the monkey chief, the Buddha himself in one of his numerous previous births. Some of the divinities represented on early Indian coins and seals have also one of their hands in the same pose. This is one of the commonest *mudrās* in which one or other hands of the Brahmanical, Buddhist and some Jaina images are shown and it stands for the assurance of fearlessness, tranquillity and protection given by the deity to his worshipper. *Varada-* or simply *vara-mudrā*, also another of the typically common *mudrās* in iconographic art of ancient and mediaeval India, symbolises the bestowal of boon or benediction by the god on his votary. In the Śivaite mythology, the act of grace or benediction (*anugraha*) is regarded as one of the five principal activities of the lord Śiva (*pañca-kṛtyas*, *viz.*, *sṛṣṭi*, *i.e.*, the act of creation, *sthiti*—of preservation, *saṃhāra*—of destruction, *tirobhāva*—of obscuration and *anugraha*—of grace). The stereotyped

manner of depicting this pose in art is by putting the palm spread outwards with the fingers pointing down; in standing figures the arm usually hangs down by the side of the body, while in seated ones the arm is sometimes flexed according to artistic requirements. Varāhamihira while describing the four- and eight-armed images of Ekānaṃśā says that one right hand of either varieties of the goddess is to be shown in the *varada* pose. Utpala explains the term *varada* as the pose in which the palm with fingers pointing downwards is shown inside out (*uttāno'dho'ṅgulirhasto varadaḥ*; *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, ch. 57, p. 780). The *añjali*, *vandanī* or *namaskāramudrā* is usually to be found in the hands of the devotees or in those of the attendant or subordinate deities. This is one of the earliest handposes recognisable in art, its antiquity going as far back as the age of the prehistoric Indus valley civilisation. I have referred in the last chapter to the supplicating pose of the figure kneeling before the tree goddess on one of the Mohenjo-daro seals, the scene being described by Marshall as the epiphany of the tree spirit; the hands are, however, not joined together as they should be in the *saṃpuṭāñjali* pose. But this is also not wanting; several of the terracotta human figurines that were discovered at Harappa distinctly portray it. I may refer to a few descriptions of such clay figurines given by M.S. Vats: 'No. 6 is a squatting male figure with folded hands,' 'No. 7 is seated with hands folded in devotional attitude,' 'No. 8, a rough figure seated on its haunches with arms clasped about the knees and hands folded in worship,' 'Nos. 9 and 10 also show male figurines with their hands folded above the breast.'[1] Reference has already been made by me in the last chapter to the two Mohenjo-daro seals which contain figures of a god seated in *yoga* posture, on whose either side kneels a half-human half-animal form of a Nāga with hands uplifted in prayer. The

[1] *Excavations at Harappa*, p. 294, Pl. LXXVI.

above evidence fully proves that the idea of worship was well prevalent among the prehistoric people of the Indus valley. *Kupiro Yakho* (Kubera, the king of the Yakṣas and the guardian of the northern quarter) is depicted in Bharhut with his hands in the above pose (Pl. II, Fig. 19); many more are the Yakṣa, Nāga, and human votaries that are shown with their hands in the devotional attitude. This is the most correct attitude of a devotee and sometimes this pose alone enables us to distinguish the chief deity from one subordinate to him. Thus, Nandin, originally Śiva himself in theriomorphic form and afterwards his mount, is carved exactly like Śiva in late mediaeval and modern reliefs of southern India, the only distinction lying in the fact of his front hands being in the *namaskāra* pose (the back hands like those of Śiva carry *paraśu* and *mṛga*, Siva's front hands being shown in the *abhaya* and *varada* poses).

Dhyāna-, *yoga-*, or *samādhi-mudrā* is that particular pose in which 'the palm of the right hand is placed in that of the left hand and both together are laid on the crossed legs of the seated image' (Rao). Thus, it is specially associated with a seated figure and is one of the most correct attitudes for the practice of *dhyāna-yoga*. One of the earliest descriptions of the correct posture of a *yogī* is to be found in the *Bhagavadgītā*, whichsays that the *yogī* should be 'steady, holding his body, head and neck balanced and motionless, fixing his gaze on the end of his nose, and looking not about him.' [1] *Samānñaphalasutta*, one of the early Buddhist texts, also gives us a clear idea about the sitting posture of a *yogī* in these words: *'nisidati pallañkaṃ ābhujitvā ujuṃ kāyaṃ panidhāya parimukhaṃ satiṃ upatthāpetvā'*, *i.e.*,

[1] *Bhagavadgītā*, VI, 13: *Samaṃ kāyaśirogrīvaṃ dhārayannacalaṃ sthiraḥ | Saṃprekṣya nāsikāgraṃ svaṃ diśaścānavalokayan ||* The above translation is taken from W. D. P. Hill's edition of the *Bhagavadgītā*, p. 157.

' (he) sits bending (the legs) crosswise (*i.e.*, he sits cross-legged) on a raised seat, with erect body and setting up his memory (*i.e.*, of the object of thought) in front.' [1] But it is noteworthy that in the above two descriptions there is not the least allusion to the pose of the hand, which as the Indus valley seals show was different. The prototype of Śiva-Paśupati shows his hands stretched sideways over the knees of the seated figure; this posture is also a yogic posture and ascetics seated entranced in this manner can be found in India even now.[2] The earliest approach to the *dhyānamudrā* of the texts, as explained by the above quotation from Rao, is to be found in the figure of a deity seated on a lotus seat, appearing on certain copper coins of Ujjain, dateable in the 2nd-3rd century B.C. (Pl. II, Fig. 16).[3]

[1] *A.S.I.A.R.*, 1929-30, pp. 191-92. It was R. P. Chanda who first drew our attention to this passage as well as the Gītā one, in order to explain the peculiar look and attitude of the mutilated limestone statue found at Mohenjo-daro as well as the three or one-faced deity on seals, already noted. Saṅkara in his commentary on the *Gītā* passage quoted above says that the phrase about 'fixing his gaze on the tip of his nose' is figuratively used and it really means 'fixing the eyesight within.' Hill, however, observes, that 'there is no doubt that the physical posture was literally recommended.'

[2] The description of Śiva practising *dhyānayoga* in the *Kumārasambhava*, however, gives a full idea of the handpose. The passage reads: *Paryaṅkabandhasthirapūrvakāyamṛjvāyataṃ saṃnamitobhayāṃsam | Uttānapāṇidvayasaṃniveśāt praſullarājīvamivāṅkamadhye ||* The *āsana* is the same as *padmāsana* where the legs are interlocked on the seat, the upper part of the body remains straight and well-spread, both the shoulders being bent a little; the palms turned upwards are placed on the lap like a fullblown lotus. The fixing of the eyes on the tip of the nose is beautifully expressed by Kālidāsa in the following verse (III, 47): *Kiṃcitprakāśastimitogratārair bhrūvikriyāyā viratāprasaṅgaiḥ | Netrairaviṣpanditapakṣmamālair lakṣyīkṛtaghrāṇamadhomayūkhaiḥ ||*

[3] Coomaraswamy found in it one of the earliest representations of Buddha in the *dhyāna* pose, but it may as well stand for Śiva, the

In Gandhara some of the numerous Buddha figures are shown with their hands in this pose; its association with asceticism (*tapas*) is characteristically emphasised in the figures of Buddha practising asceticism in the collections of the Peshwar and Lahore Museums.[1] The red sandstone figure of Pārśvanātha, from Mathura and now in the collection of the Lucknow Museum, shows the god seated erect with his legs crossed and his hands in the *dhyānamudrā*; it belongs to the early Kushan period.[2] Many images Brahmanical, Buddhist and Jain of the Gupta age, as well as of the early and late mediaeval periods, show this pose, two Yogāsana-Viṣṇu figures in the Mathura Museum characteristically portraying it.[3]

Two other *mudrās*, which are also found in the iconographic art of ancient and mediaeval India have been named by T. A. G. Rao as *jñāna* and *vyākhyāna-*, *vitarka-* or *cinmudrā*. Rao says, that in the former, 'the tips of the middle finger and of the thumb are joined together and held near the heart, with the palm of the hand turned towards the heart.' Fig. 2 in Plate III of my book illustrates this pose. The front right hand of the figure of Nārāyaṇa in the Nara-Nārāyaṇa relief at Deogarh shows it; but it can probably be traced to a period far earlier than the above belonging to the Gupta

great *Yogī*. The coin device is very much blurred and it is not sure whether the palms of the fore-arms flexed inwards near the waist actually joined each other on the lap; my drawing is based on the obverse of Fig. 10 in Plate X of Cunningham's *Coins of Ancient India*.

[1] H. Hargreaves, *Handbook to the Sculptures in the Peshwar Museum*, Pl. 8. *Cf.* also statuette No. 1550 in the Mathura Museum; this Gandhāra stone figurine showing the ascetic Buddha is said to have been found at Maholi village about 100 years ago; V. S. Agarwal, *Handbook of the Sculptures in the Curzon Museum of Archaeology*, Muttra, p. 52, Pl. XXII, Fig. 48.

[2] Coomaraswamy, *H.I.I.A.*, Pl. XXIII, Fig. 86.

[3] V. S. Agarwal, *op. cit.*, Pl. XXII, Fig. 45.

date.[1] Drawing No. I in Plate III is based on the figure of Ajakālaka Yakṣa in Bharhut with his right hand in the same characteristic pose; the standing male figure in the representation of a donor couple (or are they Yakṣa and Yakṣiṇī?) in the same plate has his left hand shown in the same pose, but it must be observed that in both a lotus flower is placed between the tips of the thumb and the index finger. We are not certain, however, whether this typical pose was known under that name as early as the 2nd century B.C.; as regards the flowers held in the hands, it should be noted that different objects such as a lotus flower, a rosary, a bowl, etc., are sometimes also placed in them even when they typify some particular pose (for example in some Dhyānī figures of Buddha, an alms-bowl is placed on the hands showing *dhyāna-mudrā*).[2] The *cinmudrā* is described by Rao thus,—' the tips of the thumb and the fore-finger are made to touch each other, so as to form a circle, the other fingers being kept open. The palm of the hand is made to face the front.' The hand in this pose is usually raised upwards near the breast and it appears that this is the exact counterpart of *jñāna-mudrā*. Rao remarks about it that it is the ' *mudrā* adopted when an explanation or exposition is being given; hence it is also called *vyākhyāna-mudrā* and *sandarśana-mudrā* ' (Pl. III, Fig. 3). The extreme right section of a large panel in the Cave temple of Rāmeśvara at Ellora depicts Subrahmaṇya teaching his father Śiva the significance of *Om*; the right hand of the polycephalous god

[1] T. A. G. Rao, *Op. cit.*, Vol. II, Pl. LXXI. Rao wrongly described this relief as the Jñāna-Dakṣiṇāmūrti of Śiva; Yarde first corrected this mistake and identified the two ascetic figures seated side by side as Nara-Nārāyaṇa on the basis of the *Viṣṇudharmottara*.

[2] For Ajalkāda figure, see B. M. Barua, *Bharhut*, Vol. III, Pl. LVII, Fig. 61; for the figure of the donor (?) couple, *cf.* Coomaraswamy, *H.I.I.A.*, Pl. XII, Fig. 44.

is shown in the *vyākhyāna* pose, a rosary being shown in the palm.[1] The two-armed figure of Nara in the Deogarh relief just referred to shows his right hand in the same pose, a rosary being also placed in the hand. One of the earliest representations of a teacher expounding his lessons or doctrines is to be found at Bharhut where the sage Dīrghatapasvī is shown in the attitude of instructing his pupils ; he is sitting at ease on a raised seat facing his four disciples seated below in a reverential attitude ; his left hand rests on his knee while his right hand is raised towards his breast with the thumb and index finger projecting outward, the other fingers being bent inwards. It is true that the tips of the thumb and the fore-finger are not joined together, but they also characteristically portray the expounding pose.[2] A reference now to the *dharmacakra-mudrā*, though it is usually associated with the representations of Buddha figures and not with the same of any Brahmanical deity, will be of some interest. The particular pose symbolises the first preaching of the law by the Master at Sarnath, thus, figuratively speaking, setting thenceforward the wheel of the Law in motion ; it was also used in the representation of the Great Miracle at Srāvastī. The Gandhara artists were never sure about the mode in which it was to be depicted; sometimes the right hand of the Buddha was placed on the rim of a wheel on stand, at other times, the hand seemingly in the *abhaya* pose was used to serve the purpose, while more frequently it was depicted in a manner that was not at all suggestive of any clear idea (the right hand with fingers flexed

[1] T. A. G. Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 350, pl. CV. The centre and left sections of the panel portray the incidents connected with the marriage of Siva with Pārvatī.

[2] B. M. Barua, *Bharhut*, Book III, Pl. LXXVIII, Fig. 104; the inscription above reads: *Dīghatapasi sise anusāsati, i.e.*, 'Dīrghatapasvī instructs his disciples.' Fig. 18 in Pl. II of my book is based on the Bharhut figure of Dīrghatapasvī.

inward was placed near the breast, the left hand with its fingers drawn together touching it from below). But in the truly Indian images of the Buddha from the Gupta period onwards, the *dharmacakra-mudrā* is invariably presented in the manner shown in Fig. 4, Plate III, of my book. A glance at the drawing will at once show that this handpose is nothing but the combined representation of *jñāna* and *vyākhyāna mudrās*, the left hand being in the former and the right in the latter. The ideology here is thus characteristically expressive, Buddha in the act of expounding the true knowledge which he had himself first obtained through his efforts.[1]

The *kaṭyavalambita-* or *kaṭisaṃsthita-hasta* is the pose in which 'the arm is let down so as to hang by the side of the body, and the hand is made to rest on the loin, indicating thus a posture of ease' (*Rao*) ; but the hand is usually bent a little at the elbow and placed on the upper part of the waist. This is one of the commonest poses in which the left hand of a standing image is shown (in seated images also, this pose is commonly met with). Figures 19, 20, 21, 22 and 28 in Plate I of my book illustrate the manner in which it appears in the depiction of deities on early Indian coins. Figure 28 is sketched from a punch-marked coin in the Purnea hoard, Fig. 19, from Śiva on some coins of Wema Kadphises, Fig. 20, from the Śiva-Viśvāmitra on Dharaghoṣa's silver coins, Fig. 21, from Śiva Chatreśvara on some Kuniṇḍa coins, Fig. 22, from Lakṣmī on the unique coin with the legend '*Pakhalavadidevata*' grouped by the numismatists in the Indo-Scythic series. The goddess tentatively identified by me as Durgā Siṃhavāhinī or Ekānaṃśā appearing on certain copper coins of Azes shows

[1] This interpretation of the *dharmacakra-mudrā* was first suggested by me in my article on 'The Webbed Fingers of Buddha' published in the *Indian Historical Quarterly*, Vol. VI, 1930, p. 722, f. n. 4.

this characteristic pose (Pl. VII, Fig. 6). Varāhamihira described the image of Ekānaṃśā as *Kaṭisaṃsthitavāmakarā sarojamitareṇa codvahatī*, i.e., ' her left hand is placed on her waist while the other (right) hand holds a lotus flower ' (*Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, p. 780). The standing images of Buddha, the Nāgas and various other divinities, belonging to the early Kushan period onwards found at Mathura and adjacent places very frequently display this attitude; the Katra , Anyor and Mankuwar figures of seated Buddha also show the same pose. Coomaraswamy was fully justified that this pose along with the raised right hand was the iconographic pose *par excellence* in ancient and mediaeval India. Figure 14 in Plate II of my book, based on the device of a Mathura coin, shows that perhaps the order was sometimes, though very rarely, reversed. Figure 1, in Plate IV, is sketched from the usual pose appearing in many Brahmanical images. A brief reference to the *kāyotsarga* pose which is usually adopted in the representations of the Jinas will not be out of place here. In it the hands are shown hanging straight down the side of the body without the least bend in any of the limbs; this is described by Varāhamihira as *ājānulambabāhu*, i.e., ' the arms long enough to reach the knees ' (this is one of the characteristic signs of the great men and divine beings). R. P. Chanda was the first to note the portrayal of this pose on some Indus Valley seals (*cf.* the seal with the epiphany of the tree-spirit, discussed by me in Chapter V) ; Fig. 13, in Plate II, sketched by me from a punch-marked coin device, also portrays the same hand-pose.

Kaṭaka- or *siṃhakarṇa-hasta* denotes that particular pose wherein ' the tips of the fingers are loosely applied to the thumb so as to form a ring or, as somewhat poetically expressed by the latter name, so as to resemble a lion's ear ' (*Rao*). As Gopinath Rao has rightly understood, this pose is very useful in the depiction of goddesses in

whose hands fresh flowers are often inserted; it is thus very common in the iconographic representation of divinities. One of the earliest instances of this posture is to be found in the figure of Sirimā devatā at Bharhut where her right hand holding a lotus flower (partially broken) shows it, her left hand hanging stiffly by her side. *Daṇḍahasta* or *gajahasta* has got the technical sense of the hand and arm being thrown forward (sometimes across the body), appearing like a straight staff or the lolling trunk of an elephant (Pl. III, Fig. 8). The palm in this drawing seems to be in the *vaināyakī mudrā* and sometimes, especially in the well-known Naṭarāja images of Śiva, this *mudrā* is also recognisable. This pose is usually met with in images of gods or goddesses shown in the dancing attitude. Śiva Naṭarāja dancing vigorously on the back of Mūyaḷaka or the apasmārapuruṣa, Nṛtya-Gaṇapati, Kṛṣṇa Kālīyadamana, dancing Cāmuṇḍā and such other images have one of their hands in the above pose. The figure of the danseuse on the right side in drawing No. 22, Plate II, has her right arm and hand extended forward in a manner somewhat different from the above, but it can justifiably be described to be another variety of the same pose. Several other dancing Apsaras in Bharhut have one of their hands extended in a different manner, but all illustrate the idea of a straight staff or an elephant trunk. The significance of *sūcīhasta* has already been explained by me; it is comparatively rare in iconographic art (Pl. IV, Fig 6, but it should be shown upside down). Another very suggestive handpose is the *tarjjanīhasta*, where the projected forefinger of the right hand points upwards (in the *sūcī*, it usually points downwards, the hand being held down), 'as if the owner of the hand is warning or scolding another' (*Rao*). A person while threatening or admonishing another very often holds his hand in this position and so there is a characteristic conformity here between the actual practice

and artistic representation (Pl. IV, Fig. 6). In Vajrayāna *sādhanas*, Mārīcī and several other goddesses are very often described as, *tarjjanī-pāśahasta*, i.e., ' with a hand holding a *tarjjanī-pāśa* ' ; it is not meant hereby that the deity holds a noose (*pāśa*) in one hand while another is shown in the *tarjjanī* pose. The epithet really means that the noose which is meant for chastisement is placed in the same hand which is shown in the threatening pose ; this interpretation is actually borne out by the images of the above goddesses. One of the earliest representation of this particular *hasta* is to be found in a Jātaka relief on one of the coping stones at Bharhut ; this scene has been tentatively identified by B. M. Barua as illustrating the Gahapati Jātaka (Fausboll, 199). The standing figure on the right side in this section of the coping, none other than the Bodhisattva himself as the householder, is threatening and admonishing with the projecting forefinger of his raised right hand another male figure shown seated below cowering ; a female figure is seen peeping out of a hut, to whom the seated figure points with both hands (the pose in which the latter's hands are shown can with some justification be called *sūcī*).[1] The right hand of Sudarśanā Yakṣiṇī in Bharhut seems to be in a pose practically similar to the *tarjjanī* (Pl. II, Fig. 23). Barua is not quite accurate in his description of the Yakṣiṇī when he writes ' the four fingers of her right hand are bent towards the palm, while the thumb remains stretched out ' ; his plate (*op. cit.*, Vol. III, Pl. LXIV, Fig. 74) as well as

[1] For the story and illustration, *cf.* B. M. Barua, *Bharhut* Vol. II, pp. 105-106. Vol. III, Pl. LXXVI, Fig. 102. Barua thus describes the attitudes of the two male figures in the scene; the seated man ' with downcast eyes is pleading his innocence by referring to the woman with the forefingers of his two hands directed towards her,' while the standing one, the owner of the house, ' is angrily asking the accused to explain his conduct threatening him with the forefinger of his upraised hand.'

my drawing definitely shows that three fingers are only bent inwards, both the forefinger and the thumb remaining stretched upwards.

T. A. G. Rao rightly observes that '*vismaya-hasta* indicates astonishment and wonder. In this pose the forearm is held up with the fingers of the hand pointing up and the palm turned away from the observer (Pl. IV, Fig. 4).' The relief illustrating the Caṇḍeśānugrahamūrti of Śiva in the Kailāsanātha temple at Conjeeveram, belonging to the Pallava period, shows the father of Caṇḍeśa 'fallen on the ground, with his left hand held in the *vismaya* pose' (for the story and its illustration, *cf.* Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 209 and Pl. XLIX, Fig. 2). It will be of use to refer here to the Figure No. 3 in Plate IV of my book; the drawing is based on a railing pillar relief of the Saka-Kushan period in the collection of the Mathura Museum. A male figure is shown standing with the index and middle fingers placed on his chin. The figure has been rightly identified by V. S. Agrawala and B. S. Upadhya as the young hermit Ṛṣyaśṛṅga; they observe, 'This *mudrā* is indicative of astonishment (*vismaya*) and reflection (*vitarka*). The eyeballs are turned upwards and the whole expression is one of deliberation in which an awareness of the immediate surroundings is absent. Satisfaction beams on the face.' The story of Ṛṣyaśṛṅga is often narrated at length in the Brahmanical and Buddhist literature and the most suggestive moment in it is that in which the young Brahmacārin for the first time beholds a maiden; the artist has chosen this moment and has very effectively portrayed the pleasant wonder of the unsophisticated youth when sex consciousness was being aroused in his mind.[1] The handposes which are

[1] For the identification of this relief, *cf.* 'A relief of Ṛṣyaśṛṅga in the Mathura Museum', in *J. I. O. S. A.*, Vol. IV, No. I, pp. 62-4, Pl. XI; see also V. S. Agrawala, *Handbook to the Sculptures in the Mathura Museum*, p. 42, Pl. XVI, Fig. 58.

depicted in Figures 6 and 7 in Plate No. III of my book should be studied now. The former figure which is based on the bronze statuette of Harpocrates (thus identified by Marshall) unearthed at Taxila shows the right hand of the child god raised towards his face with the index finger placed on the chin in token of silence. The latter is sketched from a four-armed Viṣṇu image from Khajuraho whose front left hand is shown in similar pose (the index finger here more suggestively touches the left corner of the lower lip); this is one of the most unique representations of Viṣṇu and no text is known to me which enjoins that Viṣṇu is to be shown in such a pose. Upadhya and Agrawala have very correctly drawn our attention in their article above to the *Kumārasambhava* passage which describes Nandī guarding the entrance of Śiva's place of meditation : " Nandi posted at the entrance of the bower, having a golden-staff resting against his forearm, bade the Gaṇas to observe stillness with a gesture in which a finger of his right hand touched his mouth."[1] The bronze image of Hanumān, one of the four (the others being of Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā) belonging to the temple of Shermadevī in the Tinnevelly district of the Madras Presidency, shows his right hand placed upon the mouth indicating the attitude of silent respect and ungrudging obedience of the devoted follower.[2] Figure 21 in Plate II of

[1] *Kumārasambhavam*, III, 41: *Latāgṛhadvāragato'tha nandī vāmaprakoṣṭhārpitahemavetraḥ | Mukhārpitaikāṅgulisaṃjñayaiva mā cāpalāyeti gaṇān vyanaiṣīt ||* For the Harpocrates figure, *cf.* Marshall, *A guide to Taxila*, p. 79, Pl. XV; according to him, it is a late Hellenistic work. Vögel identified the Ṛṣyaśṛṅga figure as 'probably a Yakṣa of a fashionable type,' suggesting that its pose resembled that of Harpocrates (*Ars Asiatica*, Vol. XV, p. 102), but this suggestion was rightly challenged by Agrawala and Upadhya. For the Khajuraho Viṣṇu, see *J. I. O. S. A.*, Vol. I, p. 103, Pl. XXX.

[2] T. A. G. Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, Pl. LIV. Another bronze figure of the same monkey-god hailing from Rameswaram portrays the identical pose.

my book is also another unnamed handpose where two fingers (index and thumb) are put inside the mouth in order to produce some whistling sound; the left hand is shown in that pose, while the right one waves high one end of the scarf worn by the figure. This drawing is based on a deva figure from Bharhut relief depicting the victory of Buddha over Māra (Barua, Bharhut, Vol. III, Pl. XXXVII). Exactly the same posture is shown on similar figures appearing in the scene of Buddha's birth in numerous reliefs from Gandhara. The waving of the cloth is called *cellukhepa* in Pali and is expressive of the great joy of the waver; the left hand pose, thus, is also of similar import. Even now boys who are able to do it uses the above expressive pose to give vent to their joy by whistling. I may say that I have not met with any such pose in my study of the Brahmanical sculptures of different periods.

A somewhat detailed reference has been made to the various handposes which are usually depicted in the images of the Hindu divinities and their attendants. The *bhū-sparśa* or *bhūmisparśa* pose, in which the left hand rests on the lap with palm outward and the right touches the seat below, is particularly associated with Buddhist iconography. This pose illustrates the story of Buddha's calling the earth as his witness for testifying his right to sit on the Vajrāsana under the Bodhi tree, which was challenged by Māra, just prior to his enlightenment. Grünwedel has remarked that 'certain hand-postures attached themselves to particular legends and the position of the hands in the chief figure becomes an indication of the legend' (*Buddhist Art*, p. 177). This observation is mainly applicable to the two, *viz.*, the *dharmacakra* and the *bhūsparśa-mudrā*; both these were principally connected with Buddhism and in developed Mahāyāna iconography, they were the typical handposes of the two Dhyānī

Buddhas, *viz.*, Vairocana and Akṣobhya respectively. The nearest approach of the latter pose in Hindu iconography is to be found in the two-armed figure of Nara in the Deogarh relief already noted where the god is seated in the *ardha-paryaṅka* fashion on a raised seat with the index and the middle fingers of his left hand touching his seat; but unlike the Buddhist mode of representing the *mudrā*, we find here the palm of the hand as turned outward.

A few remarks about the complicated handposes which are reproduced by me in Plate V are necessary. I have already shown that these were mainly ritualistic in character adopted by the *sādhaka* in the performance of his *sādhanā* or the *bhakta* in the worship of the deity of his choice. I have selected at random the eight *mudrās* from the manuscript text in order to show how the particular postures adopted by the *sādhaka* in the most intricate processes of his *sādhanā* are indicative of the ideas contained in the *mantras* uttered by him with every different pose. The eight *mantras* associated with eight figures are thus laid down in the text: 1. *Oṃ vajrānalahandaha-pathama-bhañjana huṃ*; 2. *Oṃ vajrapāśa hrīṃ*; 3. *Oṃ vajrapuṣpe svāhā*; 4. *Oṃ vajradvī(dī)pe svāhā*; 5. *Oṃ vajrāṃkuśa ja*; 6. *Oṃ vajranaivedya svāhā*; 7. *Oṃ sarvvatathāgatasiddhi-vajrasamaya tiṣṭha eṣastvāṃ dhārayāmi vajrasattva hi hi hi hi humiti*; 8. *Oṃ sarvvavit vajradhupe trāṃ*. Now, the ideological association of the *mudrās* numbering 1, 2, 3, 7 and 8 with the different *mantras* are not difficult to follow; Nos. 4, 5 and 6 in some mystic way may contain the outline representation of a lamp, an elephant-goad and a pot of offering. It may be noted here that the *nivedya* or *naivedya mudrā* outlined by Poduval is closely similar to No. 6 in my plate; I may also observe that the Brahmin priests when they dedicate any *naivedya* (or offering) to the deity usually adopt this *mudrā* and taking a flower with the tips of the index fingers of the two

interlocked hands drop it on the *naivedya*. The waving flames of fire, the hands tied by a noose (*pāśa*) and the offering of a palmful of flowers to the deity are characteristically expressed by Figs. 1, 2 and 3; Fig. 7 expresses the invocation of the success attained by all Tathāgatas, symbolised here by the *vajra* and *ghaṇṭā* (bell, does it also indicate time?) and asking it to stay with the *sādhaka*, as he holds these symbols in his hand; Fig. 8 simply shows the incense-burner with smoke issuing from it held in the right hand, the left hand being placed below.[1]

The *Dhruvaberas* or the principal types of Viṣṇu images are grouped under three broad heads, *viz.*, *sthānaka* (standing), *āsana* (seated) and *śayana* (recumbent), in the *Vaikhānasāgama* text. The images of the other gods and their attendants also are represented in one or other of the first two attitudes, the recumbent ones being very rare. Several varieties of images also are to be found in dancing or flying pose, the latter being mostly used in the representation of such accessories as the Vidyādharas and others. In the case of standing images, different types of stance are met with, while there are numerous varieties of sitting postures in which the seated images are shown. Four

[1] The text from which the above poses as well as the *mantras* are taken is a late 18th century Vajrayāna one collected by P. C. Bagchi from Nepal. In its colophon I read, '*Iti śrīmacchākyarāja-durgatipariśodhanamukyākhyāna heguri*(?) *samāpta* | *Samvat 915 pauṣaśukle ekādasī bṛhaspativāra kunhu*(?) | *Suvarṇapanārimahānagare śāntighaṭamahāsthāne hemākaramahāvihāraveṣṭita taṃ lācchito*(?) *rathyākāvāhārayā*(?) *śrīvajrācārya nāmasaṃgati nāthaja*(?) *tha*(?) *durgatipariśodhana-samādhi-thamanam*(?) *coyājura*(?) *śubhaḥ*||' The language is corrupt Sanskrit and there seems to be some intermixture of Newārī in it. The date 915 Newar Samvat corresponds to c. 1795 A.D.

different standing postures were usually adopted by the Indian iconographer in the representation of the *sthānaka-mūrtis* ; these postures are usually called '*bhaṅgas, i.e.*, flexions or attitudes.' They were *samabhaṅga* or *samapāda*, *ābhaṅga, tribhaṅga* and *atibhaṅga*. The first denotes the equipoised body where ' the right and left of the figure are disposed symmetrically, the *sūtra* or plumb line passing through the navel, from the crown of the head to a point midway between the heels ' (Tagore). Thus, the weight of the whole body is equally distributed on both the legs and the poise is firm and erect, there being no bend in the body. Many are the Indian images which are shown in this attitude, the most typical being the early and late figures of the Jain Tīrthaṅkaras whose hands also hang straight down by their sides without showing the least bend in them (*kāyotsarga*). The Brahmanical and Buddhist divinities when they are depicted in the above attitude usually show various dispositions of their hands, either according to the nature of the ideas expressed by them or according to the type of the weapon or emblem held in them. Sirimā-devatā and many other Vyantara-devatās on the Bharhut railing stand in the *samabhaṅga* attitude. Figures 7, 8, and 20 in Plate I (varieties of Śiva on Ujjain and Audumbara coins), Figure I in Plate VII (Gaja-Lakṣmī on some coins of Azilises), Figure 7 in Plate IX (Mahāsena on Huvishka's coins) and Figure 2 in Plate X (Gaja-Lakṣmī on a Bhita seal) are shown in the above pose. *Ābhaṅga* is that form of standing attitude ' in which the plumb-line or the centre line, from the crown of the head to a point midway between the heels, passes slightly to the right of the navel ' (Tagore). In other words, in this form, a slight bend both in the upper and the lower halves of the figure is definitely perceptible. Many also are the Indian images which are represented in this pose ; Figures 13 and 19 in Plate I (Śiva on some Ujjain coins and the same god on some coins of

Wema Kadphises), Figures 4, 5 and 7 in Plate VII (Viṣṇu on a Kushan seal, Umā on some coins of Huvishka a goddess with *cakra* on Maues' coins), Figures 2, 5 and 6 in Plate VIII (Śiva on some coins of Maues, as well as of Huvishka-Fig. 4 on a seal of the Saka period has, however, been identified as Poseidon trampling on a bull-shaped river god), the figures of Śiva and Skanda Kumāra Viśākha on Huvishka's coin reproduced in Plate IX (Figs. 1, 2 and 8), Gaṅgā and Saraswatī (?) in Plate X (Figs. 1 and 3, Fig. 1 shows Gaṅgā on the elephantine Makara on the reverse side of the Tiger-slayer type coins of Samudra Gupta and Fig. 3, possibly Saraswatī on those of Narendra-vinata, a Bengal king of the late Gupta period) can be described as standing in the *ābhaṅga* pose. The *tribhaṅga* pose has been described by A. N. Tagore as one in which 'the centre line passes through the left (or right) pupil, the middle of the chest, the left (or right) of the navel, down to the heels. The lower limbs, from the hips to the feet, are displaced to the right (or left) of the figure, the trunk between the hips and neck, to the left (or right), while the head leans towards the right (or left).' It should be noted that the number of bends in the figure is three and thus, the name is quite appropriate. The pose may not be as common as the above two, but it is also used in the iconographic art of ancient and mediaeval India, especially in the representations of goddesses and other attendants of principal deities. Ṛṣyaśṛṅga on the Mathura railing (Pl. IV, Fig. 3) and the goddess on certain copper coins of Azes, tentatively identified by me as Durgā (Pl. VIII, Fig. 6) are undoubtedly depicted in the *tribhaṅga* pose. *Atibhaṅga* has rightly been described by A. N. Tagore as really an emphasised form of the *tribhaṅga*, the sweep of the *tribhaṅga* curve being considerably enhanced. The upper portion of the body above the limbs below are thrown to right or left, backwards or forwards, like 'a tree caught in a storm.' This type is

comparatively rarely represented in Indian art and is used in the depiction of dynamic action on the part of the divinity; several *Ugra* (terrific) forms of Śaiva and Śākta deities and the various Krodha-devatās of the Vajrayāna Buddhism are usually depicted in this manner. (Reference may be made here to the *ālīḍha* and *pratyālīḍha* poses in which some *sthānakamūrtis* are shown. *Ālīḍhapada*, which is sometimes loosely called *ālīḍhāsana*, denotes that particular mode of standing in which the right knee is thrown to the front and the leg retracted, while *pratyālīḍhapada* is just its opposite; both these attitudes are adopted in shooting arrows and one of the earliest depictions of these poses is to be found in the two arrow-shooting figures of Uṣā and Pratyūṣā, the two goddesses of dawn accompanying Sūrya in the old stone railing at Bodh Gaya. In a fragmentary Gandhara relief in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, Sūrya is seated on a chariot and one of the arrow-shooting figures is present, the other being broken away.) Another very early representation of the *ālīḍha* pose is outlined in the drawing No. 25 in Plate I, which is based on a figure appearing on some punch-marked coins among the Purnea hoard. Śiva appearing on the Sirkap bronze seal of Śivarakṣita and on some copper coins of Maues (Figs. 1 and 3, Pl. VIII) is shown in the same posture, though he is not depicted as shooting arrows. *Tantrasāra* describes the Brahmanical goddess Tārā, ideologically similar to the same goddess in the Vajrayāna pantheon and most probably a borrowal from it, as 'fierce and standing in the *pratyālīḍha* attitude' (*pratyālīḍhapadāṃ ghorām*). The standing pose shown in Figure 28, Plate I (drawing from a figurine on a few punch-marked coins in the Purnea hoard) is very interesting. The right knee flexed outwards with the right leg crossing the left leg firmly planted reminds us of the posture in which some Yakṣiṇīs on Bharhut and Mathura railing are depicted; some mediæval and modern figures

of Kṛṣṇa in several of his *līlāmūrtis* are also shown in this pose.[1]

Mention may be made here of the various poses or *sthānas* in which pictures of gods and men are to be shown, according to the *Viṣṇudharmottara*. There are as many as 13 *sthānas*, viz., *pṛṣṭhāgata, ṛjvāgata, madhyārdha, ardhārdha, sācīkṛtamukha, nata, gaṇḍaparāvṛtta, pṛṣṭhāgata* (*?*), *pārśvāgata, ullepa, calita, uttāna and valita*. The above poses are characterised by the position of the legs and feet which are varied by a series of motions like *vaiśākha, ālīḍha and pratyālīḍha* (poses peculiar to arches—*Tatra vaiśākham-ālīḍhaṃ pratyālīḍhaṃ ca dhanvinām), citragomutrakagata* (?) and *viṣama* (peculiar to wielders of sword and shield), *calita, khalita* (*balita* ?), *āyasta* (*āyata* ?) and *ālīḍhaikapada* (peculiar in turn to the holders of a spear, a *tomara, i.e.*, an iron club, a stone and a *bhindipāla, i.e.*, a small javelin or dart to be thrown at the enemy), *savalgita* (in a sort of gallop ?—pose peculiar to the persons who hold a wheel, a trident, a mace, a *kuṇapa, i.e.*, a kind of spear). The above varieties of the positions of legs and feet are in addition to the two principal groups of standing postures, viz., *sama* and *arddhasama* or *asama* which are respectively well-planted and in motion (*Samaścārddhasamāḥ pādāḥ susthitāni calāni ca* । *Samāsamapādasthaṃ ca dvividhaṃ sthānakaṃ bhavet* ॥). *Samapāda* is also known as the stance which is *pādabhūyiṣṭha* (feet firmly and squarely planted ?), while the other type (*i.e., asama* or *arddhasama* should be (known as) *maṇḍala* (in rotatory motion ; *Tadgatvā pādabhūyiṣṭhaṃ sthānaṃ samapadaṃ smṛtam* । *Maṇḍalañca dvitīyaṃ syāt.....*). One foot firmly planted, the other shown in moving posture is really the *arddha-samapāda*

[1] The names of the 4 principal standing poses described above are from A. N. Tagore's '*Some Notes on Indian Artistic Anatomy*' (published by the Indian Society of Oriental Art), pp. 11-13.

or *ekasamapāda*, as seems to be the sense in the description of the standing pose of the female figures in the text. The author of the *Viṣṇudharmottara* describes the attitude in which the female figures are to be shown in this manner—'one of the legs (should be) in the *samasthāna* (straightly planted), the other in the *vidgala* (does it refer to the manner of showing one leg crossing the other firmly planted leg?—*cf.* Fig. 28 in Plate I, it is a female figure as is clear from the big braid behind the head), the body should be shown in a graceful manner, sometimes held by supports, charming with its grace and dalliance, with the front part of the loins being broad and spacious, with one leg firm and well-adjusted—thus should a sage paint a female figure.'[1]

[1] The above extracts are from *Viṣṇudharmottara*, Bk. III, Ch. 39, verses 39-50. The description of the postures is introduced there to show how they can be painted with the help of decrease and increase (*kṣaya* and *vṛddhi*, translated by St. Kramrisch as 'the science of foreshortening'). Kramrisch's translation of many of the above passages seems to me somewhat inaccurate. Verses 49-50 read—*Ekapādasamasthānaṃ dvitīyena tu vidgalam* | *Śarīraṃ ca salīlaṃ syāt sāvaṣṭambhaiḥ kvaciddhṛtam* (in the edited text the reading is *kvaciddrutam* which is evidently incorrect) ‖ *Līlāvilāsavibhrāntaṃ viśālajaghanasthalam* | *Sthiraikapādavinyāsaṃ strīrūpaṃ vilikhed-budhaḥ* ‖ These have been translated by her in the following way—'The flight (*lit.* running away) of stout men is in some cases depicted with one leg in a straight position and with the other (placed in such a way that) the wanton body should be (shown) with the neck stretched forward. The learned painter should paint a female figure with one foot calmly advanced, with the part about the hips and loins broad and flurried, on account of amorous dalliance.' There can be little doubt that both the couplets, my translation of which is given above, describe the standing pose of a female figure. The passages are bristling in technical terms, many of which may not be correctly printed in the text; the significance of a good many of them again is unknown to us at present and so the task of translating them is extremely difficult. I myself have not attempted to translate literally some of the terms quoted by me.

Only a small number of the multifarious poses noted above from the *Viṣṇudharmottara*, however, though they could all be painted by skilled artists on canvas, wall or such other objects, were actually used by the image-makers of ancient and mediæval India in the depiction of the cult-deities and their attendants. Moreover, it was the lyrical painting (*vaiṇika*) which was very rich in 'ideal proportion and in poses (*pramāṇasthāna-lambhāḍhya*) and which dealt with 'happenings on earth, not with the iconography of the gods.' As Coomaraswamy remarks, 'the action will require the representation of many different positions and movements, not merely the frontal pose appropriate to the image of a god' (*J. A. O. S.*, Vol. 52, 1932, p. 15). That the 'frontal pose' was the most appropriate one in the depiction of the cult deity is proved by the 51st verse of the chapter on Pratimālakṣaṇa in the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* ; it says that the image which leans to the left side causes harm to the wife and that leaning to the right diminishes the span of life (of the donor ;—*Vāmāvanatā patnīṃ dakṣiṇavinatā hinastyāyuḥ*).

Various kinds of *āsanas* are prescribed for different types of divinities in the iconographic texts. The *Ahirbudhnya-saṃhitā* (Ch. 30) mentions as many as eleven principal *āsanas* such as *cakra, padma, kūrma, māyūra, kaikkuṭa, vīra, svastika, bhadra, siṃha, mukta* and *gomukha* (*Cakraṃ padmāsanaṃ kūrmaṃ māyūraṃ kaikkuṭaṃ tathā | Vīrāsanaṃ svastikaṃ ca bhadraṃ siṃhāsanaṃ tathā || Muktāsanaṃ gomukhaṃ ca mukhyānyetāni nārada ||*). After naming them, the author describes each type of the sitting posture in detail; all these are evidently yogic *āsanas* adopted by a yogī as aids to his concentration. It should be noted that in the above list some can be understood to mean the particular animal or object whose name is associated with them. Thus, *kūrmāsana* in one context may mean that it is the tortoise which serves as the seat (of a particular god or

goddess—*cf.* the river goddess Yamunā who is *kūrmāsanā*) while in another would indicate that type of sitting pose in which 'the legs are crossed so as to make the heels come under the glutuses (*Gūḍhaṃ nipīḍya gulphābhyāṃ vyutkrameṇa samāhitaḥ । Etatkūrmāsanaṃ proktaṃ yogasiddhikaraṃ paraṃ ॥*). The earliest example of this sitting posture, as I have elsewhere suggested, is probably to be found in the seated prototypes of Śiva-Paśupati on some Mohenjo-daro and Harappa seals. *Padmāsana*, may very well signify a lotus as the seat of the deity; but as a particular type of sitting posture it can be described as one in which 'the two legs are kept crossed so that the feet are brought to rest on the thighs' (*Urvorupari saṃsthāpya ubhe pādatale sukham । Padmāsanamidaṃ proktaṃ . . . . .*). The *kukkuṭāsana* as a sitting posture is a variety of *padmāsana*, where the whole weight of the body rests on two arms placed on the ground on both sides, the body thus hanging in the air (*Padmāsanamadhiṣṭhāya jānvantaravinissṛtau । Karau bhūmau niveśyaitad vyomasthaḥ kukkuṭāsanam ।*). When the thighs are placed together and the left foot rests upon the right thigh and the left thigh on the right foot it is known as *vīrāsana* (*Ekatroruṇi saṃsthāpya pādamekamathetaram । Uruṃ pāde niveśyaitadvīrāsanamudāhṛtam ॥*). In the *bhadrāsana*, the heels of the legs which cross each other are placed under the testes and the two big toes of the feet are held by the hands. Rao says that 'in the *siṃhāsana* the legs are crossed as in the *kūrmāsana*; and the palms of the hands, with the fingers kept stretched out, rest supinely upon the thigh, while the mouth is kept open and the eyes are fixed upon the tip of the nose (*Nāsāgra-nyastanayano vyāttavaktra ṛjussudhīḥ*). A few of the eleven yogic *āsanas* as mentioned in the *Ahirbudhnyasaṃhitā* have been described above; many more are to be found in Tāntric and other texts. The *Niruktatantra*, as quoted in the *Śabdakalpadruma*, refers to innumerable *āsanas* (as many as 84 lacs),

but specially selects two among them, *viz.*, *siddhāsana* and *kamalāsana*. But in the representations of the deities and their accessories, very few of them are actually used. The most commonly depicted sitting posture among the above is the *padmāsana* which is illustrated by Fig. 5 in Plate III. *Vīrāsana* is the mode in which the Indians usually sit and is illustrated by Figures 15 and 18 in the same plate (No. 15 from an Ujjain coin, No. 18 from a Bharhut relief). The Aihole figure of Viṣṇu described by T. A. G. Rao as *Vīrāsanamūrti* does not actually sit in the *vīrāsana* mode, but in an easy pose which is known as *sukhāsana*, where one leg generally the left one rests on the seat while the right knee is raised upwards on the seat and the right arm rests on the raised knee.[1] The figure of Śiva seated on his mount in Figure 7, Plate X, is also depicted in a pose somewhat similar to that of Aihole Viṣṇu (it is a gem intaglio formerly in the Pearse collection now acquired by the Indian Museum, Calcutta). A yogic *āsana* which is sometimes to be found in the representations of deities but which is not included in the above list is the *utkūṭikāsana* where one sits with his heels kept close to the bottom and with the back slightly curved and the forearms resting on the knees raised above the seat. In order to keep the knees in the above position, a cloth band known as *yogapaṭṭa* is tied round the raised knees (Pl. IV, Fig. 5). The sitting

[1] For the Aihole Viṣṇu figure, see T. A. G. Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, Pl. XXX. On the obverse of the coins of Narendravinata, the king is shown as seated on a couch in a similar pose, the difference lying in the left knee being flexed upwards and the right leg bent at the knee resting on the seat. This pose is also sometimes described as *mahārājalīlā*. The Siṃhanāda variety of Avalokiteśvara and the Mañjuvara one of Mañjuśrī Bodhisattvas are usually depicted in this pose.

posture is used in some images of seated Kevala Narasiṃha (*cf.* the Halebidu figure illustrated by T. A. G. Rao in his book, Vol. I, Pl. XLII) and of Lakulīśa the founder of the Pāśupata sect. Figure 2 in Plate IV shows a Yakṣa, found at Maholi near Mathura and now in the Mathura Museum, who has a band passing round his raised left knee and his projecting belly. *Paryaṅkāsana* can be understood in the sense of a sitting posture in which both the legs are made to dangle down from whatever type of seat the figure sits on; this type of sitting posture is sometimes curiously described as 'seated in an European fashion.' Seated figures of Maitreya in mediaeval Buddhist art are very frequently depicted in the above mode; the figure of Ambikā on the reverse side of some coins of the Chandragupta-Kumāradevī type sits on her lion mount in the above pose (Pl. X, Fig. 8). *Vajraparyaṅka, baddhapadmāsana* and *vajrāsana*—all seem to denote the type of sitting attitude, similar to *padmāsana*. The *Tantrasāra* describes *vajrāsana* as that kind of *āsana* in which the feet are placed on the thighs one upon another with the toes shown upwards and on which the hands are placed (*Urvvoḥ pādau kramānnyaset kṛtvā pratyaṅmukhāṅgulī | Karau nidadhyādākhyātaṃ vajrāsanamanuttamam*). The Vajrayāna *sādhanas* describe a type of Buddha image known as Vajrāsana Buddha where the god is seated in the above pose with this difference that only his left hand with palm upwards is placed on his lap and the right touches the lotus-seat on which he is seated (*bhūsparśamudrā*). The oblong seat beneath the Bodhi-tree is also described as *Vajrāsana* or the diamond throne in Buddhist texts. One of the commonest types of sitting modes is the *arddhaparyaṅkāsana*, known also as *lalitāsana* or *lalitākṣepa*, in which one leg, usually the left leg, is tucked up on the seat, while the right one dangles down along it. Many Brahmanical, Buddhist and Jain deities who are profusely endowed with ornaments are often depicted in this

curious at all when we know that she is endowed with all that is terrific and hideous in mythology and art; she is described as *piśitāśanā* (carrion-eater), holder of a *khaṭvāṅga* (the osseous shaft of the forearm capped by a skull) and a fleshless skeleton goddess (*kaṅkālī*). *Siṃhāsana* is a four-legged seat usually rectangular in shape; its legs are carved in the shape of four lions, thus laying special stress on its name. Some ancient and mediaeval Buddha figures have been found, below whose seat are carved one or two lions; but this has been explained as symbolising the idea of Gotama Buddha as the lion of the Śākyas (Śākyasiṃha).

Śayana or fully recumbent images of Hindu divinities are extremely few and far between. All that are known to me are principally associated with the Viṣṇuite pantheon, though in some late mediaeval and modern Śakti images, such as those of Kālī, Śiva is depicted lying on his back under the feet of the principal deity as in the case of the Muyalaka or Apasmārapuruṣa (personifying the evil of ignorance) wriggling beneath the feet of Śiva Naṭarāja. Again, in some iconographic reliefs (showing a definitely sectarian bias) a god of one sect is sometimes shown lying prone under the feet of a deity belonging to another different sect. Thus, in the Śarabhamūrti of Śiva, Narasiṃha, *i.e.*, the man-lion incarnation of Viṣṇu is thus shown underneath the curious hybrid form of Śiva as Śarabha; in some Vajrayāna Buddhist images, Gaṇapati the cult deity of one of the five principal Brahmanical cults is also depicted in this attitude in the pedestals of such deities like Parṇaśavarī, Aparājitā and others (in this case, Gaṇapati may symbolise the obstacles in the way of the *sādhaka*, of which he is the remover according to the Hindu mythology, *cf.* his name Vighnāntaka). If we leave them aside, all of which are in the way of subordinate figures, the two principal types of fully recumbent images belonging to the Brahmanical and Buddhist pantheon are those of Śeṣaśayana

of Viṣṇu and the Mahāparinirvāṇamūrti of Buddha. Jalaśāyin and Vaṭapatraśāyin aspects of Viṣṇu, which are ideologically similar to his Śeṣaśayanamūrti are also represented in this particular attitude; Jalaśāyin is the same as Śeṣaśayana, while the Vaṭapatraśāyin aspect shows the god as an infant lying on a banyan leaf floating in the waters, and sucking one of his big toes. The Śeṣaśayana or Anantaśayana depicts the adult god recumbent on the folds of Ādi or Ananta Nāga, the hoods of the latter serving as a canopy over his head; there are several other figures shown round him, the chief among whom is Lakṣmī or Bhūdevī who is shampooing his legs. In the terracotta relief from the brick temple at Bhitargaon (5th century A.D.) and the stone relief from the stone temple at Deogarh (6th century A.D.), the demons Madhu and Kaiṭabha in a fighting mood are also shown by his side. This type of Viṣṇu image is one of the commonest images enshrined in the main sanctum of the South Indian Vaiṣṇava shrines of some antiquity and importance; there it is specially designated as Raṅganātha or Raṅgaswāmī. Really however, this type is nothing but an elaborate plastic representation of the cosmic god Nārāyaṇa who is one of the components in the cult picture of Bhāgavatism or Vaiṣṇavism, the other principal constituents being Vāsudeva and Viṣṇu. The *Manusaṃhitā* (I, 10) and the *Mahābhārata* (XII, 341) record that the waters were called Nārās because they were the sons of Nara and since they were the first resting place of Prajāpati, so he came to be known as Nārāyaṇa.[1] The ideology underlying the

[1] *Āpo nārā iti proktā āpo vai narasūnavaḥ | Tā yadasyāyanaṃ pūrvaṃ tasmānnārāyaṇaḥ smṛtaḥ ||* The *Mahābhārata* couplet is in a slightly altered form:—*Nivṛttilakṣaṇo dharmastathābhyudayiko 'pi ca | Narāṇāmayanaṃ khyātamahamekaḥ sanātanaḥ ||* *Āpo nārā iti proktā āpo vai narasūnavaḥ | Ayanaṃ mama tatpūrvamato Nārāyaṇohyaham ||*

concept of Nārāyaṇa even goes back to the age of the *Ṛgveda* where the original principle known as Viśvakarman is described in this manner: 'That which is beyond the sky, beyond the earth, beyond gods and spirits,—what earliest embryo did the waters contain, in which all the gods were beheld? The waters contained that earliest embryo in which all the gods were collected. One (receptacle) rested upon the navel of the unborn, wherein all beings stood.'[1] This explanation of the recumbent images of Viṣṇu shows the ideological difference that exists between them and the Mahāparinirvāṇa figures of Buddha. The Anantaśayana-mūrti of Viṣṇu sculptured in one of the side niches of the Deogarh temple just referred to is one of the finest presentations of this motif in Indian art. Farnell detected in it a real resemblance with the Stockholm Endymion and Smith endorsed his view; the latter scholar after reproducing both the figures side by side, observed, 'The peculiar character of the Gupta sculpture seems to me to be undoubtedly derived from Greece. There is no direct copying of Hellenistic models as there was in the Gandhara school, but I feel sure that somehow or other the Gupta artist drank at the fountain of Greek inspiration.'[2] Smith himself says in the same connection that the Deogarh relief is thoroughly Indian in its theme and treatment, although the artist 'has felt and understood the European sculptor's conception of a beautiful pose.' It should be noted, however, that the resemblance, how far real may be a matter of opinion, exists, only in the placing of the legs in both the figures; a careful scrutiny will show that the head, the attitude of the hands and many other features are entirely different in the two

[1] *R. V.*, X, 82, 5 and 6; *Paro divā para enā pṛthivyā paro devebhirasurairyadasti | Kaṃ svidgarbhaṃ prathamaṃ dadhra āpo yatra samagacchaṃta viśve | Ajasya nābhāvadhyekamarpitaṃ yasmin-viśvāni bhuvanāni tasthuḥ ||*

[2] *Ost. Asiatische Zeitschrift*, 1914, p. 25, Figs. 17 and 18.

reliefs. It will be too much to say on the basis of a slight parallelism in the display of legs of two recumbent figures that the sculptor of one of them was indebted for his conception of the recumbent pose and its presentation to that of the other.

I have already referred to several *Nṛtyamūrtis* of Brahmanical deities like Śiva, Kṛṣṇa and others while explaining the handpose known as *daṇḍahasta* or *gajahasta*. Of them, those of Śiva are the most variegated and remarkable ones. Śiva, according to the Hindu mythology, is a great master in the art of dancing. In fact *nṛtyaśāstra* is specially associated with this great god. The *Viṣṇudharmottara* (Bk. III, ch. 73, vv. 46-8) tells us that Maheśvara represents the science of dancing as the various other sciences like *itihāsa* (history), *dhanurveda* (archery), *āyurveda* (medicine), *phalaveda* (fruit-culture), *pāñcarātra* (a religious system), *pāśupata* (another religious system) etc. are represented by Prajāpati, Śatakratu (Indra), Dhanvantari, Mahī (the Earth goddess), Saṃkarṣaṇa and Rudra respectively. The *Nāṭyaśāstra* of Bharata mentions as many as one hundred and eight modes of dancing and the Śaivāgamas also state that Śiva knew the same number of dancing modes. According to the *Viṣṇudharmottara* (Bk. III, ch. 2, vv. 1-9), the knowledge of iconography depends on the correct understanding of the rules of *Citra* (sculpture in the round, relievo and pictorial representations), a true mastery in the latter again is unattainable without a knowledge of the art of dancing which again is supplementary to one's full acquaintance with the science of music. [1]

[1] Coomaraswamy says, 'certain of the dance poses possess not merely a general linguistic, but also a special hieratic significance..... Many of the gods are themselves dancers, and, in particular, the everlasting operation of creation, continuance, and destruction—the Eternal Becoming, informed by All-pervading Energy—is marvellously

The 26th chapter of the Book III of the same text deals with names and descriptions of various types of hand postures which are adopted in the different modes of dance (*nṛtyahastavyavasthāvarṇana*). These names are :—*caturasra, vṛtta, laghumukha, arāla, khaṭakāmukha, ābiddha, vakrasaṃvyasva(?), recita, arddharectia, avahitthaḥ, pallavita, nitamba, keśabardhanī, latākhya, karihasta* (the same as *gajahasta* or *daṇḍahasta* discussed above), *pakṣoddyota artha(?)bardhita, garuḍapakṣa, daṇḍapakṣa, ūrdhvamaṇḍalaja, pārśvamaṇḍalaja, pārśvārdhamaṇḍala, uromaṇḍala, iṣṭavastika, avanī, padmakauśika, alipallava, ulvāna, lalita* and *balita*. To the above fairly formidable list will have to be added twenty-two *asaṃyuta* and thirteen *saṃyutahastas*, the names of some of which are already familiar to us. I have referred earlier in this chapter to Poduval's division of the handposes into two groups, *viz.*, *saṃyuta* and *asaṃyuta*; our text here names the constituents of each group. The following are the *asaṃyutahastas* adopted by one expert in dancing :—*patāḳā, tripatāka, kartare(i)mukha, ardhacandra, aṭā(rā?)la, guru(śuka)tuṇḍa, muṣṭi, śikhira* (should be *śikhara*[1]), *kapittha, khatakāmukha, sūcyārdha, padmakośa, mṛgaśīrṣa, mṛga, lāṃgula, kālapadma, catura, bhramara, haṃsāsya, haṃsapakṣa, saṃdaṃśa* and *mukula*. The thirteen *saṃyutahastas* are :—*aṃjali, kapota, karkaṭa, svastika, khaṭaka, vardhamāna, utsaṅga, niṣidha, dola, puṣpaputa, makara, gajadanta* and *avahittha* (*vardhamāna* is again mentioned after this, but that would enhance the number to 14). The above list is to a great extent similar to the various *nṛtyahastas* mentioned in the *Nāṭyaśāstra* of Bharata and there seems to be very little doubt that much of it, if not all, was borrowed from the same work. The names

represented in the dance of Śiva. He also exhibits dances of triumph and destruction.' Coomaraswamy and Gopālakrishnāyya, *op. cit.*, 24-25.

of some of these handposes were also used in the denomination of several of the dancing modes which are described in detail in Bharata's work. The great temple of Śiva-Naṭarāja at Chidamvaram contained systematic illustrations of these interesting dance poses and the artists appended fully descriptive labels to each.[1] But these sculptures mainly carved on the walls flanking the passages in the great *gopurams* of the temple are comparatively late—none of them dating from a period further back than the 13th century A.D. ; again the reliefs illustrating the *karaṇas* are mainly those of danseuse. The principal image of Śiva in the main sanctum of the temple, however, depicts him 'dancing his cosmic dance, the right foot trampling down Mūyaḷaka, the left raised in the *kuñcitapāda* with one right hand sounding the cosmic drum, the other in the *abhayahasta*, with one left hand holding the fire and the other in *daṇḍahasta* pose.'[2] Numerous bronze replicas of the same type of dancing Śiva are found in

[1] The inscribed dance sculptures in the temple were first noticed at some length in the *Madras Epigraphical Report* for 1914 ; but the account was not fully comprehensive. V. N. Naidu, S. Naidu and V. R. Pantulu, in their joint work on *Tāṇḍava Lakṣaṇam*, published in 1936 by G. S. Press, Mount Road, Madras, have carefully collected much valuable information about them and have reproduced the 4th chapter entitled Tāṇḍavalakṣaṇam of Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra*, with its English translation, side by side. Their reproduction of the photographs of the *karaṇas* with the English translation of the descriptive inscriptions, as well as the glossary explaining the highly technical terms furnished by them is extremely useful.

[2] The *Aṃśumadbhedāgama* and *Uttarakāmikāgama* give a full description of this dance pose. The former names it as the first kind of dance and describes eight different other modes, though it says that in all there are 108 different kinds. The latter calls the Naṭarāja dance as *bhujaṅgatrāsa* ; but the *bhujaṅgatrāsita*, *karaṇa* No. 24 in the list of 108 dances in the Tāṇḍavalakṣaṇa chapter of Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra*, is somewhat different.

Southern India, but most of them belong to the 14th or 15th century A.D. or even later. Much earlier figures of Śiva dancing in various ways have been found in the Brahmanical cave shrines at Ellora and T. A. G. Rao has rendered useful service to students of iconography by recognising in them two of the *karaṇas* or dance poses described in detail in Bharata's work. Plates LXII and LXIII in his 2nd volume are reproductions of two Ellora panels which illustrate the *kaṭisama* and *lalita* mode of dances as described by Bharata. Several other South Indian bronze and stone figures of Śiva, of the mediaeval period, reproduced by him portray other dance poses such as *lalāṭa-tilaka, catura* and *talasaṃsphoṭita* as delineated in the *Nāṭyaśāstra*. Śiva dancing in the *catura* mode has been recognised as early as in a relief at Badami. The mediaeval dancing images of Śiva that have been found in Eastern India usually show him ten-armed and dancing vigorously on the back of his mount Nandin ; this fits well with the *Matsyapurāṇa* passage which says that the god endowed with ten arms and wielding elephant hyde should be shown dancing on his bull mount (261, 10-11 : *Vaiśākhasthānakaṃ kṛtvā nṛtyābhinayasaṃsthitaḥ | Nṛtyan daśabhujaḥ kāryyo gajacarmadharastathā*). In much earlier Indian art, especially the central Indian art of the Suṅga period, many reliefs depict male and female dancers ; Pl. II, Fig. 23, depicts two of the four dancing *apsaras* in the scene of Māra's defeat (with none of the *karaṇas* in the *Tāṇḍavalakṣaṇam* could I fully identify these two dance types). But, for the earliest Indian representation of dancing posture we shall have to go back to the prehistoric art of the Indus valley. Several female figurines—bronze and terracotta ones—have been discovered at Mohenjo-daro and Harappa, which have been explained by Marshall and others as dancers. But the most interesting discovery, in this connection, is that of a mutilated figure

of dark grey slate at Harappa, which has been described by Marshall as the statue of a male danseuse. The pose of the dancer is full of movement and swing ; he stands on his right leg with the body from the waist upwards bent well round to the left, both arms thrown out in the same direction, and the left leg raised high in front. Marshall says, 'Although its contours are soft and effeminate, the figure is that of a male and it seems likely that it was ithyphallic, since the membrum virile was in a separate piece. I infer, too, from the abnormal thickness of the neck, that the dancer was three-headed or at any rate three-faced and I conjecture that he may represent youthful Śiva Naṭarāja. On the other hand, it is possible that the head was that of an animal.' [1] Whichever suggestion of Marshall be correct, it appears that this is one of the earliest cult-objects depicted in the attitude of dancing.

Another mode in which certain figures were depicted in the iconographic art of ancient and mediaeval India is the flying one. It is usually adopted in the representation of the garland-bearing and flower-throwing attendants or accessories of the principal sectarian deity or his emblem. The early Buddhist monuments of Bharhut, Sanchi and Amaravati, etc., and the Jaina caves of Udayagiri and Khandagiri near Bhuvanesvar (Orissa) contain many such figures. They are usually divided into two main groups by the artists; one group are hybrid in appearance, their upper half being human with wings attached to the shoulders, their lower half being bird-like, while the others are entirely human even without the appendage of wings. According to iconographic terminology, the former are the Gandharvas, the latter being the Vidyādharas. The early Mathura artists make frequent use of these two types and their

[1] Marshall, *M.I.C.*, Vol. I, p. 46.

tendency to differentiate between them is clear.[1] Fig 9 in Pl. IV is based on one of the Vidyādharas shown hovering in the sky with flower basket in his right hand, carved on the top part of the *prabhāvalī* of the Katra Buddha. There are no wings and the artist has in a very characteristic manner suggested the flying attitude. By the Hellenistic craftsmen of Gandhara also the garland bearing cherubim and male and female flying figures were frequently employed. The indigenous artists of the Gupta period made occasional use of flying couples of Vidyādharas, sometimes the male ones carrying swords in their hands (*cf. M.A.S.I.*, No. 25, Pl. XV, Fig. a); but the hybrid flying figures were not discontinued. The *Viṣṇudharmottara* (Bk. III, ch. 42, vv. 9-10) describes this mode of representing the Vidyādhara couple in the following manner: *Rudrapramāṇāḥ kartavyāstathā vidyādharā nṛpa | Sapatnīkāśca te kāryā mālyālaṅkāradhāriṇaḥ || Khaḍgahastāśca te kāryā gagane vāthavā bhuvi |* The sculptors of the mediæval period introduce a new canon in their usage of these motifs. They not only retain the use of both the variants, *viz.*, the Vidyādharas and the Gandharvas, but allot well-marked position to both in their comprehensive scheme of the decorated stela (*prabhāvalī*). The hybrid couples, not now in the usual flying pose, are shown playing on musical instruments just above the *makara* motif on either side of the central figure, while the entirely human garland-bearing figures, sometimes singly and at other times with their consorts borne on their legs, are shown hovering on either side of the *kīrttimukha*. The *Mānasāra* (p. 370, vv. 7-9) describes the Vidyādharas and probably also their

[1] V. A. Smith, '*Jaina Stupa and other antiquities of Mathura*,' Pl. XVI, Fig. 1. Two flying figurines are depicted side by side, the one to the left with its mutilated face is purely human while the other is a mixed being. Smith says about the former, 'The mutilated male figure to the left of the umbrella seems to be intended for a Gandharva.'

flying posture in this manner: *Puratah prṣṭhapādau ca lāṅgalākārāveva ca | Jānvāśritau hastau gopuroddhṛta-hastakau ||* *Evaṃ vidyādharāḥ proktāḥ sarvābharaṇa-bhūṣitāḥ |* The second of the above three lines, especially its last part is difficult of interpretation (probably there is some mistake here in the text), while the meaning of the third line is quite clear. The first line most probably describes the flying pose in a very characteristic way; it means 'with ploughshare-like legs (shown) in front of the back.' This appears to be a very significant mode of describing the flying posture which is depicted in the late Gupta and mediæval reliefs by the legs flexed backwards near the knees, the feet resembling the handle of the plough and the knees, the metal ploughshare itself. The *Mānasāra* describes the Gandharvas, after the manner of their representation in mediæval art, as being not in the flying posture but either dancing or standing and playing on musical instruments; but their hybrid character is emphasised.[1] On rare occasions, more important divinities are also represented as flying in the sky. Thus, the top section of the relief showing the Anantaśayana Viṣṇu in the Deogarh temple, already referred to, shows divinities like Hara-Pārvatī, Indra and Kārttikeya flying in the air; they are seated on their respective mounts which, as their tensely strained legs and bodies show, are soaring through space.

Reference *in passim* may now be made to the conventional representation of the clouds in early and mediæval Indian art, in order to indicate the firmament through which the above figures fly. In the Kushan and early Gupta stone reliefs, the sky is hardly indicated on their

[1] *Mānasāra*, p. 370, vv. 9-10: *Nṛtyaṃ vā vaiṇavaṃ vāpi vaiśākhaṃ sthānakaṃ tu vā ||* *Gita-vīṇā-vidhānaiśca gandharvāśceti kathyate |* *Caraṇaṃ paśusamānaṃ cordhvakāyaṃ tu narābham= Vadanaṃ garuḍabhāvaṃ bāhukau ca pakṣayuktau |*

background. On early Kushan coins, however, especially on some of the coins of Wema Kadphises and Huvishka, the imperial busts are shown as rising from the clouds. The clouds are suggested by uneven clots or dots clustering together below the bust and as the Kushan kings claimed to be the sons of heaven, they could very appropriately use such as well as other devices such as fire issuing from the shoulders, halo encircling their heads, etc., in their busts on the coins (*cf.* Gardner, *B.M.C.C.G.S.I.*, pp. 124-25, Pl. XXV, Figs. 6-9, Pl. XXVII, Figs. 8-11, 13, 14 etc.). On a fragmentary stone relief in the Gandhara room of the Indian Museum, probably depicting the Śyāma Jātaka, the *antarīkṣa* region is indicated not only by the round disc of the moon on its top section, but also by blotches of stone in an undulating roll suggestive of clouds (*cf.* N. G. Majumdar, *A Guide to the Gandhara Sculptures in the Indian Museum*, Part II, p. 107). In the early and late mediæval art, however, a distinct layer of logenze-shaped stone with wavy or undulating sides serves as the background of the garland-bearers on the top corners of the *prabhāvalī*; it is by this device that the artists wanted to indicate the sky full of wavy clouds.

The Hindus from the very early times were excessively fond of displaying ornaments in the images of their gods and goddesses. Most part of the body—the head, the ears, the nose, the neck, the breasts, the upper and lower arms, the palms and fingers, the torso, the waist, the hip, the ankles, the feet—had their various appropriate ornaments. Grünwedel long ago observed this innate feature of the Indian iconographic art and remarked, 'The heroic form of Indian sculptured figures has been, and at all times remained the same,—they are decked as for gala occasions. This form has been preserved with unalterable tenacity through the whole history of Indian art, and even in neighbouring countries' (*Buddhist Art*, p. 31). The

principal cult images of some creeds like Buddhism and Jainism, heterodox from the Brahmanical Hindu point of view, no doubt were free from this peculiar feature; but the ornaments which could not be shown in their case were bestowed with greater zeal on the images of most of the subordinate deities like the Bodhisattvas and the Śāsanadevatās. Of all the important types of the male Bodhisattvas, only one, *viz.*, Siṃhanāda Lokeśvara, is known to be without any ornaments (*nirbhūṣaṇa*); but the above peculiarity of this variety of Avalokiteśvara can only be explained on the basis of his ideological affinity with Śiva whose anthropomorphic form is usually least endowed with ornaments. Even the very images of Buddha himself of the mediæval period—especially in Eastern India, were sometimes endowed with jewelled crown (*kirīṭa*) and an elaborately designed torque.[1] Even the images of divinities shown in the Yogic postures such as the *yoga* varieties of Viṣṇu and the Yoga-Dakṣiṇāmūrti of Śiva are decorated with ornaments, though their number may not be as many as in the other types of images (in the case of some Śiva figures, these are shown as made of *rudrākṣa*, a kind of seed).[2] The Indian practice of endowing even the *dhyāna-yoga* images of deities with ornaments goes back to the period of the Indus valley culture; the prototype of Śiva-Paśupati on the seals is decorated with a number of bracelets, armlets, torques or a pectoral-like thing and a horned crown. This frequent and excessive display of ornaments on the images of their divi-.

[1] N. G. Majumdar would recognise the Ādi-Buddha in them (*V. R. S*: *Ann. Rep.*, 1926-7, Mus. Notes, pp. 7-10 & Figs. 4-6. But Coomaraswamy has disputed this suggestion and described them simply as the 'Crowned Buddha'; *J. R. A. S.*, 1928, p. 837.

[2] The two figures of Nara and Nārāyaṇa on one of the side niches of Deogarh temple are shown as two sages wearing no ornaments on their body; *cf.* T. A. G. Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, Pl. LXXI. Rao wrongly describes them as Jñāna and Yoga Dakṣiṇāmūrtis of Śiva.

nities by the Indians had an effect on the modelling of the human figure from the artistic point of view. Grünwedel has observed that 'the ornament, in the painfully careful execution it received, hindered very considerably the development of the human figure, since it always retained the conventional type for the forms' (*op. cit.*, p. 31). It must be said, however, that unlike the Greek artists the Indians were not in the habit of emphasising the muscles on the body; thus, though the ornaments no doubt arrested the outline of the physical form being freely displayed, still the effect was not as harmful as could otherwise be feared. Thus, the same scholar's remark that 'the shoulders loaded with broad chains, the arms and legs covered with metal ring, the bodies encircled with richly linked girdles, could never have attained an anatomically correct form' should be accepted with some modification.

It will be necessary now to describe some typical ornaments which are commonly displayed on the different limbs of the divine image. There is no doubt that these were worn by the people themselves for whose religious use the images were made. The various types of head-gear have been grouped by the author of the *Mānasāra* under the general term *mauli*, which according to him, are subdivided into *jaṭāmakuṭa*, *kirīṭamakuṭa*, *karaṇḍamakuṭa*, *śirastraka*, *kuntala*, *keśabandha*, *dhammilla* and *alaka-cūḍaka*. It may be seen that in the above list the 2nd, 3rd and 4th denote different types of crowns, while the rest so many different modes of dressing the hair. The *jaṭāmakuṭa* specially enjoined to be depicted on the heads of Brahmā, Rudra and Manonmānī consists of matted locks of hair done up into the form of a tall crown on the centre of the head; it is sometimes adorned with jewels, crescent and a skull, the two latter being used in the case of those worn by Rudra-Śiva. One of the names of Rudra-Śiva is *Kaparddī* which means 'one whose matted locks wave spirally upward like the top

of a shell' (certain Buddha figures of the Saka-Kushan period at Mathura show this type of *kapardda jaṭā-makuṭa* on their head; *cf.* the Katra Buddha, sketched in Fig. 5, Pl. III). Several types of this variety of head-gear are reproduced by T. A. G. Rao in his book, Vol. I, Pl. VII and Pl. IX; those in the 2nd plate have been described by him as *jaṭābandha* or *jaṭābalaya* and *jaṭābhāra*.[1] *Kirīṭa-makuṭa*, specially appropriate for Nārāyaṇa, according to the *Mānasāra*, 'is a conical cap sometimes ending in an ornamental top carrying a central pointed knob' (Rao). This type of head-gear was not worn, however, exclusively by the god Nārāyaṇa-Viṣṇu; it could also be worn by Sūrya and Kubera. Varāhamihira not only describes Viṣṇu as *Kuṇḍalakirīṭadhārī* (wearing ear-rings and *kirīṭa* crown), but also says that Ravi should be wearing a *makuṭa* (*mukuṭadhārī*) and Kubera should be *vāma-kirīṭī*, *i.e.*, the *kirīṭa* should be placed slantingly on the left side of his head.[2] Figure 8 in Plate IV shows the outline of a *kirīṭa-makuṭa*; it is the so-called basket-like head-dress worn by Śakra in the Hellenistic art of Gandhara an early variant of the former (Pl. IV, Fig. 7)? *Karaṇḍamakuṭa* is shaped like a basket held upside down, the basket having the form of a reversed cone, broad at its mouth and narrow at its bottom. This is the type of crown particular to most of the other gods and the goddesses and is indicative of subordination in status according to Rao. *Śirastraka* (*śirastrāṇa*) is an elaborate turban which is so frequently shown on the heads of the Yakṣas, Nāgas, Vidyādharas and other male figures depicted

[1] Rao quotes some extracts from *Uttarakāmikāgama*, describing the *uṣṇīṣa* in which the *jaṭāmakuṭa* is included; but, as he says, the description is somewhat unintelligible (Vol. I, pp. 27-28).

[2] *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, ch. 57, vv. 32, 47, 57; according to Utpala, *mukuṭa*, *mauli* and *kirīṭa* are used in the same sense. The extant images show that in most cases there is very little difference between the crown worn by Viṣṇu and that worn by Sūrya.

in the early Indian art of the Suṅga period. The figure of Siva on the Sirkap seal seems also to wear this elaborate turban (Pl. VIII, Fig. 3); the type of head-gear shown on the head of Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu on the Kushan seal (Pl. VIII, Fig. 4) is a very interesting one which cannot be named with precision. *Kuntala*, *keśabandha*, *dhammilla* and *alaka-cuḍaka* are, as has been said above, different modes of dressing the hair. These are appropriate to particular goddesses, according to *Mānasāra*; thus, the first is shown on the head of Indirā (Lakṣmī), the first and second on those of Sarasvatī and Sāvitrī. The third and fourth are not mentioned in association with any goddess, but the former is recommended for the wives of such subordinate rulers like Māṇḍalikas and the latter 'for the women who carry torches before a king and the wives of the king's sword-bearers and shield-bearers.'[1] A mode of dressing the hair which was being used by the Eastern Indian artists in the representation of youthful Kṛṣṇa and other divinities from the late Gupta period onwards has been described by some archaeologists as *kākapakṣa* which is explained in the lexicons as '*mastakapārśvadvaye keśaracanāviśeṣaḥ*' *i.e.*, a type of arranging the hair on the two sides of the head (for illustration of this mode on some figures of Kṛṣṇa at Paharpur, *cf.*, *M.A S.I*, No. 55, Pl. XXVIII). In the Hellenistic art of Gandhara, different modes of dressing the hair are shown by the artists on the heads of Avalokiteśvara and Maitreya; the former has his hair tastefully arranged

[1] T. A. G. Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 26-30. The *Mānasāra* (P. K. Acarya's edition, p. 314) lays down that *kirīṭa* is to be worn by a sārvabhauma, *i.e.*, the ruler 'whose rule extends to the shores of the four bounding oceans' and by an adhirāja, *i.e.*, one holding sway over seven provinces; *karaṇḍamakuṭa* is to be worn by a narendra, *i.e.*, one ruling over three provinces, or sometimes even by a cakravartin (here evidently a ruler of a lesser dignity than a sārvabhauma).

upwards with jewelled bands encircling it, while the latter has long hair tied sideways in a double knot just on the centre of the cranium. Spooner has referred to the later Buddhist texts in general which speak of different hair arrangements for different Bodhisattvas (*A.S.I.A.R.*, 1906-07, p. 116). In some late Gandhara and most of the Gupta and post-Gupta Buddha images, the hair is arranged schematically in separate short curls, each curl turning from left to right (*dakṣiṇāvartakeśa*, a *mahāpuruṣalakṣaṇa*). The so-called cranial bump on the head of Buddha images of early and late periods, wrongly described as *uṣṇīṣa*, the first of the 32 *mahāpuruṣalakṣaṇas*, is, as has been shown by me elsewhere, nothing but the plastic form of hair done up in a top-knot in the centre of the head (*I.H.Q.*, 1931, pp. 499-514 & pls.). In the latest issue of *J. I. S. O. A.* (Vol. VIII, 1940), Moti Chandra has collected a lot of information about 'cosmetics and coiffure in ancient India' and has illustrated his elaborate article with very useful drawings (pp. 62-144).

The custom of perforating the ear-lobes and ears for the insertion of various types of ear ornaments is a very old one in India and it is still current mainly among the women here though in a much restricted manner; but in ancient and mediaeval times it was common to both men and women. The ceremony of *karṇabedha* (perforation of the ear) is one of the important *saṃskāras* in the life of a twice-born and wearing of *kuṇḍalas* was once regarded as one of the privileges of a *brahmacārin* (student initiate) as also of a *gṛhastha* (householder). The physical peculiarity of long and distended ears and earlobes, which was the direct outcome of the wearing of heavy and broad ear-ornaments, came to be regarded as a sign of beauty and greatness (*cf. pṛthukarṇatā* as one of the signs of greatness in men). The long and distended ear-lobes of the figures of Buddha belonging to different periods and localities in India

also emphasise this peculiar custom. Different kinds of ear-rings (*kuṇḍalas*) are shown on the ears of different types of divinities. Rao refers to five kinds of ear-ornaments, *viz.*, *patra-kuṇḍala*, *nakra-kuṇḍala*, *śaṅkhapatra-kuṇḍala*, *ratna-kuṇḍala* and *sarpa-kuṇḍala*. Their very names indicate that they were made of cones of cocoanut or palmyra-leaves or even thin gold leaves, (metal, ivory or woo len piece) in the shape of the mythical *makara*, cut sections of conch-shells, jewels, and (metal, ivory. or wooden piece) fashioned like a cobra, respectively. Śiva and sometimes Gaṇapati are adorned with *sarpa-kuṇḍalas*, the *patra* and *śaṅkhapatra-kuṇḍalas* are usually shown on the ears of the goddesses like Umā and others, while *nakra-kuṇḍala* and *ratna-kuṇḍala* can with equal appropriateness be used to decorate the ears of the divinities of both sex. Varāhamihira describes Viṣṇu, Sūrya and Baladeva as *kirīṭakuṇḍaladhārī*, *kuṇḍalabhūṣitavadana* and *bibhrat kuṇḍalamekam*, respectively. The ornament on the nose is known by the name of *vesara* (not a Sanskrit word) and is not to be found in early Indian images; in late figures of youthful Kṛṣṇa and goddesses like Rādhikā and her attendants, this ornament and its variants sometimes appear. Various kinds of ornaments were and are still used to decorate the neck, their names being *niṣka*, *hāra*, *graiveyaka*, etc. The earliest form of neck ornaments is to be found in the representations of Śiva-Paśupati's prototype in Mohenjo-daro and Harappa, and it seems that the pectoral-like object hanging from the neck and adorning the breasts is really nothing but a concentric row of neck-chains or torques. In the 33rd hymn of the *Ṛgveda*, Rudra is described as wearing a beautiful *niṣka*; in many other passages of the same as well as in other Vedic texts *niṣka* is mentioned. *Niṣka* in most of the passages signifies neck-ornaments (necklace torque, etc.), and it was first suggested by E. Thomas on

the authority of the *Ṛgveda* passage that the term there meant a necklace made up of *niṣka* coins.[1] *Hāra* also means a torque or a necklace and various types of it were current in ancient and mediaeval India, as the neck ornaments of the images show. Sūrya is expressly described by Varāhamihira as *pralambahārī* (with a long torque hanging from his neck) and Hara (Śiva) is described in iconographic texts as 'loaded with the weight of *hāras*' (*hārabhārārpito Haraḥ*). Another term which is used to denote the broad necklaces in Sanskrit literature is *graiveyaka* which almost invariably adorns the neck and breasts of the Yakṣi and other figures in Central Indian art. In many cases these necklaces are adorned with jewel-pendants and the jewel *par excellence* adorning the breasts of Viṣṇu is *kaustubha* (Viṣṇu is described by Varāhamihira as *kaustubhamaṇibhūṣitoraska*).[2] The long necklace or garland hanging down from the neck below the knees, known as *vaijayantī* (also sometimes loosely called *vanamālā*) is peculiar to Viṣṇu; according to the *Viṣṇupurāṇa*, it is

[1] E. W. Thomas, *Ancient Indian Weights*, p. 35. D.R. Bhandarkar in his *Carmichael Lectures* (1921) further pursued the idea and suggested that in some context, *niṣka* meant gold coins, while in others necklace made of coins (pp. 65-69); S. K. Chakravarti, however, suggests that the word always means a necklace (*Studies in Ancient Indian Numismatics*, p. 22ff.).

[2] The breasts of Viṣṇu, Buddha and the Jinas are also characterised by the *śrīvatsa* mark. *Śrīvatsa* is a sort of hairy mole, one of the *mahāpuruṣalakṣaṇas*; Utpala explains it as a '*romāvarta*.' Rao says, 'In sculpture this mode is represented by a flower of four petals arranged in the form of rhombus, or by a simple equilateral triangle, and is invariably placed on the right side of the chest.' In not many mediæval Viṣṇu figures of the northern and eastern India, I could recognise this mark. In Chapter V of this book, I have referred to a symbol and its variants frequently to be found on the seals of the Gupta period as probably representing the *śrīvatsa* mark; *cf.*, Pl. II, Figs. 11 and 12.

five-formed for it is made up of five different gems, *viz.*, the emerald, pearl, blue stone (*nīla*), ruby and diamond, which are associated with the five elements. The *yajñopavīta* or the sacred thread which is invariably to be worn by the male members of the twice-born is found on the images of the gods from the Gupta period onwards; in the earlier images it seems to be absent. In mediæval sculptures, what appears to be the representation of a jewelled *yajñopavīta* sometimes accompanies that of the cotton one; all this of course is placed in the *upavītī* fashion, *i.e.*, it encircles the torso from the top of the left shoulder and below the right arm. Sometimes the skin of an antelope (*kṛṣṇasāra*) is thrown over the body of such deities like Nara and Nārāyaṇa (*cf.* the Deogarh relief).

Channavīra, according to Rao, is 'a kind of flat ornament, a kind of jewelled disc, meant to be tied on the *makuṭa* or hung round the neck by a string so as to lie over the chest.' But Rao is not quite sure about his explanation; the ornament is mentioned very often in the iconographic texts. An ornament made of two chain-like objects worn crosswise on the torso, one in the *upavītī* and the other in the *prācīnāvītī* fashion (the latter is just the reverse of *upavītī*) with a flat disc placed on their junction near the centre of the chest, may illustrate *channavīra*; this is sometimes found on some late South-Indian sculptures of Viṣṇu or his incarnatory forms (*cf.* Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, Pl. LV, Figs. of Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa) and other images. Curiously enough, I have seen similar ornaments decorating the torso of a few figures in the Taxila museum. The Besnagar Yakṣiṇī seems to be adorned with this ornament (*cf.* also similar ornament on the figure of Culakokā devatā in a Bharhut pillar; many other such examples can be shown). Two other ornaments of the torso are the *kucabandha* and the *udarabandha*; their names signify the purpose for which they were used. Both of them are flat bands, the former to keep the breasts

in position and the latter, the protruding belly. *Kucabandha* is only used in female figures and not even in all of them; Rao has observed that when a deity like Viṣṇu or Subrahmaṇya is depicted with two consorts, one on either side, the one on the right of the god is only adorned with this ornament or dress. His explanation that 'this peculiarity is perhaps connected with the right hand manner of worshipping the *devī*' is not at all convincing. *Udarabandha* is shown in many male figures and it reminds us of the band going round the top of the protruding stomach of so many early representations of the Yakṣa figures (*cf.* the Parkham and other Yakṣa figures). The waist and hip of both the male and the female figures are tastefully decorated with several kinds of jewelled ornaments like *kaṭibandha* (waist-band), *mekhalā* (girdle), *kāñcīdāma* (a girdle furnished with small tinkling bells held down in chains and arranged in rows), etc. Various types of such ornaments are met with in ancient, mediæval and modern Indian art; I can draw the attention of my readers to such ornaments on the Besnagar and the Diadarganj Yakṣiṇī figures. In mediæval reliefs, both of the north and south, they are far more elaborate than on the above. Mention of *avyaṅga*, the waist-girdle peculiar to the Sun images of the north should be made in this connection. tI is based on the Avestan *aiwiyaonghana*, the sacred woollen thread girdle which a Zoroastrian is enjoined to wear round the waist. Round anklets in rows decorate the ankles mostly of the female figures from the early reliefs onwards, while the upper surface of the feet of the female figures and sometimes of the male figures also is decorated with an ornament elliptical in shape, known as *mañjīra*.

Many and various are the ornaments which are depicted as adorning the upper and lower arms of the deities. The earliest representation of such ornaments is to be found on the prototype of Śiva-Paśupati at Mohenjo-daro and Harappa and the many sculptures and terracotta figurines of the

Maurya, Suṅga and later periods portray various types of them. The names which are used in iconographic and general Sanskrit texts are such as *kaṅkaṇa, valaya, keyūra, aṅgada,* etc.; the first two are worn on the lower and the last two on the upper arm. '*Keyūra* is a flat ornament worn on the arm just over the biceps muscle, the *kaṅkaṇa* or the bracelet is worn at the wrist' (Rao). Sometimes the armlets were adorned with plaques containing interesting devices; one such is described by Vögel, worn by a seated Bodhisattva figure in the Mathura museum, as 'embellished with plaques on which we observe a human figure riding on a conventional bird, probably a Garuḍa or a peacock.'[1] The palms and fingers are sometimes adorned with ornaments, the former with small round discs held in the centre inside of it with two chains crossing at its back and the latter with rings (*cf.* Fig. 87 in Pl. XXIII of Coomaraswamy's *H.I.I.A*).

The early Indian artists attained much success in the treatment of the drapery which, in the case of male figures, is made up of a loin-cloth (*dhoti*) whose folds are very tastefully arranged in parallel rows in the early and mediæval period and a long scarf thrown loosely on the upper part of the body. In the early figures of the Maurya-Suṅga period and even sometimes afterwards, the excess of the long loin-cloth is gathered together and shown hanging in a long tapering fold or folds in front. This form is common to both the male and the female figures (*cf.* the figures of Parkham Yakṣa and Besnagar Yakṣiṇī, shown side by side in *H.I.I.A.*, Pl. III, Figs. 8 and 9). Thus there is not much difference in the dressing of male and female figures in early

[1] *M.M.C.*, p. 58, Pl. X. The broad necklace displayed on the figure is also interesting; it is fastened with buckles in the shape of animal-heads. It is also adorned with a string of amulet-holders, commonly found on the Bodhisattvas of Gandhara, worn in the *upavīti* fashion.

Indian art, especially in the lower part of the body. But the long scarf shown on the upper half of the male figures is usually absent in the female, the upper part of the latter remaining always uncovered. The torso of the male body is also shown bare (excepting the scarf mentioned above), the modern jacket like garment (*āṅgiyā, āṅgrākhā*) being nowhere present. It is in the types of figures, undoubtedly representing people foreign to India, a few of which are met with in the early art of Sanchi and Bharhut, that we find the close covering of the whole of the body, from the neck to the feet.[1] This is one way of representing the *udīcyaveśa* named by the authors of the iconographic texts while describing such figures as Sūrya, Citragupta and Dhanada (*cf.* Hemādri's *Caturvargacintāmaṇi*, Bibliotheca Indica Edition, Vratakhaṇḍa, Vol. II, pp. 145-46); Varāhamihira characterises it fully as *gūḍhaṃ pādāduro yāvat* in his description of the Sūrya figures. In the earlier extant images of Sūrya, the costume he is depicted as wearing is exactly similar to the dress worn by the Kushan kings like Wema Kadphises and Kanishka (*cf.* the sculptural and numismatic representations of these kings with the Sūrya relief at Bhumara). The mode of presentation of the costume changes in the later sculptures and varies mostly in details according to the different localities to which they belong. On some late mediæval figures, great care is bestowed by the artist on the carving of the garment; thus, the *śārī*,

[1] The figure on the Bharhut pillar inscribed *Bhadaṃtasa mahilasa thabo dānaṃ*, in the Indian Museum, as also the figures riding on winged lions in the eastern gateway at Sanchi are shown in this costume. *cf.* Barua, *Bharhut*, Vol III, Pl. LXII and Grünwedel, *Buddhist Art*, p. 84, Fig. 10. It is curious that the heads of two of these figures are encircled by a band tied in a loop behind with its two loose ends floating downwards; this is very much similar to the diadems worn by the Greek kings on their heads.

i.e., the cloth worn by women, which is shown round the body of the figure of Pārvatī, one of the Pārśvadevatās (deities shown on the side niches) of the Liṅgaraja temple at Bhuvanesvar, Orissa, is an example of such extreme care. A few remarks about the dress shown on the body of the Buddha figures will not be out of place here; this is the dress of a Buddhist monk. It is made up of three pieces, *viz.*, the lower garment (*antaravāsaka*) which hangs down to the ankles and is gathered round the loins with a girdle; secondly, the upper garment (*uttarāsaṅga*) which covers the breast and shoulders and reaches below the knees; and thirdly the cloak (*saṅghāṭi*), worn over the two under-garments (*M.M.C.*, p. 35). Of these three pieces, the last is most prominently displayed in sculptures, though the artist does seldom fail to suggest one or other of the under-garments. Grünwedel and after him Vögel suggest that the treatment of the drapery was entirely derived from classical art. This is acceptable to a certain extent, though the motif represented, as Vögel himself suggests, is entirely Indian. But the remark of the latter scholar that 'the indication of the drapery is indeed foreign to Indian art' (*ibid*, p. 35) does not bear scrutiny. In its support he has compared the presentation of the drapery on the Buddha images of Gandhara and Mathura with the same on those of the Gupta period and of the mediaeval period. But as I have just shown the Central Indian artists of the pre-Christian period indicate the garments worn in those days in diverse ways, and in many figures of the Gupta and mediæval period, dress is characteristically represented with great care. The diaphanousness of the drapery on the Buddha figures of Sarnath and afterwards is very effectively suggested by the artists and it certainly does not testify to their inability in indicating the garments. This brings us to the question of the representation of nudity in Indian art. The Greek sculptures, in the figures of the athletes

and the mythological beings very often went in for the representation of the nude human body; in this they had the free scope to reveal the beauty of the physical form. But this in itself seems hardly to have been the aim and intention of the Indian artists; whenever rarely they represented the uncovered body, they were either actuated by a purpose of making the nudity repugnant to cultured taste or by mythological requirements. Thus, some of the Mathura Yakṣiṇīs who appear to be nude or just about to divest themselves of their garments (most of these Yakṣiṇīs are not depicted nude at all, but are presented by the artists as clothed in the most transparent of garments), or the nude female figures in the mediaeval art of Orissa and central India emphasise the carnal character of nakedness. Mythology again necessitated the representation of nude body, where, however, the voluptuous element was entirely absent; we may refer, for instance, to the figure of a Jina or a Tīrthaṃkara of the Digamvara Jaina creed or of a Bhikṣāṭanamūrti of Śiva. Again the idea which underlies the representation of the nude mother goddess found in India from the earliest times onwards is much the same as is evident in the so many realistic phalli, ring-stones of prehistoric India and Śiva-liṅgas of the historic period. But attempts to symbolise and sanctify the principles of virility and fecundity were not peculiar to India alone and many other nations of the world did the same thing in diverse ways.[1]

Two other characteristic features of the Indian images in general, which require some notice here, are the *śiraścakra* and the *prabhāvalī*. The former represents the halo-circle round the head, corresponding to the Greek nimbus while the latter the same round the whole of the divine body, really serving the purpose of the stela or the back-slab.

[1] *Cf.* Hartland's article on 'Phallicism' in *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*; Wall, *Sex and Sex Worship*, etc.

Grünwedel remarks about the halo round the Buddha heads of Gandhara that 'the nimbus is borrowed from the Greek school, yet it appeared very late in Greek art—in the time of Alexander' (*Buddhist Art*, p. 86). But originally it belonged only to the astral divinities. Coomaraswamy has suggested, however, that 'the disk of gold placed behind the fire altar to represent the Sun may well be the origin of the later *prabhāmaṇḍala* or *śiraścakra* (nimbus).'[1] In Gandhara it is almost invariably plain; in the Saka-Kushan art of Mathura it shows a scalloped border, while in the Gupta period though retaining this feature, it is endowed with more ornamentation. But several images of the Hindu divinities in the Gupta period are represented with comparatively plain nimbus. In the mediæval sculptures different types of *śiraścakra* are used to decorate the figures, the commonest of them taking the shape of a lotus flower in full blossom; another common variety is parabolic in shape, with two concentric layers of gable decorations at its outer end. Varāhamihira describes the image of Sūrya as having a *prabhāmaṇḍala* shining with jewels (*ratnojjvalaprabhāmaṇḍalaśca*). Rao says that the *śiraścakra* 'should have the form of a circle or a full-blown lotus, eleven *aṅgulas* in diameter, and should be away from the head by a distance equal to a third of its diameter. This halo-circle is attached to the back of the head of images by means of a rod whose thickness is equal to one-seventh of the diameter of the *śiraścakra*.' But the description is more appropriate in the case of bronze images

[1] *H.I.I.A.*, p. 41. He supports his suggestion by saying 'Just as the tree behind the empty altar or throne, representing Buddha in the early art, remains in the later art when the throne is occupied, so the sun-disc behind the fire-altar may well have remained there when the deity was first made visible.' He remarks further, 'It is hard to believe that the nimbus can have originated outside the classic area of sun-worship. It may be of Iranian origin, or of Indian origin;' *ibid*, p. 57, fn. 1.

than in the case of wooden or stone ones. The mediæval bronze Viṣṇu images from Rungpur, first noticed by D. B. Spooner in the *Annual Report of the Archæological Survey* for the year 1911-12 (pp. 152-58, Pls. LXX, LXXI), show separate *prabhāmaṇḍalas* attached to their heads. The stone or wooden images do not show this separate piece and the nimbus is carved on the back of their heads in the same piece. The *prabhāvalī* is an ornamental decoration, usually elliptical in shape, shown behind the whole body of the image; it is sometimes endowed with a number of *jvālās* or projecting tongues of flame. This is really the background or the original slab on which the image is carved in very high relief. The usual relievo-character of the Indian sculptures and their necessary dependence on architectural art have been traced by Grünwedel to the ancient Indian style of carving in wood. The scholar's remarks about the Buddhist sculptures are very well applicable to many images belonging to the other creeds. He says, 'even when figures are executed alone they are never represented without an aureole, never without attendant accessory figures, and never without a wall behind to form a solid background to the figure. This fact bears a certain relation to the Indian conception of the universe—the constant merging of historical persons in a system.....' (*Buddhist Art*, p. 30). Though, since this was written, several separate Yakṣa, Yakṣiṇī and similar figures of the Maurya-Suṅga and Saka-Kushan periods have been discovered in different parts of northern India, yet it is principally correct. Coomaraswamy, especially with an eye to these 'magnificent primitives' observes the same thing with regard to Gupta art in this manner, 'In the Gupta period the image has taken its place in architecture; becoming necessary, it loses its importance, and enters into the general decorative scheme and in this integration acquires delicacy and repose' (*H.I.I.A.*, p. 71). Occasionally, however, the image is

partially carved out of the black slab, portions behind the torso, the head and the legs being fully chiselled out, giving it the specious appearance of being fully in the round ; but it is attached to its background in the extreme ends, thus retaining its relievo-character all the same. The *prabhāvalī* sometimes contains the emblems special to the god to whose image it serves as the background ; while, in the case of some principal types of Viṣṇu images (*dhruva-beras*) the ten *avatāras* are carved on it. In early and late mediæval Hindu images of northern and eastern India, it commonly depicts a scheme of decorative carving on it; thus, in a fully complete stela, the order of arrangement of the motifs from the pedestal (*pīṭhikā*) upwards is first the leogryph (lion upon elephant—*gaja-śārdūla*, sometimes the animals bear sword-bearers on their backs), then the *makara* transom, above it the hybrid couple (Gandharvas) playing on lute and dancing, a little higher up the flying garland-bearers (*mālādhārī* Vidyādharas) among the clouds and lastly the *kīrttimukha* finial. This last motif consists of a grinning lion face with protruding goggle eyes and fangs, just placed in the top centre of the *prabhāvalī*, sometimes chains of jewel garland issuing out of either corners of its mouth. The *kāla-makara* motif in Indonesian art seems to be an adaptation of this Indian motif. The age of an image belonging to the eastern India can be satisfactorily determined with the help of its *prabhāvalī*. In the earlier period it is usually plain, decorated with the scallop or cable design at its outer rim and the top is fully rounded (very rarely, the whole of it appears in the shape of a rough oblong); the *kīrttimukha*, *leogryph*, etc., are usually absent. Gradually, it becomes torus-shaped with the pointed peak in the top centre, and the various motifs named above crowd in. In the reliefs of the Sena period, some varieties are also characterised by profuse ornamental carvings, reminding one of the Hoysala school of Mysore.

The *pīṭha* or *pīṭhikā*, about which something has already been said by me in connection with *āsanas* is that portion of the stone slab on which the image is shown. In its top layer, it is usually of the form of a *mahāmbuja* or *viśva-padma*, *i.e.*, a double-petalled lotus, one set of petals pointing upwards and the lower set gracefully drooping down; the feet of the god or goddess rest on the pericarp (*karṇikā*) of the flower. The real pedestal below usually of two or more distinct layers is of the *pañcaratha* or *saptaratha* type, *triratha* and *navaratha* varieties being uncommon; the *rathas* indicate the re-entrants or facets and their number is never even. On these different horizontal sections of the pedestal are carved the figures of the donors of the image (usually the donor couple are depicted, thus laying stress on the association of the wife, *i.e.*, *sahadharmiṇī*, with her husband in the pious act), the particular mount of the god or goddess; sometimes, though rarely, objects used in the ritual worship (*i.e.*, the *pūjopakaraṇas*) such as a lamp (*dīpa*), a bell (*ghaṇṭā*), offering (*naivedya*), etc., are also figured there. In the pedestals of the early mediæval period and even a little later, the decorations in the shape of lotus blossoms with stalks and leaves are far simpler and are usually carved in outline; but in those of the later mediæval period (late Pāla and Sena) these are more ornate and the lotus blossoms are embossed. The above observations show that the image with its accessories, with both the *prabhāvalī* and the *pīṭha* are carved out of the same slab of stone, thus all embodying an organic whole. Such other *pīṭhas* as the *bhadra-pīṭha*, a brief description of which has already been given, are usually made of separate pieces of stone; these are normally broad in their top and bottom sections, the middle ones being narrow. Coomaraswamy makes this interesting remark about the shape of such *pīṭhas*, "The altar (used in Vedic sacrifice) itself, usually wide above and below and narrow in the middle 'like a woman's waist,' is evidently the proto-

type of the *āsana* and *pīṭha* of later images" (*H.I.I.A.*, p. 41).

I have reserved the consideration of the various kinds of objects placed in the hands of the Hindu images to the last part of this chapter. These objects can be classed under several heads like weapons, implements, musical instru- ments, animals and birds, etc., which are the respective attributes or emblems of the different members of the Hindu pantheon. The weapons that are u ually mentioned in iconographic tex s are *cakra, gadā, daṇḍa, kheṭaka, dhanus, śara, aṅkuśa, pāśa, khaḍga, paraśu, śūla, śakti, vajra, agni, muṣa'a* and *khaṭvāṅga*, etc. Rao not only mentions the above as so many important weapons, but adds to the above list three other objects such as *śaṅkha, taṅka* and *hala* which can also justifiably be described as su ch. *Śaṅkha* is an ordinary conchshell which was blown in ancient times by the warriors in the battle field for the purpose of inspiring their own soldiers with hope and striking terror into the minds of their opponents. In the first canto of the *Bhagavadgītā* Sañjaya recounts the names of various *śaṅkhas* which were particular to the principal warriors assembled in the field of Kurukṣetra, the special *śaṅkha* of Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu being described as *pāñcajanya* (said to have been made out of a bone of the demon Pañcajana, killed by the god) *Ṭaṅka*, a stone-mason's chisel, and *hala*, a plough-sh re, really fall under the category of implements, but could also be used as offensive weapons in early times. *Sīra* is another name of the ploughshare ; it is the particular emblem of Saṃkarṣaṇa-Baladeva as *taṅka* is of Śiva. *Cakra* is a wheel, the one *par excellence* held by Viṣṇu being *Sudar-śana* and the Pāñcarātra texts like the *Ahirbudhnya Saṃhitā* elaborately describes the latter. In art it is represented in two ways, either as a cart wheel (*cf.* Pl. VII, Figs. 4 and 7 ; Pl. IX, Fig. 1) or an ornamental disc, sometimes in the form of a full-blown lotus, the petals serving as the spokes. *Gadā* or the Indian club or mace is usually represented as

thicker than the *daṇḍa* or the ordinary cudgel. In the very early representations of this weapon found in some Indian coins and seals, no distinction is probably made between these two weapons, one form of which seeming to have some similarity to the knotted club of Herakles (*cf.* Pl. I, Figs. 12 and 18; Pl. VII, Fig. 4; Pl. VIII, Figs. 1 and 3; in the hands of the deity shown in Pl. I, Figs, 4, 7, 8 and 13 and in Pl. IX, Fig. 2, the object is shown simply as a short slender cudgel). The mace held in the hands of Viṣṇu is known as *kaumodakī* or *kaumodī*. *Śaṅkha, cakra* and *gadā* are collectively the attributes particular to Viṣṇu, though individually the last two are sometimes placed in the hands of other divinities. *Kheṭaka* is a shield either round or oblong in shape; it is primarily a weapon of defence and used to be made of wood, metal or skin (on account of its being also made of hyde, it is very often named *carma* in iconographic texts). *Dhanus* and *śara* are a bow and arrow and special names are given to the bows held by different gods; thus, the bows of Śiva and Viṣṇu are called *pināka* and *śārṅga* respectively. The cow held by Pradyumna (Manmatha, Kāmadeva—the same as Māra in the Buddhist mythology) is described as floral (he is also called Puṣpadhanvā) and having arrows five in number (*pañcaśara*). *Aṅkuśa* is an elephant goad (*cf.* Pl. VIII, Figs. 2 and 6) and *pāśa*, a noose or lasso used in binding one's enemies; the latter is sometimes shown in the form of a snake (*nāgapāśa*). *Khaḍga* means a sword and various names are used to denote swords particular to different deities; the sword of Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu is *nandaka*, while the one placed in the hand of the consort of Pradyumna is *nistriṃśa*. The special weapons of the consorts of Śāmba and Pradyumna, both sons of Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa, are a *kheṭaka* and *nistriṃśa* respectively, their own weapons being a mace and a bow (*Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, ch. 57, v. 40—*Śāmbaśca gadāhastaḥ Pradyumnaścāpabhṛt surūpaśca | Anayoḥ striyau ca kārye kheṭakanistriṃśa-dhāriṇyau ||*).

Paraśu and *śūla*, the weapons *par excellence* of Śiva, are a battle-axe and a trident and in their early representations are often combined (*cf.* Pl. I, Figs. 16, 129 and 21; for *śūla* shown separately, see Pl. I, Fig. 15; Pl. VIII, Figs. 1 and 3; Pl. IX, Figs. 1 and 2). *Śakti* is a spear, the special weapon of Skanda-Kārttikeya and Durgā while *vajra*, a thunder-bolt, is particular to Indra and Śiva. *Vajra* seems to have been represented in early art in two different ways; one is clublike in appearance, narrow in the middle and wider at both ends (*cf.* Pl. VIII, Fig. 8, in the upper right hand of Śiva on a coin of Huvishka) and the other is a double-faced weapon ending in projecting prongs at its both hands (*cf.* Pl. IX, Fig. 2, upper right hand; Pl. IX, Fig. 6—a *vajra* of this variety, shown behind its personified form on whose head the right hand of Zeus-Indra is placed). *Agni* shown as a ball of fire is placed in one of the hands of Śiva-Naṭarāja; it may also be depicted as a torch serving the purpose of an incendiary weapon. The earliest representation of *agni* as the sacrificial fire (a pot with flames issuing out of it) is found in the scene of the miracle of sacrifice (performed by Buddha for the conversion of Kāśyapa) carved in the eastern gateway of Sanchi (in mediæval Indian art, it is shown in the illustration of the marriage of Śiva-Pārvatī, the Kalyāṇasundaramūrti of Śiva). *Muṣala* is the wooden pestle, 'an ordinary cylindrical rod of wood capable of being used as an offensive weapon'; it is usually placed in one of the hands of Saṃkarṣaṇa-Balarāma. *Khaṭvāṅga* is 'a curious sort of club, made up of the bone of the forearm or the leg, to the end of which a human skull is attached through its foramen' (Rao). This description shows how hideous the weapon was, though in some of its late mediæval representations, this character is somewhat subdued by the replacement of the osseous shaft by a well-carved and ornamented wooden handle; this weapon is peculiar to the

awe-inspiring forms of the Devī and her consort Śiva, such as Cāmuṇḍā and Bhairava.

I have already referred to the few implements which can be improvised as weapons. Other implements are comparatively rare in iconographic art, but in some of the images of the Āḷvārs and the Nāyanmārs (the South Indian Viṣṇu-bhaktas and Śiva-bhaktas, many of whom were historical persons) a few such are sometimes shown. *Sruk* and *Sruva* are sacrificial implements in the shape of ladles, the usual emblems of Brahmā, the former for taking out the clarified butter from the butter-pot (*ājyapātra* or *ājyasthālī*) and the latter for pouring it into the sacrificial fire. The same ladle was not used, as the *sruk* if it came in contact with the fire would be *ucchiṣṭa*, and it would be improper to put it into the butter-pot. Various kinds of musical instruments are represented in early and late iconography and the names of such as *vīṇā*, *venu* or *muralī*, *ḍamaru*, *śaṅkha*, *ghaṇṭā*, *mṛdaṅga*, *karatāla*, etc., are well known. *Vīṇā* in the Suṅga art of central India is shown as a stringed instrument like the Greek harp or lyre (*cf.* such a *vīṇā* shown as being played by Samudragupta on the obverse of his Lyrist type of coins); another mode of depicting it is the long stringed instrument somewhat similar to modern *esrāj*, shown in the hands of the mediæval and modern figures of Sarasvatī and Vīṇādharadakṣiṇamūrti of Śiva. *Venu* or *muralī* is the bamboo flute usually placed in some youthful figures of Kṛṣṇa of a comparatively late period. *Ḍamaru* or a small kettle drum played by the hand is one of the characteristic emblems of Śiva; this was wrongly recognised in the upper right hand of Śiva on some coins of Huvishka (*cf.* Pl. VIII, Figs. 5 and 6) by Gardner. *Śaṅkha* also falls under the category of a musical instrument, while *ghaṇṭā* is a plain bell usually placed in one of the hands of the multi-armed image of Pārvatī. *Mṛdaṅga*, a big drum wide in the middle and narrow at the ends, is

sometimes shown as being played by the divine attendants. *Karatālas* are a pair of metal cymbals struck against each other with both hands to keep time with the music; these are also rarely shown and are usually placed in the hands of the accessories.

Various other objects which can be recognised in the hands of divinities include *kamaṇḍalu, akṣamālā, darpaṇa, kapāla, pustaka, padma,* etc. *Kamaṇḍalu* is a water-pot, the special emblem of various deities like Śiva, Brahmā, Pārvatī and others and is depicted in various ways (for some early forms of this, see Pl. I, Figs. 4, 7, 8, 13; Pl. VII, Figs. 5, 6; Pl. IX, Fig. 2). *Akṣamālā,* or *akṣasūtra,* sometimes simply called *sūtra* (the latter has wrongly been translated by B. T. Bhattacharya as 'thread' in his *Esoteric Buddhism,* p. 138) a rosary of beads of either *rudrākṣa* or *kamalākṣa* variety 'is found in the hands of Brahmā, Sarasvatī and Śiva, though rarely in association with other deities' (Rao). *Darpaṇa* is a mirror made of highly polished metal as in vogue in ancient times and is one of the attributes of certain aspects of the Devī. *Pustaka,* the special emblem of Brahmā and Sarasvatī, is usually represented in art as a manuscript made of palm leaves. *Padma,* a lotus flower, an emblem common to many gods and goddesses, is usually depicted in several varieties, such as a lotus-bud, a full-blown flower round in shape, or a blue lotus (*nīlotpala*) longish in appearance; Rao has shown that in the South Indian Bhogasthānaka-mūrtis of Viṣṇu, goddess Śrī who stands to the right of the god always holds a full-blown lotus in her hand while Bhūdevī who is on his left a *nīlotpala.* The same writer has also observed that the South Indian images of Sūrya almost invariably hold two lotus buds by their stalks in their hands while the North Indian ones, two full-blossomed lotus flowers. *Kapāla,* the most characteristic emblem of some of the fearful aspects of Śiva and Pārvatī, is a cup

made out of a human skull, to drink out of which is one of the various rites of a Tāntric *sādhaka*. The Chinese annals inform us that the victorious leader of the Hiungnu tribe drank out of such a cup made out of the skull of the Wu-sun chief who was defeated and killed by him. Śiva had the skull of Brahmā attached to his hand, of which he could get himself rid after severe penances for the sin of Brahmanicide (*cf.* his Bhairavamūrti which is the same as Brahmaśiraśchedakamūrti). Animals and birds are seldom placed in the hands of the images of deities, a goat or ram and deer, and a cock being the few known to me. The Śiva figure carved on the Guḍimallam Liṅga carries either a goat or a ram, and in some of the representations of the same god on some coins of Kanishka and Huvishka an antelope is to be found (*cf.* Pl. VIII, Figs. 5, 6). The cock which along with peacock serves as the crest of Skanda-Kārttikeya, is sometimes, though rarely, placed in the hand of the god.

One or two words about the ideology underlying this custom of placing the diverse objects in the hands of their divinities by the Hindu worshippers will not be out of place here. I have already drawn the attention of my readers in a previous chapter to the views of Macdonell, Rao and Hocart about the multiplicity of arms of the Hindu divinities, which feature was regarded by some writers like V. A. Smith as a monstrosity of the Indian iconographic art. The views of Rao and after him Hocart are far more acceptable than the same of Macdonell. Coomaraswamy has fully shown in 'Buddhist Primitives' in his '*Dance of Śiva*', how Smith's charge is absolutely untenable. The idea of symbolising the manifold activities of the deity, in however imperfect a manner, undoubtedly lies at the root of placing in these multiple arms the variety of objects noted above. In the developed concepts about the numerous members of the

Hindu pantheon, particular activities were associated with the individual units among them. It is no wonder then that one or more of these objects came to be regarded as special to different gods, though it must not be forgotten that the same could also appear in the hands of other deities, in a secondary rôle. The mythology at the root of the varieties of divinities also determined the allocation of the objects. Thus, Brahmā, one of the members of the Hindu Triad in the post-Vedic age, was undoubtedly derived from Prajāpati, the Vedic god of sacrifice; so, the *sruk*, *sruva* and *pustaka* (really the Vedas in manuscript form) became his special emblems. Viṣṇu, really a composition of Viṣṇu (a Vedic Āditya), Vāsudeva and Nārāyaṇa, and one of the two prominent members in the Triad (Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva), has, in his *cakra* and his mount Garuḍa, his Vedic trait of an aspect of the Sun-god fully emphasised, for the former is the sun in the shape of a wheel and the latter the same deity in his theriomorphic form. But the *cakra* was also conceived as a weapon of war along with his other emblem *gadā*, in order to emphasise his character as the chastiser of the wicked. Śiva, the last of the Triad, an amalgam of the awe-inspiring Rudra of the Vedic texts, the pre-Vedic god of the Indus valley and several other god concepts, could very appropriately be endowed with a cudgel, a trident and a thunderbolt, the weapons with which he destroys the world. But as side by side with this destructive aspect, his benignity and omniscience are also characteristic of him according to the epic and puranic literature, emblems indicative of these traits are not wanting in his mediæval representations. Saṃkarṣaṇa (Balarāma), the elder brother of Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa and one of the Vyūhas in the Pāñcarātra system, had certainly in his composition the traits of a harvest or bucolic deity. This seems to be at the root of his characteristic emblems, *viz.*, a plough-share (*hala*), sometimes a pestle used in

pounding corn *muṣala*) and the drinking vessel (*pānapātra*) emphasising hisinebriety (Varāhamihira describes him as *Baladevo halapāṇirmadavibhramalocanaśca karttavyaḥ | Bibhratkuṇḍalamekaṃ śaṅkhendumṛṇālagauratanuḥ ॥*)

CHAPTER VIII

Canons of Iconometry

Canons dealing with the proportions of the human figure as represented in art, not particular to India alone—reference to the practice of some other ancient nations—Indian belief in the existence of several types of men (*cf.* the five types mentioned in the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*)—the measure of their height compared to that of the Indian images.

Several kinds of measurements mentioned in the texts : *māna*, *unmāna*, *pramāṇa*, *parimāṇa*, *upamāna* and *lambamāna*—two different units of measurement : *aṅgula* and *tāla*, the former a constituent of the latter—different kinds of *aṅgulas* : *mānāṅgula*, *mātrāṅgula* and *dehalabdhāṅgula*—the constituent units of an *aṅgula*, natural objects—difficult to reconcile the measure of the *mānāṅgula* as laid down in the early texts with the actual unit of measure adopted by the artists in the construction of images—different modes by which the latter unit was arrived at, as laid down in various iconometric texts—*dehalabdhāṅgula* as explained by Utpala, the most rational unit, adopted by the artists in the measurement of interspaces—*Tāla* : its various names—the length of the face equivalent to a *tāla*—the division of the whole height of the image into *tālas* and *aṅgulas*—different *tāla* heights like *uttamadaśatāla*, *daśatāla*, *navatāla*, etc., prescribed for different types of images—the length of the face in relation to its breadth—Drāviḍamāna—a brief comparison with the practice of other ancient nations and with the modern Western mode.

Theory as laid down in the above texts, how far borne out by the actual practice of the artists of eastern and northern India.

It has already been briefly mentioned in the fifth chapter that the Indian sculptors used to follow certain rules of proportions in the making of images. I have criticised the view that the mere fact of stereotyping these rules and their adoption by the artists was one of the causes of the gradual decadence of Indian iconoplastic art. These canons were really the results of the accumulated experience of generations of artists, and if they were judiciously followed, would not be injurious to the work of the latter. T. A. G. Rao, who was responsible for the above view criticised by me, himself observes, '... the rules arrived at by the Indian artist do not appear to be divergent from those evolved by the

European artists, and *if in Indian sculpture the results are not good in some instances it is the fault of the artists and not attributable to the guide books* ' (*Elements*, etc., Vol. I, App. B., p. 8 ; *italics are mine*). In some of the compilations containing these rules, it is expressly laid down that the divine images must not only be well-proportioned but must also be good-looking ; the image-maker should visualise in his mind's eye the god to be represented in concrete and then should fashion him according to his mental perception, for these images were really the aids to the attainment of *dhyānayoga* (*Dhyānayogasya saṃsiddhyai pratimālakṣaṇaṃ smṛtam | Pratimākārako marttyo yathā dhyānarato bhavet—Śukranītisāra*, IV, 71). But as very few sculptors could be successful in turning out really beautiful images (*Sarvāṅgaiḥ sarvaramyo hi kaścillakṣe prajāyate*), it would be better that all divine images should conform to the correct proportions as laid down in the *śāstras*, for ' beautiful is that image which is made according to the canons detailed in the *śāstras*,—no other is so ' (*Śāstramānena yo ramyaḥ sa ramyo nānya eva hi*). The practice of stereotyping these rules of proportions in the fashioning of human figures was not peculiar to the Indian artists alone, but was also adopted by many ancient nations of the world. W. W. Hyde says, ' The doctrine of human proportions is very ancient, originating in Egyptian art.' [1] The first canon employed by the Egyptians in the time of the Ancient Empire, ' divides an erect human figure over 18 squares, the highest of which ends, not at the top of the head, but at the top of the brow, thus leaving the dome of the skull outside, as well as the head-dresses or crowns which the Egyptian monuments display in such great variety.' [2] Hyde remarks very properly that the greatest artists—architects,

[1] *Olympic Victor Monuments and Greek Athletic Art, p. 67.*

[2] **Jean Capart, *Egyptian Art*, p. 156.**

painters and sculptors of all times have taught and practised the doctrine that certain proportions are beautiful, *e.g.*, the proportion of the height of the head or the length of the foot to the whole body.[1] In modern times, we have only to mention such names as those of da Vinci, Duerer, Raphael and Flaxman. In Greek days there were many artists who formulated such canons of proportions. I have already stated that there were different schools of sculptors in ancient Hellas such as Old Attic, Old Argive, Polyclitan, Argive Sicyonian or Lysippan, etc., which were distinguished from one another on the basis of the fixed proportions of the parts of the human figure. These proportions were written down by subsequent artists and art-historians for the help and guidance of later sculptors and painters. E. A. Gardner tells us that '*theoretical* works upon the principles of sculpture were written by several of the most distinguished artists of antiquity; but none of these have been preserved to us. . . . . Later compilers have recorded many opinions or statements, often without acknowledgement which we can trace with more or less certainty to these lost treatises.'[2] Polyclitus who flourished in the 5th century B.C. and was most probably a pupil of Ageladas of Argos, was one of the first to write such a work dealing with the proportions of the body; he embodied these rules in a sculpture named as the 'Doryphorus' (the treatise as well as the sculpture was

[1] W. W. Hyde, *op. cit.*, p. 68. I shall presently show that in ancient and mediæval India, the length of the face (from the chin to the beginning of the hair-line— *keśarekhā*) or the inside length of the outstretched palm was the bigger unit known as *tāla* in terms of which the whole height of the body was calculated.

[2] E. A. Gardner, *A Handbook of Greek Sculpture*, p. 2. One can compare with the above statement my remarks in the first chapter about the indebtedness of various Indian writers on iconography and iconometry to their predecessors.

described in the Greek works on art as the *Canon*). Euphranor, the Corinthian, who flourished in the fourth century B.C. and who was both a sculptor and a painter, also wrote upon colouring and proportion; his study of proportion seems to indicate at once an imitation of Polyclitus and a departure from his canon.[1] In the Hellenistic age such treatises became quite common and this fact was not a little due to the influence of the great artist of this age, Lysippus, one of the most prolific sculptors of ancient Hellas. He was looked upon by the later Hellenistic artists and art-critics as the most academic of sculptors; he revolutionised the system of proportions adopted by his predecessors such as Polyclitus and others and introduced many technical innovations and improvements which he derived from a direct and thorough study of nature. The activities of the two artists of the Pergamene school, *viz.*, Antigonus and Xenocrates (3rd-2nd century B.C.), who were both writers on art and practical sculptors, can be directly traced to the school of Lysippas. They 'are cited by Pliny as authorities; and very probably their works commonly served as a basis for the treatises of the later writers' (E. A. Gardner, *op. cit.*, p. 2). Most of the artists mentioned above not only made figures of mere mortal men such as the Greek athletes, where they could display their keen sense of modelling the human body, but also fashioned divine images, such as those of Zeus, Hera, Nike, Aphrodite and a host of other Greek deities. It is needless to state that in the latter class of sculptures also, the artists followed certain canons of proportions, according to the tradition of their respective schools. I have stated in the first chapter of my book that secular images used also to be made in ancient and mediæval

[1] E. A. Gardner, *op. cit.*, p. 404. 'He evidently adopted unusually slender forms, in a reaction against the solid and heavy build of the Polyclitan athlete.'

India. A. N. Tagore thinks that the canons of proportions which are incorporated in ancient and mediæval Indian *Śilpaśāstras* were only applicable in the case of images intended for worship and the artist was 'free in all other cases, to follow his own art instinct.'[1] Such might or might not have been the case; but it is more probable that in their secular images also, the Indian artists, like the Greek and Egyptian ones, followed some recognised rules of proportions.

In India, as well as in other ancient countries of the world, the deities were mostly conceived anthropomorphically and represented as mortals in mythology and art. The affinity between the mortals and the immortals lay not merely in this anthropomorphism, but it also lay deeper. When Euhemerus explained the members of the Greek pantheon as ordinary men who lived and acted in this world in bygone days, he was really giving expression to the very common tendency of the human mind of endowing the deities with human emotions and passions. I have drawn the attention of my readers in the second chapter of this book to the Ṛgvedic description of the deities as *divo naras*, *nṛpeśas* ('men of the sky,' 'kings of men'), etc; innumerable again, are the myths narrated in the Vedic, Epic and Purāṇic literature where the denizens of the heavens appear as mere men, living their lives of joys and sorrows. In later times in India, from the iconographic and iconometric points of view, this likeness is always present. Leaving aside the theriomorphic or therio-anthropomorphic divinities, even those gods or goddesses endowed with more limbs than are natural, really present cases of exaggerated anthropomor-

[1] A. N. Tagore, *Some Notes on Indian Artistic Anatomy*, p. 3. He explains the line '*Sevya-sevaka-bhāveṣu pratimālakṣaṇaṃ smṛtam*,' thus, 'Images should conform to prescribed types when they are to be contemplated in the spirit of worship.'

phism. In the proportional heights assigned to different types of divine images in early iconometric texts, we recognise the heights attained by several types of men in India. The Indians from a fairly early period believed in the existence of five different types of men (*pañcamanuṣya-vibhāga*), which might or might not have ethnic bases. These five classes, according to Varāhamihira, are *Haṃsa*, *Śaśa*, *Rucaka*, *Bhadra* and *Mālavya*, who are born when the planets Jupiter, Saturn, Mars, Mercury and Venus are ascendant respectively.[1] The height as well as the girth of the *Haṃsa* type of men is laid down by the same author as 96 *aṅgulas*, the height and girth of the four other classes exceeding by three *aṅgulas* each from the same of its immediate predecessor (*i.e.*, a *Śaśa* type of man will be 99 *aṅ.*, *Rucaka*—102 *aṅ.*, a *Bhadra*—105 *aṅ.* and a *Mālavya*—108 *aṅ.*).[2]

[1] *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, ch. 68, vv. 1-2:—

Tārāgrahairbalayutaiḥ svakṣetrasvoccagaiścatuṣṭyagaiḥ |
Pañcapuruṣāḥ praśastā jāyante tānahaṃ vakṣye ||
Jivena bhavati haṃsaḥ saureṇa śaśaḥ kujena rucakaśca |
Bhadro budhena balinā mālavyo daityapūjyena ||

[2] *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, ch. 68, v. 7 : *Ṣaṇṇavatiraṅgulānāṃ vyāyāmo dīrghatā ca haṃsasya | Śaśarucakabhadramālavyasaṃjñitastryaṅgulavivṛddhyā ||* An explanation is necessary of the height and girth being the same of each of the different classes of men. They are really *nyagrodhaparimaṇḍala* types, in which the height of the figure is equal to the measurement from the middle finger-tip of one hand to the same of the other, both arms being fully extended each way in the same line with the chest. *Vyāyāma* or *pṛthutā* has been explained by Utpala as '*prasāritabhujadvayasya pramāṇam.*' This is one of the most important characteristic signs of the Mahāpuruṣas (*Mahāpuruṣalakṣaṇas*) and Utpala quotes the following couplet from Parāśara to elucidate it further:—*Ucchrāyaḥ pariṇāhastu yasya tulyaṃ śarīriṇaḥ | Sa naraḥ pārthivo jñeyo nyagrodhaparimaṇḍalaḥ ||* For further observations on this term, the reader is referred to my *Pratimā-lakṣaṇam* (Cal. Univ. Press), pp. 21-24, 77-79.

Now, images of different gods and goddesses conformed to the two of the various proportional heights mentioned above, *viz.*, the first and the last. The *aṣṭatāla* images,—figures of goddesses usually were made according to this height (*cf.* V. 88 in the *Pratimāmānalakṣaṇam*, edited by P. Bose, which reads: *Dīrgham cāṣṭamukham kuryād devīnām lakṣaṇam budhaiḥ*), though there were also several other gods who were shown up to this stature,—were those which were 96 *aṅgulas*, just as high as a *Haṃsa* type, according to Varāhamihira; as I shall presently show, it was also the height of a *samaparimāṇa* or *madhyama* class of image. The height of the *Mālavya* variety of men, *viz.*, 108 *aṅ.*, on the other hand, exactly corresponded to the *navatāla* images, which were grouped by the same author among the *pravara* or the best class of images.[1] It should be noted that from the descriptions given of the five different kinds of men, the *Mālavya* seems to be the best and the height of the *Mālavya* and *Haṃsa* varieties of men alone are uniform.[2] The *Matsya Purāṇa* evidently refers to the *Mālavya* type, when it says that the man who measures 9 *tālas* from the top of the head to the bottom of the feet and whose arms reach the knees are respected even by the gods (ch. 145, v. 10.: *Āpādatalamastako navatālo bhavet tu*

[1] *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, ch. 57, v. 30.

[2] *Bhadra* type, as we have seen, measures 105 *aṅ.*; but in verse 18 of the chapter on *Pañcamanuṣyavibhāga* (ch. 68), Varāhamihira tells us that such men are 84 *aṅ.* high (*Aṅgulaṃ navatiśca ṣaḍūnānyucchrayeṇa*); Utpala reconciles this discrepancy by commenting that when such a type of man attains to the height of 105 *aṅ.*, he becomes a *sārvabhauma* monarch (*Yadi pañcottaramaṅgulaśataṃ vyāyāmena dairghyeṇa ca bhavati tadā sakalāvaninātha sārvabhaumo rājā bhavatītyarthaḥ*). But in the case of two other types, *viz.*, *Saśa* and *Rucaka*, the commentator does not care to make any remark about this discrepancy; in verses 21 and 29 of the same chapter in the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, the respective heights of the two are given as 92 and 100 *aṅgulas*.

yaḥ | *Saṃhatājānubāhuśca daivatairabhipūjyate* ||). The physical features of the former, which are enumerated by Varāhamihira, contain several of the major *mahāpuruṣa-lakṣaṇas*, which are also the characteristic signs of a Buddha or a god. The verse reads : *Mālavyo nāganāsasamabhujayugalo jānusamprāptahasto māṃsaiḥ pūrṇāṅgasandhiḥ samarucira-tanurmadhyabhāge kṛśaśca* | *Pañcāṣṭau cordhvamāsyaṃ śrutivivaramapi tryaṅgulonaṃ ca tiryagdīptākṣaṃ sat-kapolaṃ samasitadaśanaṃ nātimāṃsādharoṣṭham* || One among these features, *viz.*, 'the full fleshy limbs and joints of the body,' typically emphasises one of the particular traits of the ideal divine figure in Indian art.[1]

In order to understand the canons of iconometry clearly, it is necessary to know something about the meaning and usage of certain technical terms denoting the different ways in which an image can be measured. The *Vaikhānasāgama* mentions six such ways of measurement (*mānas*), *viz.*, *māna*, *pramāṇa*, *unmāna*, *parimāṇa*, *upamāna* and *lambamāna*.[2] It also gives various synonyms of each of these terms, incidentally explaining the significance of each. Rao, on the basis of this text, writes, '*Māna* is the measurement of the length of a body ; *pramāṇa* is that of its breadth, that is a linear measurement taken at right angles to and in the same plane as the *māna* ; measurements taken at right angles to the plane, in which the *māna* and *pramāṇa*

[1] This is *māṃsaiḥ pūrṇāṅgasandhiḥ* which has been commented on by Utpala as *māṃsaiḥ paripūrṇāḥ sarvāṅgasandhayo yasya* | *Anulbanāsthirityarthaḥ*. The *Śukranītisāra* lays down that those images in which the joints, bones, veins and arteries are hidden, are always auspicious (IV. 4,146—*Gūḍhasandhyasthidhamanī sarvadā saukhyavarddhinī*).

[2] *Vaikhānasāgama*, as quoted by T. A. G. Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, App. B., p. 60:—*Evaṃ mānāni bhavanti* | *Mānaṃ pramāṇam unmānaṃ parimāṇamupamānaṃ lambamānamiti ṣaṇmānāni*. It clearly enjoins that *etaiṣṣaṇmānairyutaṃ beraṃ kārayet*.

measures have been noted, are called *unmāna*, which obviously means the measure of thickness; *parimāṇa* is the name of the measurement of girths or of the periphery of images; *upamāna* refers to the measurements of interspaces,.....; and lastly *lambamāna* is the name given to measurements taken along plumb lines.'[1] Early texts, both iconometric and general, use many of these terms in the technical sense appropriate to each, though in several instances some difference in meaning is noticeable. It will be of interest here to refer to the section on iconometry in the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* and see what terms are used there to denote the different kinds of measurement followed in image-making. Verses 1-28 of chapter 57 of this work deal with several iconometrical details and in these 28 verses many such terms occur. The word *parimāṇa*, occurring only in verses 3 and 28, is used in the same sense as *pramāṇa* occurring in verse 1, meaning simply measurement; the latter, however, when used in verses 8 and 23 undoubtedly means width measurement (in verse 16 it means the inter-space measurement — *kaṇṭhāddvādaśa hṛdayaṃ hṛdayānnābhi ca tat pramāṇena*). The measurement of width is also denoted by such terms as *vistīrṇa* (4, 13, 15, 25), *vitata* (5), *pṛthula* (5), *vistāra* (6), *vipula* (9—*vaipulya* in 22), *pṛthutā*; the measurement of length

[1] T. A. G. Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, App. B., pp. 4-5. The various synonyms of the 6 kinds of measurements as laid down in the *Vaikhānasāgama* are:—*māna—āyāma, āyata, dīrgha; pramāṇa—vistāra, vistṛta, tāra, visṛti, visṛta, vyāsa, visārita, vipula, tāla, viṣkambha, viśāla; unmāna — baha(u?)la, nīvra(?), ghana, ucchrāya, tuṅga, unnata, udaya, utsedha, ucca, niṣkrama, niṣkṛti, nirgama, nirgati, rudra; parimāṇa—mārga, praveśana, nata, pariṇāha, vṛti, āvṛta; upamāna—nivṛta, vivara, antara; lambamāna—sūtra, ālambana* (or according to another reading—*sūtra, lambana, unmita*). Rao's enumeration of the above synonyms evidently on the basis of the text is a bit faulty; his errors are corrected here.

is indicated by the words, *dairghya* (4, 15), *āyata* (4, 18; in verse 9 it means length sidewise), *dīrgha* (18); the measurement of height is denoted by *ucchrāya* (10), *āyāma* (14), *māna* (17), *utsedha* (19); the terms *pariṇāha* (as many as seven times—in 14, 15, 18, 21, 22, 24 and 26) and *paridhi* (twice—in 22 and 23) are used to denote the girth or periphery of particular parts of images; *antara* in verses 10 and 24 undoubtedly refers to inter-space measurement, while *vedha* in verse 23 denotes depth. Utpala in the course of his comment on the above verses introduces a few other terms not used in the text; thus, he explains the term *ucchrāya* by *auccya* (10), *āyāma* by *viṣkambha* (14—*āyāmato viṣkambhādityarthaḥ*, but compare the *Vaikhānasāgama* text quoted above, where *viṣkambha* is used as a synonym of *pramāṇa*, *i.e.*, the width measurement), *pariṇāha* by *parimāṇḍalya* (22—*tat pariṇāhastayoḥ parimāṇḍalyam*) and *vedha* by *gāmbhīrya* (23). The words *māna*, *unmāna* and *pamāṇa* occur in the Jaina *Kalpasūtra* in its description of Mahāvīra's body; the passage, *mān'-unmāṇappamāṇa-paḍipunna-sujaya-savv'-āṃga-suṃdar'-āṃgam*, has been translated by Jacobi as 'a boy on whose body all limbs will be well-formed, and of full volume, weight and length' (*S.B.E.*, XXII, p. 221). But in the light of the above observations, the three words ought to be rendered a little differently. The ancient writers themselves do not appear to have been sure of their minds. Thus, the dwellers of the Śvetadvīpa, visited by Nārada while he was trying to see the great god Hari, the original *prakṛti* of Nārāyaṇa, are described in the *Mahābhārata* as *sama-mānonmānāḥ* (Bangavasi edition, ch. XII, 335, 10). Now, *māna* meaning height in this passage, *unmāna* ought to mean width (here the measurement from the middle finger tip of the one hand to that of the other, when both the arms are outstretched opposite ways in the same line with the chest). This is really the *nyagrodhaparimaṇḍala* sign of

the mahāpūruṣas, about which something has already been said; so this sense fits ill with the one which has been given to *unmāna* by Rao, *viz.*, thickness. Nīlakaṇṭha wrongly explains this *Mahābhārata* passage in his commentary when he writes, *mānaśconmānaścopamānaśca samau yeṣāṃ te*, for there can be no question of the *upamānas* (the measurement of the interspaces) being the same as the *māna* (height) and *unmāna* (really *vyāma* or *vyāyāma*, as explained above). I have suggested elsewhere that the words *māna-unmāna-ppamāṇa* in the Jaina text quoted above should be translated as '(a body whose) *māna* and *unmāna* are *pamāṇa*, *i.e.*, full and equal' (the word *pamāṇa* being not used in its technical sense here).[1] It has been shown that the term *pariṇāha* according to the *Vaikhānasāgama*, is a synonym of *parimāṇa* which has been explained by Rao as the measurement of the girth or periphery. Now, Parāśara, as quoted by Utpala, while describing the *nyagrodhaparimaṇḍala* sign, uses the term *pariṇāha* in the sense of *vyāyāma*. It is also used in the same sense in the *Matsya Purāṇa*, whose author fully explains it.[2]

It is time now to explain the significance of the different units, *aṅgula* and *tāla*, in terms of which the height of the Indian images were measured. The former came to be regarded as a constituent of the latter and was more

[1] *Pratimālakṣaṇam*, C. U. Press, p. 78; or if *unmāna* is taken to mean height in the *Kalpasūtra* and *Mahābhārata* passages, then *māna* which may mean any kind of measurement should signify *vyāyāma*.

[2] *Matsya Purāṇa*, Bangavasi edition, Ch. 42, verses, 61-2: *Mahādhanurdharāśoaiva tretāyāṃ cakravarttinaḥ | Sarvvalakṣaṇapūrṇāste nyagrodhaparimaṇḍalāḥ || Nyagrodhau tu smṛtau bāhū vyāmo nyagrodha ucyate | Vyāmena tūcchrāyo yasya sa ūrddhvantu dehinaḥ | Samocchrāyaḥ pariṇāho nyagrodhaparimaṇḍalaḥ ||*

universal in its application, inasmuch as it was used not only in the measurement of the height as the *tāla* mainly was, but also was used in the other varieties of measurements referred to above. The term *aṅgula* served as a unit of measurement in India from very early times. In the first verse of the *Puruṣasūkta* (*R. V.*, X. 90), the Puruṣa is described as covering the whole universe and at the same time outreaching it by 10 *aṅgulas* (*Sa bhūmiṃ viśvato vṛtvā atyatiṣṭhaddaśāṅgulam*). In the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (X. 2. 1, 2), the author says that Prajāpati measures the fire-altar by finger-breadths; for the sacrifice being a man, it is by means of him that everything is measured here; these fingers are his lowest measure (*tasyaiṣāvamā mātrā yadaṅgulayaḥ*) and the measurement is taken with the help of this lowest measure. The *Śulbasūtras* which contain the rules for the construction of raised altars (*vedīs* and *agnis*) used in the performance of *nitya* and *kāmya yajñas*, frequently refer to this unit in giving the measure of the different sections of the altars.[1] Several different kinds of *aṅgulas* are described in the iconometric texts of a comparatively late period; these are *mānāṅgula*, *mātrāṅgula* and *dehalabdhāṅgula*. The first is some sort of an absolute unit, it being derived from the width measurements of some natural objects. The *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* lays down that a mote in the sunbeam filtering through a lattice is known as *paramāṇu*. A *raja* (a speck of dust) is made up of eight such *paramāṇus*; a *bālāgra* (the tip of one single hair), a *likṣā* (the egg of a louse), a *yūka* (a louse), a *yava* (barley-corn) and an *aṅgula* are each made up of eight units of its preceding object, a *bālāgra* measuring the same

[1] 'A *vedi* is a raised altar on which the *yajña* was performed and on which sat the persons performing the ceremony, namely the sacrificer, the Hotā, the Adhvaryu, the Ṛtvik, etc. An *agni* is an altar for keeping the fire'; *J.I.S.O.A.*, Vol. VII, p. 89.

as eight particles of dust.[1] But this type of *aṅgula* could hardly have been used as the unit of measurement by the iconographers of ancient and mediæval India. The width of eight barley corns placed side by side is far thicker than the same of the unit which was adopted by the artists in measuring the different sections of images. There is the second type of *aṅgula* known as *mātrāṅgula* or a unit of the relative type. This is arrived at on the basis of 'the length of the middle digit of the middle finger of either the sculptor or the architect, or of the rich devotee who causes a temple to be built or an image to be set up' (Rao). This relative measurement was perhaps adopted by the image-makers and the temple-builders for first ascertaining the height of a temple or an image, before they set to work out the other unit on the *dehalabdha* basis; but the latter, as I shall presently show, was principally adopted in the case of images alone. Another manner in which the *mātrāṅgula* was reached is referred to by the author of the *Śukranītisāra*; this is the fourth part of one's own fist (ch. IV, Sec. 4, Verse 82, *Svasvamuṣṭeścaturtho'ṃśo hyaṅgulaṃ parikīrttitam*). In the *Pratimāmānalakṣaṇam* edited by P. Bose, we find in the first line of the fourth verse practically the same definition of *aṅgula* (*Pallavānāṃ caturbhāgo māpanāṃgulikā smṛtā*). Here the word *pallava* is used in place of *muṣṭi*, *pallava* evidently meaning the palm of the hand (*kara-pallava*, *cf.* the use of the word in the same sense in the *Raghuvaṃśa*, III, 7—*Lateva saṃnaddha-manojñapallava*); the fourth part of one's fist or the same of the middle of one's palm is equal in measurement. But the question is

[1] *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, Ch. 57, verses, 1-2: *Jālāntarage bhānau yadaṇutaraṃ darśanaṃ rajo yāti | Tadvindyāt paramāṇuṃ prathamaṃ taddhi pramāṇānām || Paramāṇurajobālāgralikṣāyūkaṃ yavo'ṅgulaṃ ceti | Aṣṭaguṇāni yathottaramaṅgulamekaṃ bhavati saṅkhyā ||*

whose palm or fist is it to be? Will it be that of the sculptor, the architect or of the rich devotee? The word *sva* in the *Śukranītisāra* passage is significant. The same word occurs in the first line of the fourth verse of the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* (ch. 57), where the author describes the length and the breadth of the face of an image; it reads—*Svairaṅgulapramāṇairdvādaśa vistīrṇamāyataṃ ca mukham*. Utpala's commentary on the above line is very interesting; for it gives us a sure clue to the meaning of the word *sva*. It reads—*Yasmāt kāṣṭhāt pāṣāṇādikādvā pratimā kriyate taddairghyaṃ pīṭhapramāṇavivarjitaṃ dvādaśabhāgavibhaktaṃ kṛtvā tatraiko bhāgo navadhā kāryaḥ so'ṅgulasaṅjñā bhavati। Yasmādaṣṭādhikamaṅgulaśataṃ pratimāpramāṇaṃ vakṣyati। Svairaṅgulapramāṇairiti। Pratimāyāḥ svairātmīyairaṅgulapramāṇairmukhaṃ vadanaṃ dvādaśāṅgulāni vistīrṇaṃ vipulamāyataṃ ca dīrghaṃ kāryam।*

It can be freely translated thus:—'The term *aṅgula* is derived in this manner; first, the height of the block of wood or stone out of which the image is to be made, leaving aside that portion of it on which the pedestal is to be shown, should be divided into 12 equal parts; when one of the latter is again divided into 9 equal parts, each of these subdivisions is equivalent to the *aṅgula* unit, thus, the height of an image is 108 *aṅgulas*; lastly, the length and the breadth of the face of the image should be 12 such *aṅgulas*, *i.e.*, the *aṅgula* of the image itself.' This is really the *dehalabdha aṅgula* or *dehāṅgula* which certainly was the principal basis of the various kinds of image-measurements referred to above. But one remark can be made with regard to Utpala's manner of defining the term *aṅgula*. He says it is the 108th part of the measured material from which the image is to be made, only leaving out the pedestal (*pīṭha*). If by *pīṭha*, he means the stele (the *pīṭhikā* or *piṇḍikā* and *prabhāvalī* combined) of the

image, then he is quite correct. But if he means only the pedestal, then some difficulty will arise; because, from the portion of the material without the pedestal not only the image itself, but also the *śiraścakra* (halo) of the image as well as the top section of the *prabhāvalī* was carved out. The basis of this *dehalabdha aṅgula* is also described in more or less the same way in several other texts. Thus, the *Hayaśīrṣa Pañcarātra* says—*Abhipretapramāṇantu navadhā pravibhājayet | Navame bhāskarairbhakter-bhāgaḥ svāṅgulamucyate ||* *i.e.*, the desired length (of the image) should be divided 9 times, each of these divisions should again be subdivided 12 times (*bhāskara—āditya*—12 *ādityas*), one of these subdivisions is then called an *aṅgula*. The *Nārada Purāṇa* makes a similar statement in these lines:—*Vimbamānantu navadhā procchrayāt saṃvibhājya vai | Bhāgaṃ bhāgaṃ tato bhūyo bhaveddvādaśadhā dvija | Tadaṅgulaṃ syādvimbasyeti.*[1] In all the above texts the division into 108 parts (9 × 12) refers to *navatāla* images only, not to images of larger (*daśatāla* or *uttamadaśatāla*) or smaller (*aṣṭatāla*, *saptatāla*, etc.) proportions. That images measuring 108 *aṅgulas* of their own were the commonest ones in ancient India is proved by Varāhamihira's observation that the figures of Rāma, the son of Daśaratha, and of Bali, the son of Virocana should be 120 *aṅgulas* in height; the other groups of images belonging to the best, medium and inferior varieties are each less by 12 *aṅgulas* from its immediately preceding one, *i.e.*, the best type of image should be less than 120 *aṅgulas* by 12, *i.e.*, 108

[1] Both the above extracts are from *Haribhaktivilāsa*, *vilāsa* 18. The *Agni Purāṇa* says the same thing in the couplet—*Śilāṃ śilpī tu navadhā vibhājya navame'ṃśake | Sūrpa* (should be *Sūrya*)-*bhaktaiḥ śilāyāntu bhāgaṃ svāṅgulamucyate ||* It should be noted that *pramāṇa* in the *Hayaśīrṣa* extract means length or height; but the words *māna* and *ucchraya* (or *ucchrāya*) in the *Nārada Purāṇa* passage are appropriately used.

aṅgulas, the medium one 12 *aṅ.* less than 10 (*i.e.*, 96) and the inferior one 84 *aṅ.*[1] The *Vaikhānasāgama* (ch. 22) supplies us with further interesting information in this connection; it lays down: *Berotsedhaṃ tattālavaśena vibhājyaikāṃśaṃ dehalabdhāṅgulaṃ tadaṣṭāṃśaṃ yavamiti*, *i.e.*, one part (unit) arrived at by dividing the whole height of the image according to its *tāla* is a *dehalabdhāṅgula*, while one-eighth part of the latter is a *yava*. It means that if the image be a *daśatāla* one, then $\frac{1}{120}$th part of it is its *aṅgula*, and if an *aṣṭatāla* one, $\frac{1}{96}$th part of it is its *aṅgula* and so on. In the light of the above observation, Fleet's criticism of the term *svena* = *svamānena* is not applicable in the case of iconometry; he writes: 'As regards the expression *sva-mānena*, it stands to reason that the measures

[1] *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, ch. 57, v. 30; *Daśarathatanayo Rāmo Baliśca vairocaniḥ śataṃ viṃśam | Dvādaśahānyā śeṣāḥ pravarasamanyūnaparimāṇāḥ ||* Utpala's commentary on it is worth quoting: *Daśarathaputro Rāmaḥ | Virocanaputraśca Baliḥ | Viṃśatyadhikamaṅgulaśataṃ kāryamityarthaḥ | Anyāḥ pratimā dvādaśakadvādaśakahīnatvena pravarasamā nyūnaparimāṇāḥ bhavanti | Viṃśatyadhikādaṅgulaśatāddvādaśāṅgulānyapāsyāṣṭādhikaṃ śatamaṅgulānāṃ pratimā pradhānā bhavati | Tato'pi dvādaśakamapāsya ṣaṇṇavatyaṅgulasamā madhyamā bhavati | Tato'pi dvādaśakamapāsya caturaśityaṅgulanyūnaparimāṇā pratimā bhavati | "Svairaṅgulapramāṇairdvādaśavistīrṇamāyataṃ ca mukham'-ityanena nyāyena yā pratimoktā sāṣṭāṅgulaṃ śatamadhikaṃ bhavati | Yadatroktaṃ "Daśarathatanayo Rāmo Baliśca vairocaniḥ śataṃ viṃśam "-ityasmin dvādaśānāmaṅgulānāmadhikānāṃ tairadhikena parimāṇaḥ kāryaḥ sarvāvayavānām | Evaṃ hīnatve 'pyanupāta evetyanuktaṃ jñāyata iti.*

It may be incidentally remarked here that an image of Bali the demon king is mentioned along with that of Dāśarathi Rāma, one of the incarnatory forms of Viṣṇu. But Bali's image was an object of veneration to the devout Vaiṣṇavas, for he was one of the greatest devotees of Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu. This is the reason why the images of the Āḻvārs and the Nāyanmārs were so very frequently given important positions in South Indian Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva shrines respectively.

must be taken according to an *aṅgula* or cubit which is of a fixed standard length, not according to the varying finger-breadths and cubits of individuals who are to be measured' (*J.R.A.S.*, 1911, pp. 208-09). Again, higher units of length measurement used in texts, such as *kiṣku*, *prājāpatya*, etc., have no place in iconometry; these are undoubtedly the derivatives of *mānāṅgula*.[1] But the iconometric texts especially of a comparatively late period frequently use various synonyms of an *aṅgula* of the relative variety and of its higher multiples; it may be noted that many of these synonyms are of a figurative nature. Thus, a space of an *aṅgula* is called *indu* (moon—and there is one moon), of two *aṅgulas*, *akṣi* and *pakṣa* (two eyes and two fortnights), of three *aṅgulas*, *agni* (sacrificial fire of three kinds: *gārhapatya*, *āhavanīya* and *dakṣiṇa*), *rāma* (three Rāmas: Dāśarathi, Bhārgava and Balarāma), *guṇa* (three *guṇas*: *sattva*, *raja* and *tama*) etc.[2]

[1] The following is the measure:—

24	*aṅgulas*	or *mānāṅgulas*	make	1 *kiṣku*
25	,,	,,	,,	1 *prājāpatya*
26	,,	,,	,,	1 *dhanurgraha*
27	,,	,,	,,	1 *dhanurmuṣṭi*
4	*dhanurmuṣṭis*		,,	1 *daṇḍa*.

Rao correctly remarks that 'the measure called *daṇḍa* is employed in ascertaining large lengths like that, for instance, of a street in a village'; Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, App. B., p. 2.

[2] The *Vaikhānasāgama* supplies us with the following list:— 1 *aṅgula*=*mūrti*, *indu*, *viśvambhara*, *mokṣa*, *ukta*; 2 *aṅgulas*=*kalā*, *golaka*, *aśvinī*, *yugma*, *brāhmaṇa*, *vihaga*, *akṣi*, *pakṣa*; 3 *aṅgulas*=*agni*, *rudrākṣi* (three eyes of Rudra), *guṇa*, *arṇa*, *kāla*, *śūla*, *rāma*, *varga*, *madhya*; 4 *aṅgulas*=*veda*, *pratiṣṭhā*, *jāti*, *kara*, *abjajānana* (4 faces of Brahmā, born of lotus), *yuga*, *tūrya*, *turīya*; 5 *aṅgulas*=*viṣaya*, *indriya*, *bhūta*, *iṣu*, *supratiṣṭha*, *pṛthivī*; 6 *aṅgulas*=*karma*, *aṅga*, *rasa*, *samaya*, *gāyatrī*, *kṛttikā*, *kumārānana* (six faces of Kumāra or Skanda-Kārttikeya), *kauśika*, *ṛtu*; 7 *aṅgulas*=*pātāla*, *muni* (seven ṛṣis), *dhātu*, *loka*, *uṣṇik*, *rohiṇī*, *dvīpa*, *aṅga*, *ambhonidhi*; 8 *aṅgulas*=*lokapāla*,

I have already suggested that the other relative *aṅgula* unit (*viz.*, that based on the width of the middle digit of the medius of either the sculptor, architect or the rich devotee) might have been sometimes first adopted for ascertaining the height of the image and then the second variety of *mātrāṅgula* was worked out for the detailed measurements; but this was done on rare occasions when the images were life-size ones. There was another mode of first settling the full height of the image. Varāhamihira tells us that an image measuring one cubit (*hasta*) in height is auspicious, one two cubits high bestows riches, and those images that are three or four cubits in height ensure benefit and plenty.[1] This shows that another unit of measurement, a higher one, was also adopted by the image-makers in fixing the required height of the image. The height of those images which were meant to be enshrined in temples was also based on the same of the door of the particular

(Aṣṭadikpālas, the guardians of the eight quarters), *nāga, uraga, vasu, anuṣṭup, gaṇa*; 9 *aṅgulas=bṛhatī, graha* (navagrahas), *randhra* (*navadvāra*, the 9 doors or orifices of the body), *nanda* (Nava nandāḥ, the Nine Nanda Kings of Magadha), *sūtra*; 10 *aṅgulas=dik, prādurbhāva, nāḍi, paṅkti*; 11 *aṅgulas=rudra* (Ekādaśa Rudras), *triṣṭup*, 12 *aṅgulas=vitasti, mukha, tāla, yama, arka* (Sūrya—Āditya—Dvādaśa Ādityas), *rāśi, jagatī*; 13 *aṅgulas=atijagatī*; 14 *aṅgulas=manu, śakvarī*; 15 *aṅ.=atiśakvarī, tithi*; 16 *aṅ.=kriyā, aṣṭi, indukalā*; 17 *aṅ=atyaṣṭi*; 18 *aṅ.=smṛti, dhṛti*; 19 *aṅ.=atidhṛti*; 20 *aṅ.=kṛti*; 21 *aṅ.=prakṛti*; 22 *aṅ.=ākṛti*; 23 *aṅ.=vikṛti*; 24 *aṅ.=saṃskṛti*; 25 *aṅ.=atikṛti*; 26 *aṅ.=utkṛti*; 27 *aṅ.=nakṣatra* (there are 27 stars or constellations—Aśvinī, Bharaṇī, Kṛttikā, Rohiṇī, etc.). Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, App. B, pp. 59-60; a few errors have crept in Rao's translation of this part of the *Vaikhānasāgama*, *ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

[1] *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, ch. 57, v. 49: *Saumyā ṭu hastāmātrā vasudā hastadvayocchṛtā pratimā | Kṣemasubhikṣāya bhavet tricatur-hastapramāṇā yā ||* Here the use of the word *pramāṇa* is to be noted; it means height or length measurement.

temple. Thus, Varāhamihira informs us that the height of the pedestal of the image should be three parts of the height of the shrine door less the eighth part, when the latter is divided into eight parts, and the same of the image should be twice the height of the pedestal.[1] The author, however, is a little roundabout in his manner of referring to the height of the image and its pedestal. Another simpler way of fixing it in relation to the shrine door is mentioned in the *Hayaśīrṣa Pañcarātra*; it says that the measure of the height of the door (shrine door) should be divided into 8 equal parts; two of these parts should constitute the height of the image and one part of it divided into three parts, the height of the pedestal which should be neither too high nor too low.[2] It is to be noted that the surface of the pedestal should be square, its length and breadth measuring the same as the height of the image proper, according to some texts, but its height should be half the height of the image.[3] The above details generally apply to the *dhruva-beras* (in the case of Viṣṇu images) or *acala* variety of images (they may also be applicable to

[1] Bṛhatsaṃhitā, ch. 57, v. 3: *Devāgāradvārasyāṣṭāṃśonasya yastṛtīyo'ṃśaḥ | Tatpiṇḍikāpramāṇaṃ pratimā taddviguṇaparimāṇā ||*

[2] *Hayaśīrṣa* as quoted by Gopala Bhatta: *Dvārocchrāyasya yanmānamaṣṭadhā tattu kārayet | Bhāgadvayena pratimāṃ tribhāgīkṛtvā tat punaḥ | Piṇḍikā bhāgataḥ kāryā nātinīcā nacocchritā ||* But the *Matsya Purāṇa* (ch. 258, vv. 24-25) with the addition of one line to the above supplies us with the information identical to that given by the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*; after the first line *dvārocchrāyasya, etc*, is placed—*Bhāgamekaṃ tatastyaktvā pariśiṣṭantu yad bhavet*; then follow two lines similar to the above quoted from the *Hayaśīrṣa*.

[3] *Nāradapañcarātra*, as quoted by Gopala Bhatta: *Vimbamānād yathā pīṭhaṃ kuryād devasya tacchṛṇu | Caturasraṃ ca tad viddhi caturasrāyataṃ tu vā ||* *Vimbocchrāyasamaṃ pīṭhaṃ paritaścaiva vistṛtam | Tadarddhenonnataṃ kuryādetat sāmānyalakṣaṇam ||*

calācala variety).[1] The *Matsya Purāṇa* distinctly says that those images which are meant for worship in the private chapels of the house-holders should never measure more than a digit of the thumb or a *vitasti* (one span) at the utmost, while those that are to be enshrined in palaces, *i.e.*, temples, should measure not more than 1/16th part of the whole height of the latter; one should make an image up to this height (this is the *uttama* or best class) or less than it (of the *madhyama*, *i.e.*, middling or *kaniṣṭha*, *i.e.*, the lowest class) according to his means, but on no account the image should measure more than (1/16th part of the full height of the shrine).[2]

A few more words about the word *tāla*, already described by me as a higher unit of which the *aṅgula* became a constituent, need be said here. The *Vaikhānasāgama* informs us that a *tāla* is constituted of 12 *aṅgulas* and has as its various synonyms such terms as *vitasti*, *mukha*, *yama*, *arka*, *rāśi* and *jagatī*; of these, however, *vitasti* and *mukha* are more frequent in use. Thus, the *Pratimāmānalakṣaṇa* (3) says, '(a unit of) 12 *aṅgulas* is known as a *tāla*, *vitasti* or *mukha*' (*Dvādaśāṅgulitālaṃ ca vitastīrmukhameva ca*). The *mukha* as well as *vitasti* is 12 *aṅgulas*; *vitasti* is the distance between the extended thumb and little finger, which is the same as the length of the middle of the extended palm (Pl. VI, figs. 2 & 3). The *Matsya Purāṇa* uses the word *mukha* in the passage *Svakīyāṅgulimānena mukhaṃ syāddvādaśāṅgulam*, *i.e.*, the *mukha* or the face of the image

[1] Rao refers to one of the modes of classifying the images, *viz.*, *cala* (movable), *acala* (immovable, permanently placed in shrines) and *calācala* (which is permanently enshrined, but can also be removed on ceremonial occasions); *op. cit.*, Vol. I, Introduction, p. 17.

[2] *Matsya Purāṇa*; ch. 258, vv. 22-3: *Aṅguṣṭhaparvvādārabhya vitastiṃ yāvadeva tu | Gṛhe vai pratimā kāryā ṇādhikā śasyate budhaiḥ || Aṣoḍaśāttu prāsādaiḥ karttavyā nādhikā tataḥ | Madhyottamakaniṣṭhā tu kāryā vittānusārataḥ*

(equivalent to a *tāla*) should be 12 of its own *aṅgula*; the text further states that the measurement of the height of the other limbs should be in terms of the measure of its face (*Mukhamānena karttavyā sarvvāvayavakalpanā*, ch. 258, v. 19). The author of the *Purāṇa* then lays down the whole height of the image as follows: The whole image should be divided into 9 parts in terms of its face-length; the neck should be 4 *aṅgulas*, the chest (from the bottom of the neck to the same of the breast), 1 *bhāga* (*i e.*, *mukha* or *tāla*); (the space) from the chest to the navel, 1 *bhāga*; from the navel to the (top of the) organ, 1 *bhāga*; the thighs are two *bhāgas* and the patella of the knee, 4 *aṅgulas*; the legs (from below the knee to the top of the feet measure two *bhāgas* in height, the feet being four *aṅgulas* high.[1] The full height of the image as given in the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* is exactly the same. Thus in verse 4 (ch. 57) we are told that the face-length is 12 *aṅgulas*; verse 5 tells us that the neck measures 4 *aṅgulas*; then in verses 16 and 17, the height of the rest of the body is given.[2] A glance at Plate VI, Fig 1 will show the distribution of the height of an image measuring 108 of its own *aṅgula* and it should be noted that the part above the *keśarekhā* (hair-line) is not included

[1] *Matsya Purāṇa*, ch. 258, vv. 26-29: *Pratimāmukhamānena navabhāgān prakalpayet | Caturaṅgulā bhaved grīvā bhāgena hṛdayaṃ punaḥ || Nābhistasmād adhaḥ kāryā bhāgenaikena śobhanā | Nābheradhastathā meḍhraṃ bhāgenaikena kalpayet | Dvibhāgenāyatā vūrū jānunī caturaṅgule || Jaṅghe dvibhāge vikhyāte pādau ca caturaṅgulau ||* The sum total of the above is just 108 *aṅgulas*; the height of the skull or scalp is not included in the above for the reason that it is generally put inside some sort of a crown or head gear, which according to the same authority is 14 *aṅgulas* high (*Caturddaśāṅgulastadvanmaulirasya prakīrtitaḥ*).

[2] *Kaṇṭhāddvādaśa hṛdayaṃ hṛdayānnābhi ca tatpramāṇena | Nābhimadhyānmeḍhrāntaraṃ ca tattulyamevoktam || Ūrū cāṅgulamānaiścaturyutā viṃśatistathā jaṅghe | Jānukapicche caturaṅgule ca pādau tattulyau ||*

in it. It is noteworthy that in none of the above texts, the word *tāla* is mentioned, though in the *Matsya Purāṇa* a brief reference is made to the *daśatāla* images of Rāma (Dāśarathi), Bali the son of Virocana, Varāha and Narasiṃha, and the *saptatāla* image of Vāmana. [1] One should refer in this connection to the *uttama*, *madhyama* and *adhama daśatāla* and several other varieties of the other *tāla* measurements like *navārddha tāla*, *uttama navatāla*, *satryaṅgula navatāla*, *navatāla*, *aṣṭatāla*, *saptatāla*, etc., as mentioned in such texts as the *Vaikhānasāgama*, *Kāraṇāgama*, *Śilparatna* and others. The *Vaikhānasāgama* says that images of Viṣṇu, Brahmā and Śiva should be made according to the *uttamadaśatāla* (124 *aṅgulas*), of Śrī, Bhūmi, Umā, and Sarasvatī, according to *madhyamadaśatāla* (120 *aṅgulas*), of Indra and other Lokapālas, Sūrya, Candra and the twelve Ādityas, the eleven Rudras, the eight Vasus, the Aśvins, Bhṛgu, Mārkaṇḍeya, Garuḍa, Śeṣa, Durgā, Guha (Kārttikeya) and the seven Ṛṣis, according to the *adhamadaśatāla* (116 *aṅ.*) measurement; the lord of the Yakṣas (Kubera), the Navagrahas, and other deities should measure *navārdhatāla* (114 *aṅ.*), while the lords of the Daityas, Yakṣas (again mentioned) and the Uragas (Nāgas) as well as the Siddhas, Gandharvvas and Cāraṇas should be *uttamanavatāla* (112 *aṅ.*) high; the figures of those men who are equal to gods (*devakalpamanuja*, perhaps the same as the *mahāpuruṣas*) should measure *satryaṅgula-navatāla* (111 *aṅ.*) and those of Rākṣasas, Indras, Asuras, *navatāla* (108 *aṅ.*); *aṣṭatāla* (96 *aṅ.*) is prescribed for men, *saptatāla* (84 *aṅ.*) for Vetālas, *ṣaṭtāla* (72 *aṅ.*) for pretas, *pañcatāla* (60 *aṅ.*) for

[1] Ch. 259, *vv.* 1-2—*Daśatālaḥ smṛto Rāmo Balirvairocanistathā ॥ Vārāho Nārasiṃhaśca saptatālastu Vāmanaḥ ।* The *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* also, as I have already shown, refers to the 120 *aṅgula* image of Dāśarathi Rāma and Vairocani Bali, but does not use the word *tāla*.

hunchbacks, *catustāla* (48 *aṅ.*) for dwarfs, *tritāla* (36 *aṅ.*) for Bhūtas and Kinnaras, *dvitāla* (24 *aṅ.*) for Kuṣmāṇḍas (? Kumbhāṇḍas) and *ekatāla* (12 *aṅ.*) for Kabandhas.[1]

It has already been shown that neither the earliest datable work on iconometry now extant, *viz.*, the earlier portion of Chap. 57 of the Bṛhatsaṃhitā, nor Utpala's commentary on it explicitly refers to the word *tāla* or its equivalents. Kāśyapa also, as quoted at some length by Utpala, is silent about it (*Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, pp. 776-78). The *Samyaksambuddhabhāṣita-Pratimālakṣaṇam* (edited by me, C. U. Press, 1932) follows these earlier works and does not mention the word *tāla*. But most of the other works dealing with iconometry, which cannot be given very early date, not only use it but also record very intricate details about it. Does it prove that *tāla* as a higher unit in iconometry was a comparatively late introduction, the earlier mode of distinguishing the well-known varieties of measurements being in terms of the lower unit the *aṅgula*? I cannot help quoting the following lines from Gopinath Rao for elucidating my point: "The reader would be inclined to believe that the phrases *daśatāla*, *pañcatāla* and *ekatāla* mean lengths equal to ten, five and one *tāla* respectively, but

[1] T. A. G. Rao, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, App. B., p. 61. The text further says that each of the above *tāla* measurements have three varieties, *viz.*, *uttama*, *madhyama* and *adhama* (*teṣāṃ pratyekamuttamamadhyamādhamabhedāni bhavanti*), it being understood that the first and the last varieties are respectively 4 *aṅgulas* more and 4 *aṅgulas* less than the middle one which is normal. Śrī-Kumāra gives us a very detailed account of all these different *tāla* measurements and their sub-varieties (*Śilparatna*, T. S. S., Vol. II, pp. 34-76); about *eka-*, *dvi-*, and *tri-tāla* images, it is simply mentioned, '*Tridvyekatālameyānāṃ pratimānāṃ vicakṣaṇaḥ* | *Aṅgopāṅgādimānāni proṇnayet pārvaśāstrataḥ* ||. The text enjoins that images of Gaṇapati (Vighneśa) should be made according to the *uttama-pañcatāla* or *madhyama-pañcatāla* measurements, some details of which are also appended. Rao has fully utilised this text in his work on iconometry (*Tālamāna*, *M.A.S.I.*, 8).

unfortunately this interpretation does not seem to agree with the actual measurements; for example, the total length of an image made according to the *uttama-daśatāla* measurement is 124 *aṅgulas* and the *tāla* of this image measures 13½ *aṅgulas*; dividing the total length by the length of the *tāla* we find that there are only 9 *tālas* in it; again, the total length of a *catustāla* image is 48 *aṅgulas* and its *tāla* is 8 *aṅgulas* and therefore there are 6 *tālas* in this set of proportions" (Rao, *Tālamāna* or *Iconometry*, p. 35). His authority as regards his assertion about the length of the *tāla* in the above cases is the *āgama* literature (*cf.* his table, *op. cit.*, pp. 36-37). He could not offer any satisfactory explanation of this discrepancy, his only remark being, 'there is no etymological significance clearly visible in the names given to the various proportions.' It is possible that originally there was never a *tāla* unit of such varying measurements as laid down in the later āgamic literature; over and above the smaller *aṅgula* unit, a higher one computed in terms of *aṅgula* was known (used in differentiating between the *pravara*, *sama* and *nyūna* images of Varāhamihira). This larger unit was composed of 12 *aṅgulas*, but was not referred to as a *tāla* in the earlier texts. It is a pity that Nagnajit's work on iconography and iconometry (*Pratimālakṣaṇa*) has not been discovered as yet and there is no knowing whether the 14 *aṅgula* lengthwise measurement of the face was ever described as a *tāla*. Thus it is quite likely that the *tāla* of different measurements was comparatively a late feature in the iconometrical system of India. The earlier method of arriving at the smaller and higher units was a much simpler and practical one. This view of mine is further supported by the fact that in all the texts both early and late, this unit of 12 *aṅgulas* is the basis of calculation, when it is made in terms of a higher unit. Varying face-lengths in different types of images as recorded in the comparatively late iconometric texts were never

mentioned in them as the higher unit on the basis of which the images were to be measured.

W. S. Hadaway explains *tāla* (he writes ' *thalam* meaning a short span ') and *aṅgula* in a slightly different way. According to him, the actual image in order to be made in accordance with one definite system, should have its total height divided into one of five different sets of proportions, *viz.*, 10, 9, 8, 7 or 5 equal parts of the whole height, *i.e.*, *daśa, nava, aṣṭa, sapta* or *pañca tālas* respectively ; the *tāla* is now divided into 12 equal parts, each part being termed an *aṅgula* which is again divided into 8 equal parts called *yavas* for the purpose of more minute measurements. For still more minute measurements, the *yavas* may be again subdivided, but it is seldom necessary in practice.[1] It is clear, however, on the authority of the earliest datable text that the lower limit was derived independently of the higher one at an early age. It may be observed here that Hadaway based his conclusions not only on comparatively late South Indian texts but also on the actual method followed by the modern South Indian *sthapatis*.

I have already shown that several early iconometric texts record the length of the face as equal to its width, both being 12 *aṅgulas*. But there was the Dravidian measure in which the length of the face was two *aṅgulas* more than its width, the former being 14 *aṅgulas* and the latter 12. Varāhamihira mentions the name of Nagnajit, who recorded this *Drāviḍa māna* in two verses of his chapter on Pratimālakṣaṇam, the first of which with Utpala's commentary on it has already been quoted by me in p. 31. In the second verse we are informed that according to Nagnajit the length or height of the face of the image with the hair on its head should be 16 *aṅgulas* (*Āsyaṃ sakeśanicayaṃ ṣoḍaśa dair-*

[1] W. S. Hadaway, ' Some Hindu Silpaśāstras,' *O.Z.*, 1914 p. 37.

ghyeṇa Nagnajitproktam, ch. 57, v. 15); Utpala supplies us with the line from Nagnajit's work in his commentary (*Tathā ca Nagnajit—Dvyaṅgulā keśarekhaivaṃ mukhaṃ syāt ṣoḍaśāṅgulam*). The length of the face of an image of the *uttamadaśatāla* variety as laid down in the various South Indian texts like *Kāraṇāgama*, *Kāmikāgama*, *Vaikhānasāgama* and *Śilparatna* is also 14 to 13½ *aṅgulas* (according to the first two, 14 and according to the last two 13½, if we include the measurement of the small fleshy fold below the chin in it).[1] The above fact proves that the longer facial type was in vogue in South Indian iconographic art from a very early time. An interesting comparison of the Drāviḍa measure can be made with the face-length of the Buddha image as laid down in the *Samyaksambuddhabhāṣita-Pratimālakṣaṇam*. This text says that the face of the Buddha image should be 13½ *aṅgulas* long and it should be divided into 3 parts, *viz.*, the forehead, the portion beneath it up to the bottom of the nose, and thence to the end of the chin. The forehead, like the nose, should be 4 *aṅgulas*, the portion below the nose up to the end of the chin should be a little in excess (½ *aṅgulas* according to the Chinese translation of the text and 1½ according to its Sanskrit original).[2] But the *Kriyā-*

[1] Rao, *Tālamāna*, p. 44:—

1. End of the front hair to the *akṣisūtra*—4 *aṅ*. 4 *yavas*.
2. *Akṣisūtra* to *nāsikānta* (end of the nose)—4 *aṅ*. 4 *yavas*.
3. *Nāsikānta* to *civukānta* (end of the chin)—4 *aṅ*. 4 *yavas*.

(*Kāraṇa and Kāmikāgamas*)—13 *aṅ*. 4 *yavas*.

1.....4 *aṅ*. 3 *yavas*
2..... ,, ,,
3..... ,, ,,

(*Vaikhānasāgama and Śilparatna*).....13 *aṅ*. 1 *yava*.

[2] *Pratimālakṣaṇam* (C. U. Press, 1932), vv. 2-3 (p. 10).

samuccaya which includes a sort of a commentary on the above text on Buddhist iconometry expressly says that the length of each of the three parts of the face is $4\frac{1}{2}$ *aṅgulas*. Reference may be made here, *in passim*, to the face-length of the *Mālavya* type of men as referred to by Varāhamihira. The height of the face of this type of men should be 13 *aṅgulas*; the passsage—*pañcāṣṭau corddhvamāsyam*—has been commented on by Utpala in the following way :—*pañca ca aṣṭau ca pañcāṣṭau trayodaśāṅgulāni | Ūrddhvamāsyamūrdhvādhamānenāsyaṃ civukāllalāṭāntaṃ yāvat trayodaśāṅgulaṃ bhavati |* It should be noted, however, that though the full height of the Buddha image according to the above Buddhist text corresponds to the same of an image of the *uttamadaśatāla* type (the former measures 125 *aṅgulas* in height, thus being only 1 *aṅgula* in excess of the height of the latter), the height of a *Mālavya* type is only 108 *aṅgulas*.

It will be of interest now to compare briefly the Indian canons of proportion with those in vogue among the Egyptians and Greeks. In instituting this comparison, a few only of the broad vertical measurements of the figures are to be taken into account, for we have very little knowledge of the intricate details about the varieties of proportions that were adopted by the artists of the ancient times. I have already drawn the attention of my readers to the very early Egyptian mode of dividing an erect human figure over 18 squares, the highest of which ends not at the top of the head, but at the top of the brow, thus leaving the dome of the skull outside, as well as the head-dresses or crowns. The knee falls over the 6th square, the upper part of the legs over the 9th, the shoulders over the 16th, the nose over the 17th. The head which occupies two squares, is thus $\frac{1}{8}$th of the rest of the body. Under the same system, the sitting figure occupies 15 squares, plus the dome of the head. Lepsius sought for the basis of these canons in the length

of the foot, Wilkinson in the height of the foot, C. Blane claims to have discovered it in the length of the medius.[1] In terms of Indian iconometry, the Egyptian mode of measuring the erect human figure up to the forehead roughly corresponds to the *aṣṭatāla* measurement, a measurement which, as we have seen, is enjoined in the case of ordinary mortals. Like the Indians, the Egyptians also left the dome of the head outside because in both cases that was usually adorned with elaborate type of head-dresses.[2] The basis of the canons followed in the Egyptian figures was sought for by different scholars in different parts of the body; Blane's reference to the length of the medius reminds us of the āgamic reference to the width or length of the middle digit of the medius used as the basis in India (*cf.* the *Vaikhānasāgama* passage—*Puruṣasya dakṣiṇahastamadhyamāṅgulermadhyamaparvaṇi vistāram āyataṃ vā mātrāṅgulam*). The famous statue of the Doryphorus or Canon in which the Greek sculptor Polyclitus embodied his ideas about perfect proportions of the human body can only be seen now in its imperfect copies. The completest of such copies is that from Pompeii, now in the Naples Museum; 'it represents a young man in the very prime of athletic condition, but remarkable rather for massive strength than for agility. All his muscles are strongly developed, though we must allow something here for the exaggeration of the late copyist; his head is large in proportion, about *one-seventh* of the total height, and its squareness of skull and rather heavy jaw imply that his athletic prowess is due rather to obstinate

[1] Jean Capart, *Egyptian Art*, p. 156.

[2] P. K. Acarya is wrong when he says that the *tālamāna* as a sculptural measurement denoted a system in which the length of the face including the head is stated to be the unit.' Another statement of his, *viz.*, 'an image is of *daśatāla* measure when its whole length is equal to 10 times the face including the head, is also incorrect. P. K. Acarya, *Dictionary of Hindu Architecture*, pp. 221-22.

power of endurance than to quickness or versatility' (E. A. Gardner, *op. cit.*, pp. 360-62). But the technique which was followed by the same artist in his bronze statues (copies only of which are extant) shows his artistic skill in the delineation of proportions and delicate modelling to much better advantage than it is shown in marble. The statue of an Amazon, leaning with her left elbow on a pillar, her right hand resting on her head, which is in the Berlin Museum and which has been recognised as a copy of Polyclitus' Amazon, shows the square and vigorous form of the athlete who though female in sex is male in modelling and proportion; its head with its squarely shaped skull and heavy jaw resembles greatly the head of the Doryphorus. The successors of Polyclitus gradually changed into figures of slimmer proportions; this is proved by Praxiteles' sculpture of Hermes as the protector of youth, the original of which has been discovered by the German excavators in the Heraeum at Olympia. The figure is more slender and graceful than that of a Polyclitan athlete; it embodies Praxiteles' ideal of Greek youth in its normal and healthy condition. Part of the right leg (from the knee to the ankle) and the whole of the left leg below the knee are broken and so we cannot accurately determine the proportion of the head to the full height of the body, but it was certainly more than 7 :1 which was so in the case of Polyclitus' Canon. One of his other statues, *viz.*, the Aphrodite of Cnidus (preserved only in copies) prove the same truth. The goddess, represented as preparing for the bath, shows a pronounced stoop forwards, with the weight of the body carried along the projecting right hip and resting on the right foot, the left knee being bent; even in this slightly bent posture, the full height is more than seven times her head and had she been in an erect position, the proportion would have probably been 8 :1. This is maintained in the works of Lysippus, one of the most prolific of the Greek sculptors who was the

acknowledged and unrivalled master of the Sicyonian school 'which had contributed more than any other to the advance of academic study and the continuity of artistic tradition.' 'Thus we are told that Lysippus modified the square and heavy proportion of the Polyclitan Canon; he made the head smaller (*about one-eighth of the total height instead of one-seventh*), the body more slender and drier in texture, thus increasing the apparent height.' [1]

It will be useful, in this connection, to refer briefly to the proportion of the head to the full height of the human figure, which is normally followed by the modern artists of the west in their work. Alfred Fripp and Ralph Thompson have shown in their work on *Human Anatomy for Art Students*, 'that the height of an average adult male is just seven and half times the measurement of the head,' observing at the same time that 'the student of art anatomy will do well to remember that the more exact the measurements which are made upon one special individual, the more liability to error is there if you attempt to lay down general rules thereform' (p. 255). Still it seems the Western artists generally follow this mode in representing an adult male body in art, the average female being made somewhat smaller in proportion than the average male. Now, if we leave out the measurement of the dome of the head and measure the whole height of the figure in terms of the face-length, it will appear that the full height will approximate to nearly 9 times the face, as is laid down in the early Indian *śilpaśāstras* (Pl. VI, fig. 4). The art students in the Indian

[1] E. A. Gardner, *op. cit.*, p. 439; *italics are mine*. Lysippus was one of the earliest sculptors to introduce the principle of making men and things, not as they were in nature (which was the mode of the earlier Greek sculptors), but as they appeared to be; 'that is to say, he did not so much consider the correctness to nature of the actual material form of his work, but rather the effect it produced on the eye of the spectator, and was, so far, an impressionist.'

art schools also are usually given this proportion when they are asked to represent an average human body.[1]

A few words are necessary here about the comparison of the ideal theory and the actual practice. It has already been shown that there must have flourished in ancient and mediaeval India different schools of image-makers who followed art traditions current in their respective localities. If we carefully analyse the large number of available iconographic and iconometric texts, we seldom fail to find differences, however slight they may be. While editing the text on Buddhist iconometry, *Samyaksambuddhabhāṣita-buddhapratimālakṣaṇam* by name, I noted some measurements of as many as 16 selected Buddha images belonging to Gandhara, Mathura and Bihar. I found that those among them hailing from the two last mentioned places very closely approximated to the corresponding details laid down in the text; very few of the Gandhara Buddhas, on the other hand, tallied with the textual data. While engaged in my present work, I measured several comparatively well-preserved images of Brahmanical divinities in the collection of the Indian Museum, Calcutta and the Asutosh Museum, Calcutta University. I found that in many instances the approximation of the actual practice with the theory was very great. The above sculptures, datable from

[1] Rao says that according to the canons of European art, a well-proportioned male figure is equal to eight times the length of the head, a female figure is seven and a half times that of its head. He is not quite accurate when he describes the two types as *aṣṭatāla* and *sārdhasaptatāla* respectively. He further observes, 'According to European artists the ear is said to extend from a line drawn across the side of the head on a level with the eye-brow, and another which is drawn on a level with the wing of the nose: or, in the language of the Indian artist between the *bhrūsūtra* and the *nāsāputa-sūtra*. Similarly, the other rules arrived at by the Indian artist do not appear to be divergent from those evolved by the European artist.' T. A. G. Rao, *Elements*, etc., Vol. I, App. B, p. 8.

the 9th-10th century onwards, were collected mainly from different parts of Eastern India, and the texts that were followed by their makers were certainly North-Indian ones. It must be observed, however, that the iconometric study of the reliefs could only be of a partial nature, the actual measurements taken with the help of anthropometric instruments mainly being of their height and rarely of their width. I append the results of my observations in Appendix C; in Appendix B, I give the text of *Pratimāmānalakṣaṇam* and for comparison's sake quote the relevant section of ch. 57 of *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*.[1] A comparison of these two texts will show how the latter is much simpler and practical than the former which is much more complicated and which bristles with technicalities.

I conclude this chapter by quoting the observations of V. A. Smith who was sometimes a severe critic of Indian hieratic art and Hadaway, a practical artist, about these canons. Smith says, "There is in the Hindu system nothing complicated or difficult to understand or remember, but like every other canon of artistic proportion, these methods are more capable of producing works of art in unskilled hands than are any other aids or methods.....These śāstras are the common property of Hindu artisans, whether of Northern or Southern India." (*I.A.*, Vol. XLIV, pp. 90-91). Hadaway remarks, "The Hindu image-maker or sculptor does not work from life, as is the usual practice among Europeans, but he has, in place of the living model, a most elaborate and beautiful system of proportions, which he uses constantly, combining these with close observation and study of

[1] *Pratimāmānalakṣaṇam* has been edited by P. Bose. But this edition is very much defective, and it seems to have been based on an indifferent copy. I am indebted to my friend and colleague, Dr. P. C. Bagchi, Dr. es. Lettres, of the Calcutta University, for kindly allowing me to utilise a much better copy of this text brought by him from Nepal.

natural detail. It is in fact a series of anatomical rules and formulae, of infinitely more practical use than any European system which I know of, for the Indian one treats of the actual proportion and of the surface form, rather than the more 'scientific' attachments of muscles and the articulation of bones" (*O.Z.*, 1914_1 p. 34).

APPENDIX A

(a) Image-worship and the Pāñcarātra

I have already referred in the second chapter of my book to the excessive importance attached to the images of Viṣṇu, his Vyūhas and Vibhavas (emanatory and incarnatory forms), in the Pāñcarātra cult. There is very little doubt that it was this cult among all the other Brahmanical cults prevalent in India, that was most responsible for the wide diffusion of the practice of image-worship. To the Pāñcarātras the *Arcā* or *Śrī-vigraha* was the God himself in one of his aspects, and was thus the object of the greatest veneration as the 'God manifest' (*pratyakṣa devatā*). These images were principally anthropomorphic ones and the Pāñcarātra theologians exulted in endowing their god and his various aspects with human traits. It has been proved by me with the help of numismatic data that anthropomorphic as well as theriomorphic images of Śiva were fairly prevalent in this country in the centuries immediately preceding the Christian era and those immediately succeeding it, though his phallic form was not surely unknown. But, in course of time, the latter came to be regarded as the all-important emblem to be almost invariably enshrined in the main sanctum, the former being chiefly used as the central figure in decorative reliefs illustrating the various myths associated with Śaivism. The Vīra-śaivas or Liṅgāyats, a comparatively late branch of the same sectary, were averse to the practice of worshipping the deity in his anthropomorphic form ; to them the Śiva-liṅga was the most sacred object symbolising the greatness of their divinity and they carried it on their body in some form or other throughout life from the time of their initiation.[1] The Pāñca-

[1] But, the tendency to anthropomorphise even this aniconic emblem made itself manifest in many late specimens of Śiva-liṅgas

rātras or the Vaiṣṇavas, on the other hand, seldom (if at all) enshrined a mere emblem of their god in the main sanctum, the aniconic emblems like the *śālagrāmas* being given subsidiary position in the public shrines or worshipped in private chapels of the individual householders. Their principal cult objects enshrined in the sanctum were the images of one or other of the various aspects of the Lord, often anthropomorphic, less so theriomorphic or therio-anthropomorphic. The *Nārada Pāñcarātra (Bhāradvāja-Saṃhitā-Pariśiṣṭa)* tells us that Hari is to be always worshipped in images ; but when these are wanting, then alone other objects are to be used for this purpose. Of these objects again, Śālagrāmas are the best for a Śālagrāma stone is the celestial form of Hari.[1]

Sometimes, though perhaps rarely, the image of the goddess Śrī, his consort *par excellence*, seemed to have been the central object of worship in a Pāñcarātra shrine, as is proved by one of her earliest stone images fully in the round, discovered at Besnagar. It is interesting that one of the oldest Viṣṇuite images should be none other than that of this goddess with unmistakable Pāñcarātra association. Reference has been made by me in the third chapter to the sculpture found there by Cunningham and described by him as the Kalpadrum capital ; I have proved that in it is to be recognised the earliest representation of the *aṣṭanidhis* which are usually associated with Kubera. It has also been shown by me that Śrī was the goddess who presided over these eight treasures (pp. 115-116, 210 ; Pl. X., Fig. 2). I may suggest here that the colossal female statue, 6′ 7″ in height, discovered very near

enshrined in temples. I have already drawn the attention of my readers to the curious practice of permanently fixing gold leaves in the shape of three eyes, a nose (the outline of a human face) into the *pūjābhāga* of the emblem (p. 40, f.n. 1).

[1] *Bhāradvāja Saṃhitā-Pariśiṣṭa*, III, 57-58.
Arcyo'rcāyāṃ Harirnityaṃ tadabhāve tu kutracit ।
Puṣpeṇārghyeṇa haviṣā natyā stutyāpi vāparam ॥
Śālagrāmaśilāyāntu pūjanaṃ snāpanādapi ।
Sā hi divyā Harermūrttirdarśanādeva siddhikṛt ॥

the above capital by the same archaeologist, and belonging to the same age (3rd-2nd century B. C.), stands for no other than Śrī herself who held such an important position in the Pāñcarātra cult as the active energic principle—the chief consort of the Para-Vāsudeva.[1]

A few Besnagar and Nāgarī inscriptions of the pre-Christian period refer to the existence of the Pāñcarātra shrines in the ancient towns of Vidiśā and Madhyamikā (Ch. III). It is true that no images of Vāsudeva or of any of his forms have yet been discovered in these places; but it is presumable that they must have been destroyed in course of time. Epigraphic data about the erection of similar shrines at Mathura and other places in the early centuries of the Christian era have to some extent been corroborated by the actual finds of Viṣṇuite images. I have a suspicion that the *devagṛhas* which housed them might not always have been elaborate structures as they were afterwards, but were sacred places with cult-objects placed on raised pedestals inside them very carefully fenced off by railings. The Nāgarī and Mathura inscriptions emphasise these railings (*cf.* the *Pūjā-śilāprākāra* in the former and *vedikā* in the latter), though the latter also mentions the erection of a *toraṇa* and a *catuḥśāla* (or *devakula—Lüders*) in the *mahāsthāna* of Vāsudeva. Numismatic data, though occasionally supplying us with representations of

[1] My suggestion about this sculpture which is usually described as a Yakṣiṇi can be supported with the help of the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa* passage already quoted by me (pp. 116 and 210—but there I had not discussed its identity), as also by referring to the fact that it closely resembles the figure of Sirimā represented on an upright pillar of the Bhārhut railing. It is highly probable, if not certain, that the above capital with the *nidhis* was the capital of a *dhvaja* before the shrine of the great Pāñcarātra goddess at Besnagar. The existence of three other Pāñcarātra shrines—those of the three Vyūhas, *viz.*, Vāsudeva, Saṃkarṣaṇa and Pradyumna, has been proved by the discovery there of their *dhvaja*-capitals, Garuḍa, Tāla and Makara. The points raised here are discussed in fuller details in two of my papers, one appearing in the current (1941) issue of the *J.I.S.O.A.*, and the other read in the Fifth Session of the Indian History Congress at Hyderabad.

structural shrines of gods (*cf.* some coins of the Audumbaras and a few of Huvishka), very frequently refer to the railings which usually demarcated these *sthānas*. It may be remarked here, *en passant*, that the railings which are very often depicted beneath the feet of so many Yakṣas, Yakṣiṇīs, Nāgas and Nāginīs in the early Buddhist art of central India, though serving the purpose of pedestals of these *vyantara devatās* in their relievo-representations, really refer to such as fenced off their shrines.

A few lines about the sectarian exclusiveness of the Pāñcarātrins, especially with regard to their ritualistic practice will not be out of place here. This exclusive spirit is more noticeable in such late works as the apocryphal *Nārada-Pāñcarātra*. *Bhāradvāja-Saṃhitā*, included in it, writes that such gods as Brahmā, Rudra, Dikpālas, Sūrya, their Śaktis or their children should neither be worshipped daily, nor should ever be resorted to for the fulfilment of any desire. No (Pāñcarātrin) should stay for a single day or take food and drink in a house or a village in which there are no images of Viṣṇu. Images enshrined and worshipped by heretics and Śaivas are always to be shunned ; all the gods (*i.e.*, their images), even if they are worshipped according to the rituals prescribed for them should be avoided. No food ought to be taken (by a Vaiṣṇava) in the house of one, where there are images of other divinities, but Janārdana (*i.e.*, his image) is absent, even if the householder be well-versed in the Vedāntas.[1]

[1] IV 4 :

Brahmarudradigīśārka-tacchaktiprasavādayaḥ ।
Nityamabhyarcane varjyāḥ kāmo'pi syānna tanmukhaḥ ॥

IV 28:

Viṣṇvarcārahite grāme Viṣṇvarcārahite gṛhe ।
Na kuryādannapānādi na tatra divasaṃ vaset ॥

IV 30-31:

Varjyāḥ pākhaṇḍaśaivādyaiḥ sthāpitāśca tathārcitāḥ ।
Anyatra ca svato baddhā niyamat sarvadevatāḥ ॥
Gṛhe yasyānyadevārcā vyakto na ca Janārdanaḥ ।
Na tasya kiñcidaśnīyādapi vedāntavedinaḥ ॥

Many more such verses can be quoted.

This mental attitude is in striking contrast to the catholicity of spirit to be fouud in the *Bhagavadgītā*, a much earlier text expounding the *bhaktimārga* of the Ekāntika or Bhāgavata school.[1]

(b) The installation of images

The images, until they were duly consecrated and ceremonially enshrined, were not regular objects of worship. Elaborate rituals are prescribed in comparatively early and late texts for their due consecration and installation (*mūrti-pratiṣṭhā*). I give here a free translation of the Chapter on Pratimā-pratiṣṭhāpanam in the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* (Ch. 59, Sudhakar Dvivedi's Edition).

"A wise man should erect a pavilion for the preliminary consecration of an image in the southern quarter or eastern: the pavilion should be furnished with four *toraṇas* (ornamental arches) and (its top) covered with the branches of such trees as *yajña-ḍumbura*, etc. In the different parts of the pavilion—eastern, south-eastern, southern, south-western, western, north-western, northern and north-eastern—garlands and banners of various colours should be hung. Inside the *maṇḍapa* an earthen altar (*sthaṇḍila*) should be raised, and the latter should be first sprinkled with sand and then covered over with *kuśa* grass ; now the image should be placed on it with its head and feet resting on a *bhadrāsana* (a kind of seat).[2]

[1] *Bhagavadgītā*, IV. 11 and IX. 23:

Ye yathā māṃ prapadyante tāṃstathaiva bhajāmyaham |
Mama vartmānuvartante manuṣyāḥ Pārtha sarvaśaḥ ||
Ye'pyanyadevatābhaktā yajante śraddhyānvitāḥ |
Te'pi māmeva Kaunteya yajantyavidhipūrvakam ||

[2] In three verses just before it, the author refers to the different materials out of which the images are made, and the different results to be obtained by making and worshipping them:—

Āyuḥśrībalajayadā dārumayī mṛnmayī tathā pratimā |
Lokahitāya maṇimayī sauvarṇī puṣṭidā bhavati ||
Rajatamayī kīrttikarī prajāvivṛddhiṃ karoti tāmramayī |
Bhūlābhaṃ tu mahāntaṃ śailī pratimāthavā liṅgam ||
Śaṅkūpahatā pratimā pradhānapuruṣaṃ kulaṃ ca ghātayati |
Svabhropahatā rogānupadravāṃśca kṣayaṃ kurute ||

Now, the image should be successively bathed with various kinds of waters ; first, a decoction of the (twigs of) *plakṣa*, *aśvattha*, *udumbara*, *śirīṣa* and *vaṭa* should be used, then the auspicious *sarvauṣadhi* water and next the water from sacred places, in which earth raised by elephants and bulls, earth from mountain, anthill, confluences of rivers, lotus ponds, and *pañcagavya* are mixed, should be poured ; when the image is being bathed with the above and with scented water in which gold and precious gems are put in, it should be placed with its head towards the east ; during this ceremony, *tūryas* (a kind of musical instrument—a trumpet) should be sounded, and '*puṇyāha*' ('auspicious day') and Veda *mantras* should be uttered.[1] The most respected of the Brāhmaṇas then chant *Aindra mantras* (*mantras* associated with the Vedic god Indra) in the eastern and *Agnimantras* in the south-eastern quarter ; these Brāhmaṇas are to be honoured with handsome offerings or fees (*dakṣiṇā*). The Brahman (*i.e.*, the priest) should offer *homa* to fire with the *mantra* particular to the deity being enshrined. If during the performance of the *homa*, the fire becomes full of smoke, or the flames turn from right to left or the burning faggots emit frequent sparks, then it is not auspicious ; it is also inauspicious, if the priest forgets his *mantras*, or, (the flames) rage backwards. After having bathed the image and decked it with new cloth and ornaments and

[1] The following plants constitute *sarvauṣadhi* according to Utpala: *Jayā*, *jayantī*, *jīvantī*, *jīvaputrī*, *punarnavā*, *viṣṇu-krāntā*, *abhayā*, *viśvambharī*, *mahāmodā*, *sahadevī*, *pūrṇakośā*, *śatāvarī*, *sahasravīryā*, *lakṣmaṇā*. The *pañcagavyas* are cow-dung, urine of the cow, milk, curd and clarified butter.

In performing *nitya* (daily) and *naimittika* (occasional) *pūjās*, the Yajamāna, after performing *ācamana*, will think of Viṣṇu after uttering a particular *mantra* (*Viṣṇu-smaraṇa*) and then say: '*Om karttavye'smin karmaṇi puṇyāhaṃ bhavanto brubantu* ('In this action that should be done, you kindly say that the day be auspicious') and the Brahmin priest should say '*Om puṇyāham*') ('yes, let it be auspicious') ; this is '*puṇyāhavācana*.'

worshipped it with flowers and sandal paste, the priest should lay it down on a well-spread bed. When the image have slept its full, it should be roused from sleep with songs and dances and should be installed at a time fixed by the astrologers. Then after worshipping the image with flowers, garments, sandal paste, and the sounds of conchshell and trumpet, it should be carefully taken inside the sanctum from the pavilion, keeping the temple to the right (*prādakṣiṇyena*). After making profuse offerings (to the deity) and honouring the Brāhmaṇas and persons assembled there, a piece of gold should be put into the mortise-hole of the *piṇḍikā* (base), and the image should be fixed (in its base). The enshriner of the image, by honouring specially the astrologer, the Brāhmaṇas, the assembled persons and the image-maker or the architect (the word here used is *sthapati* explained by Utpala as *vardhakī*), enjoys bliss in this world and in heaven. Images of Viṣṇu, Sūrya, Śiva, Mātṛgaṇas, Brahmā, Buddha and the Jinas should be installed by a Bhāgavata, a Maga, a Pāśupata, one well-versed in the worship (of the Śakti), a Brāhman knowing the Vedas well, a person of the Śākya race, a Digambara Jaina respectively, according to the different rituals prescribed in the above different sectarian systems. The installation of god (*i.e.*, their images) is recommended in the bright fortnight in the period of the summer-solstice and during certain particular positions of the planets and asterisms, and in days other than Tuesday and in a time particularly auspicious to the donor of the image. I have given here in brief the general and easily practicable rules about the preliminary consecration (*adhivāsa*) and installation (*pratiṣṭhā*) of images. In the *Sāvitra* (*śāstra*), however, preliminary consecration and installation (of individual dīvinities) have been elaborately treated (*Adhivāsana-sanniveśane sāvitre pṛthageva vistarāt*)."

One or two points in the above rendering of the chapter on Pratimā-pratiṣṭhāpanam require notice. In the installation ceremony of the sectarian gods and goddesses, some importance is undoubtedly given to Vedic ritualism ; in the preliminary consecration, the Indra and Agni *mantras* are to be uttered and

the Vedic *homa* is to be performed. But during the performance of the *homa*, the *mantra* particular to the deity whose image is being installed is to be recited. The principal installation is to be done by a sectarian initiate according to the rites prescribed in the individual sectarian system. The mixed ritualism, partly Vedic and mostly sectarian, has been curiously enough described by Utpala as *Vaidik vidhāna*, while explaining the word *sāmānyam* in the last verse (*Sāmānyamaviśeṣaṃ vaidikena vidhānena*). Then reference is made in the last verse to the elaborate treatment of the same topic in *Saura śāstra* in which detailed descriptions of rituals followed in the installation of different divinities are incorporated.[1]

The whole of the 19th Vilāsa (named *Prātiṣṭhiko*) of the *Haribhaktivilāsa* supplies us with an extremely full account of *Śrīmūrtti-pratiṣṭhā* (the installation of the auspicious image of the Lord Vāsudeva) based on the *Hayaśirṣa-pañcarātra* and several Purāṇas. The *Saṃkarṣaṇa-kāṇḍa* of the *Hayaśirṣa-pañcarātra* itself is principally devoted to this topic, but it is still in manuscript form (note that the *Saura-kāṇḍa* in this Pāñcarātra text also contains something on *pratiṣṭhā* and compare this with the last line of the chapter just quoted). Lastly, notice should be taken of the honours to be done to the architect or the sculptor, the artist or artists responsible for the construction of the image and the building of the temple. *Haribhaktivilāsa* quotes from various texts like the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa, Matsya Purāṇa* and the *Hayaśirṣa-pañcarātra* about the full satisfaction and honour to be given to the artists by the person who is enshrining an image (*cf.* the section on *Śilpiparitoṣaṇam* in the 19th Vilāsa)[2].

Utpala gives two explanations of the last line of the last verse. The first is given above by me ; the other is:—*Athavā sāvitre saviturādityasya ye adhivāsana-sanniveśane pṛthageva vistarāt tac-chāstre saure bhavata iti.*

[2] *Tato Viṣṇuṃ samānīya sudhautaṃ suparīkṣitam ।*
Śilpinaḥ pūjayet paścād vastrālaṅkaraṇādibhiḥ ॥

(*Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*)

(C) *Jīrṇoddhāra*

Restoration of old and dilapidated shrines and replacement of broken, decaying and sometimes defiled images or other cult objects by new ones have been regarded from a long time as great acts of religious merit in India. In some texts, these are even described as more meritorious than the establishment of new shrines and construction of new images. One of the earliest instances of *jīrṇoddhāra*, though associated with Buddhism, has been recorded in the steatite casket discovered at Shinkot in Bajaur territory, 20 miles to the north-west of the confluence of the Panjkora and Swat rivers, beyond the borders of the North-West Frontier Province. Two sets of inscriptions are engraved on it, the earlier one referring to the establishment or consecration of (the corporeal relic) of the Buddha in the reign of Mahārāja Minadra (Menander), the donor being a person named Viyakamitra, the *apraca-raja* (one who has no king as his adversary). The later portion of the record also refers to the establishment of the corporeal relic of the Buddha, and of the bowl, but by a person named Vijayamitra, also an *apraca-raja* and evidently a descendant of Viyakamitra, on the 25th day of Vaiśākha of the 5th regnal year. This subsequent epigraph records—' This corporeal relic having been broken is not held in worship with zeal. It is decaying in course of time, (and) is not honoured ; (and here) by the offering of alms and water, ancestors are no longer propitiated ; (and) the receptacle of that (relic) has been cast aside. (Now) in the fifth year and on the twenty-fifth day of the month of Vaiśākha, this has been established by Vijayamitra, who has

Ānīya liṅgamarccāṃ vā śilpinaḥ pūjayedbudhaḥ ।
Vastrābharaṇaratnaiśca ye ca tatparicārakāḥ ।
Kṣamadhvamiti tān brūyāt yajamāno hyataḥ param ॥
(*Matsya Purāṇa*)

Pūjayitvā tu pratimāṃ śilpinaṃ toṣayet tataḥ ।
Gandhapuṣpādibhirvipraṃ toṣayed kaṭakādibhiḥ ॥
Sarvve' tha karmmiṇastasyāstasmin kāle pṛthak pṛthak ।
Kṣamāpayita tān sarvvān priyapraśnena sarvvathā ॥
(*Hayaśīrṣa-pañcarātra*)

no king as his adversary."[1] Thus, there is no doubt about its being a clear case of *jīrṇoddhāra*. H. Thsang says that 'in recent times Śaśāṅka, the enemy and oppressor of Buddhism, cut down the Bodhi-tree, destroyed its roots down to the water, and burned what remained. A few months afterwards Pūrṇavarmā, the last descendant of Aśoka on the throne of Magadha, by pious efforts brought the tree back to life and in one night it became above ten feet high. This king then built round it a stone wall 24 feet high' (Watters, *On Yuan Chwang*, Vol. II, p. 115). Here also is a clear case of restoration after the original shrine was defiled by a non-believer, for the stone wall which was set up by Pūrṇavarmā was nothing but a re-erection. The *śilā-prākāra* was originally erected in the first century B.C., through the pious zeal and munificence of a lady, Āryā Kuraṅgī by name, the wife of Indrāgnimitra, perhaps a local chieftain. What Pūrṇavarmā did was to use the old materials—the *thabhas* (pillars), *sūcīs* (joining pieces) and *uṣṇīṣas* (coping stones) all made of greyish sandstone—in rebuilding the wall, using new material (granite) when the old fell short of his requirements; there are clear structural indications which fully prove this point (Barua, *Gayā and Buddha Gayā*, Vol. II, p. 12 ff.). I have referred in the last page of my first chapter to the rebuilding of the Chauñṣaṭ Yoginī temple at Bheraghat by Alhanādevī, the queen of the Haihaya King Gayakarṇadeva, during the reign of her son Narasiṃhadeva, in the Kalacurī-Cedī year 907 (1155 A.D.). Cunningham noticed that the style of architecture of this temple was plain and simple and might belong to any period between 900 and 1200 A.D. But the characters of the inscriptions on the pedestals of the images point to the earlier date and thus it

[1] *Ime śarira paluga-bhud(r)ao na sakare atrita | sa śaria-t(r)ikalad(r)ena śadhro na piṃḍoyakeyi pitri griṇayat (r)i | tasa ye patre apomua | Vaṣaye paṃcamaye 41 Veś(r)akh(r)asa masasa divasa-paṃcaviś(r)aye iyo prat(r)ithavit(r)e Vijayamitrena apracarajena Bhag(r)avatu Śakimuṇisa samasa(ṃ)budhasa śarira |*

—*Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. XXIV, p. 7. The Kharoṣṭhi record was edited by N. G. Majumdar (*ibid.*, pp. 1-8), who, however, did not notice this aspect of the epigraph.

is clear that they were restored and re-enshrined at a later date.[1] R. D. Banerjee proved with the help of the images divisible into two broad groups, one standing, made of brittle reddish sandstone, with no inscription, and the other seated, mostly carved out of a dull greenish yellow sandstone, inscribed with letters datable in the 10th century A.D. inside the circular temple, that ' before the building of the circular temple in the tenth century A.D., another structure existed on this spot.' Banerjee thinks it extremely probable that the most ancient shrine on the top of the hill, on which the circular temple stands, was erected in the Kushan period, and it enshrined the standing uninscribed images of brittle reddish sandstone.[2]

The last few verses of the *Pratimāmānalakṣaṇam*, being edited by me with translation and notes in the next Appendix (B), contain some interesting details about the replacement of old images by new ones, similar to those incorporated in Ch. 67 of the *Agni Purāṇa*. The details, however, contain more about the manner in which the decaying images are to be destroyed than about their restoration. My study of some ancient Brahmanical and Buddhist images in the Sarnath and Rajshahi Museums has led me to conclude that attempts were made to restore them when they were partially damaged. The *Śilparatna* tells us that ' when an image is slightly damaged, it should never be discarded ; but when its arms, hands, feet and legs are severed, when it is broken, split up or nine *yava* portion of it is gone or when it gets disfigured, it is usually to be discarded. If its fingers, etc., are cut up (or broken) the sages recommend binding (repairing) them'.[3]

[1] Cunningham, *A.S.R.*, Vol. IX, pp. 11, 73. Cunningham says, ' the old circular wall, with its inscribed statues, belonged to the 10th century and the cloister with its roof was the work of Queen Alhaṇādevī in the 12th century.'

[2] R. D. Banerjee, *The Haihayas of Tripuri and their Monuments (M.A.S.I.*, No. 23), pp. 69-70.

[3] *Śilparatna*, Part II, p. 206:—
Doṣe laghutare bimbaṃ naiva tyājyaṃ kadācana |
Bāhucchede karacchede pādacchede tathaiva ca ||

(*d*) *Dhūlicitra*

In the prefixed summary of my chapter VI, I have referred to the pictures drawn with coloured rice-powders, but I have inadvertently omitted to discuss it in the body of the chapter. I do it now in the following para.

In many Vaiṣṇava shrines of Bengal, there is a custom of illustrating the stories connected with the early life of Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa, through the medium of differently coloured rice powder. A part of the shrine, generally of the *nāṭmaṇḍap* is set apart for this purpose ; on a raised platform there, are painted these scenes with extreme care by putting the coloured powder. This is done at the time of Vaiṣṇava festivals like Jhulanyātrā and its purpose is mainly decorative and edificatory. Such pictorial representation is probably referred to in the *Śilparatna* as *Dhūlicitra* (not exactly the same as *Ālponā*). Śrī Kumāra tells us that there are three kinds of *citras*, *viz.*, *Rasacitra*, *Dhūlicitra* and *Citra* (*Rasacitraṃ tathā dhūlicitraṃ citramiti tridhā*). The second one is thus described by him:—'After powdering separately fire and other colours (methods of preparing different mixed colours such as autumnal green, the colour of elephant, those of *bakula* fruit, fire, water, etc., are first detailed by him), a beautiful altar (platform) should be painted temporarily with these powders. The old painters have described this as *Dhūlicitra* ; in it likeness is shown just as reflection appears in a mirror.' The Original text is: *Etānyanalavarṇāni cūrṇayitvā pṛthak pṛthak* । *Etaiścūrṇaiḥ sthaṇḍile ramye kṣaṇikāni vilepayet* ॥ *Dhūlicitramidaṃ khyātaṃ citrakāraiḥ purātanaiḥ* । *Sādṛśyaṃ dṛśyate yattu darpaṇe pratibimbavat* ॥ (*Śilparatna*, Part I, ch. 44, Verses 144-45):

Tathaiva sphuṭite bhinne yasminnavayave gate ।
Vairūpyaṃ jāyate yasya tat tyājyam prāyaśo bhavet ॥
Aṅgulyādiparicchede bandhanaṃ śasyate budhaiḥ ।
(Ch. 29, vv. 30-32).

APPENDIX B

PART I

प्रतिमामानलक्षणम्

नमो बुद्धाय ॥

आत्रेयतिलके बोद्धशास्त्रेऽन्यत्र पुरातने ।
उक्तं यत्पूर्वमुनिभिः प्रतिमामानलक्षणम् ॥१॥
तत्संकृत्येह चैकत्र पिण्डीकृत्य यथाक्रमम् ।
नत्वा सर्वविदं देवमर्चालक्षणमुच्यते ॥२॥
द्वादशाङ्गुलि तालञ्च वितस्तिर्मुखमेव च ।
श्रेयमेवार्थनामेन द्व्यङ्गुलं गोलकं कला ॥३॥
पञ्चवानां चतुर्भागो मापनाङ्गुलिका स्मृता ।
ततोऽङ्गुलाष्टभागेन यवं विन्द्याद्विचक्षणः ॥४॥
अर्चानामङ्गप्रत्यङ्गं मापनार्थमिति स्मृतम् ।
अनेनैव विधानेन मापयेत्प्रतिमां बुधः ॥५॥
यत्किञ्चिद्रूपकायामं विभाज्य नवभागतः ।
एकतालं मुखं कुर्य्याद्विस्तारञ्च तथैव च ॥६॥
वकाराकृति चूताभं (मुखं) खगाण्डाभं तिलाकृति
सार्द्धाङ्गुलविहीनं यत्तद्वकाराकृतीष्यते ॥७॥
द्व्यङ्गुलेन विहीने तु चूताभमाननं भवेत् ।
सार्द्धद्व्यङ्गुलहीनन्तु खगाण्डाकारमुच्यते ॥८॥
वर्जयेच्चाङ्गुलं यत्तु नामधेयं तिलाकृति ।
चतुर्णामपि वक्त्राणां कपोलेषु विवर्जयेत् ॥९॥
केवलं तिलसंस्थानं नारीणामिष्यते मुखम् ।
अन्यास्येषु मुखं ज्ञात्वा यजमानो विनश्यति ॥१०॥

सशास्त्रेण मुखं कृत्वा वर्द्धते सह बान्धवैः ।
सर्वशास्त्रागमं कृत्वा अर्चानां कारयेद्बुधः ॥११॥
द्विगोलं शीर्षभागञ्च कृत्वाकारं प्रयोजयेत् ।
अङ्गुलार्द्धं द्विगोलञ्च ललाटं परिकीर्त्तितम् ॥१२॥
तिर्यक्त्वं च ललाटस्य नियतं पञ्चगोलकम् ।
द्विकलो द्वियवश्चैव नासिकायाम उच्यते ॥१३॥
द्वियवश्चाग्रविस्तारो निष्कामं सार्द्धमङ्गुलम् ।
द्व्यङ्गुलं पार्श्वयोरुर्द्धं नासावय (नासावंश) यवत्रयम् ॥१४॥
अर्द्धाङ्गुलिसमे वृत्ते वंशमूले यवद्वयम् ।
स्रोतसी त्रियवे स्यातां शङ्खाकृति सुशोभना ॥१५॥
इति मानसमायुक्ता जिह्वापिण्डी प्रशस्यते ।
तिलपुष्पसमाकाश-शुकश्येनमुखोपमा ॥१६॥
त्र्यङ्गुलं द्वियवं तस्या अधोभागं प्रचक्षते ।
षड्यवं भोजकं कुर्य्यादुत्तरोष्ठं चतुर्यवम् ॥१७॥
त्रिभागाङ्गुलिका कार्या गोजी तस्योपरि स्थिता ।
अप(ध)रं भोजकं तुल्यं विस्तारमङ्गुलद्वयम् ॥१८॥
निष्कासं षड्यवं मध्ये बिम्बरेखाञ्च कारयेत् ।
सृक्कणीं चाङ्गुलार्द्धेन किञ्चिन्निम्नान्तु कारयेत् ॥१९॥
द्व्यङ्गुलं चिबुकं तिर्यगायामेन यवा दश ।
अर्द्धाङ्गुलं भ्रुवोर्मध्ये दीर्घं पञ्चाङ्गुलं भवेत् ॥२०॥
यवार्द्धमाना भ्रूरेखा चापाकृतिरखण्डिता ।
द्व्यङ्गुलं द्वियवं नेत्रमायतन्तु त्रिभागतः ॥२१॥
लोचनस्य त्रयोभागं तथा तारं प्रकीर्त्तितम् ।
तस्य भागत्रयं कुर्य्यादसितं सम्प्रकीर्त्तितम् ॥२२॥
कुमुदोत्पलपत्राभं पद्मपत्रं व्यसो(क्षो)दरम् ।
अपाङ्गे हे कले श्वेते नेत्रमध्यञ्च द्व्यङ्गुलम् ॥२३॥
कर्णौ द्व्यङ्गुलविस्तारौ दीर्घन्तु चतुरङ्गुलम् ।
पृष्ठतः कर्णनिष्कासं द्व्यङ्गुलं परिकीर्त्तितम् ॥२४॥

त्रुटिका ह्यङ्गुलं सम्यक् तदर्धा कक्षुनी (?) भवेत् ।
अङ्गुलस्य चतुर्थांशः कर्णवर्त्या(कर्णावर्त)स्तु विस्तरः ॥२५॥
त्रियवं कर्णयोर्गुह्यं यथाशोभा च पार्ष्णिका ।
कर्तरीमूलसंस्थानं कर्णनालम्प्रकीर्त्तितम् ॥२६॥

कर्णयोरुभयोर्मध्ये मस्तकोऽष्टादशाङ्गुलः ।
चतुर्दशाङ्गुलं पृष्ठं ललाटस्य न संशयः ॥२७॥
भ्रूरेखा नेत्रयोर्मध्ये गोलकं परिकीर्त्तितम् ।
अष्टाङ्गुलं भवेन्मध्यं चिबुकाकर्णमूलयोः ॥२८॥

तथा चिबुकललाटञ्च कर्त्तव्यं नेत्रयोः समम् ।
कृकणौ तारकापार्श्वं समसूत्रेण मापयेत् ॥२९॥
भ्रूरेखा कर्णशीर्षञ्च समसूत्रेण ताड़येत् ।
त्रुटिका नेत्रमध्यञ्च तथैव समताड़नम् ॥३०॥

द्विगोलं मुखनिष्कासं ग्रीवायामस्तथैव च ।
स्कन्धमूलाच्छ्रुतेर्मूलं यावत्स्याद्गोलकत्रयम् ॥३१॥
चिबुकाधो यथाशोभं कर्तव्यं मांसवर्तनम् ।
तदालम्बप्रमाणेन गण्डिणी ह्रासयेन्मनाक् ॥३२॥

मौलिकोऽथ जटाबन्धः कुञ्चितो वा शिरोरुहः ।
किरीटी त्रिशिखञ्चैव मुकुटं खण्डमेव च ॥३३॥
तेषामष्टाङ्गुलं दीर्घं कर्तव्यं नाधिकं ततः ।
मुखाकारं प्रवक्ष्यामि शुभं वा यदि वाऽशुभम् ॥३४॥

किञ्चित्प्रहसितं कुर्य्यान्माधुर्यं लवणा(लक्षणा)न्वितम् ।
कषायं कटुकं क्रुद्धं आम्लं तिक्तकमेव च ॥३५॥
वक्त्रं वेद न संस्थानं दूरतः परिवर्जयेत् ।
अतःपरम्प्रवक्ष्यामि देहानाम् मानलक्षणम् ॥३६॥

द्विकातो नाभिपर्य्यन्तं द्विमुखं कारयेद्बुधः ।
नाभितो वृषणमूलं तिर्यक्पार्श्वौ स्फिचौ तथा ॥३७॥
द्विकाचुचुकयोर्मध्ये चुचुकान्तरमेव च ।
ग्रीवापार्श्वाङ्गुजशीर्षं तालमेकं प्रकीर्त्तितम् ॥३८॥

नाभिचुचुकयोर्मध्ये भागश्चतुर्दशाङ्गुलम् ।
समसूत्रश्च कर्त्तव्यं हिक्का चाङ्गा(चांसा)ग्रमेव च ।
अंसयोर्मध्यविस्तारस्त्रितालः समुदाहृतः ॥३८॥
कक्षं षडङ्गुलं कुर्यात्तथा कक्षस्तनान्तरम् ।
एकगोलप्रमाणश्च चूचुकापार्श्वमण्डलम् ॥४०॥
द्वियवं चूचुकं वृत्तं त्रियवं नाभिमण्डलम् ।
निम्ननाभिश्च कर्त्तव्या दक्षिणावर्तलाञ्छना ॥४१॥
त्रयङ्गुलौ वृषणौ स्यातां मेढ्रन्तु चतुरङ्गुलम् ।
स्फिचावष्टाङ्गुलादूर्ध्वं पीनवृत्तौ सुशोभनौ ॥४२॥
भुजायामं प्रशंसन्ति तज्ज्ञामुखं चतुष्टयम् ।
बाह्व चाष्टकलौ स्यातां प्रबाह्व नवगोलकौ ॥४३॥
त्रिगोलं करदीर्घन्तु तावती मध्यमाङ्गुलिः ।
कुर्याद्विगोलमङ्गुष्ठं तत्तुल्या च कनीयसी ॥४४॥
मध्यमाया नखार्द्धेन हीना चानामिकाङ्गुलिः ।
हीना नखेन विज्ञेया मध्यमस्य प्रदेशिनी ॥४५॥
अङ्गुष्ठस्य तु विस्तारं कल्पयेत्तु यवा नव ।
सार्द्धमष्टयवं तिर्यङ् मध्यमायाश्च योजयेत् ॥४६॥
उभौ चाष्टयवं कृत्वा समयवा कनीयसी ।
कनिष्ठामूलतो बन्धोः मणेः पञ्चाङ्गुलम्मतम् ॥४७॥
तत्प्रमाणेन जानीयात्तिर्यक्करतलस्य तु ।
अङ्गुष्ठमूलतो बन्धमणेर्यावद्विगोलकम् ॥४८॥
अङ्गुष्ठमूली(?मूलात्) तर्जन्या मूलं सार्द्धकलं कलेत् ।
अङ्ग्यस्तास्त्रिपर्वाः स्युर्द्विपर्वोऽङ्गुष्ठको भवेत् ॥४९॥
अङ्गुष्ठस्याङ्गुलीनाञ्च समपर्वो विधीयते ।
सुवर्तिताग्रसूक्ष्माश्च सुसन्धीश्च प्रयोजयेत् ॥५०॥
स्वाङ्गुलार्द्धं नखं तिर्यक् पर्वार्द्धदीर्घमेव च ।
मूलेऽर्द्धचन्द्रसंयुक्तं करजं कारयेद्बुधः ॥५१॥
पाणिं पञ्चाङ्गुलं कुर्य्यात्तत्पार्श्वमङ्गुलद्वयम् ।
पूर्णं करतलं कुर्य्याच्छुभरेखोपशोभितम् ॥५२॥

हस्तरेखां प्रवक्ष्यामि देवानां शुभलक्षणम् ।
शङ्खं पद्मं ध्वजं वज्रं चक्रं स्वस्तिककुण्डलम् ॥५३॥
कलशं शशिनक्षत्रं श्रीवत्साङ्कुशमेव च ।
त्रिशूलं यव(जप)मालाश्च कुर्वीत वसुधां तथा ॥५४॥
नाभिगुह्यकयोर्मध्ये नीरमूलं समं क्लेत् ।
द्विवितस्त्युरुदोर्घत्वं जङ्घादोर्घं मुखद्वयम् ॥५५॥
जानुनो द्विकलौ स्यातां गुल्फावेककलौ स्मृतौ ।
द्विकलौ पार्ष्णिकौ श्रेयौ पक्वबिम्बफलाकृति ॥५६॥
अंघ्रः (अंघ्रि) सप्ताङ्गुलं तिर्यगायामेन दशाङ्गुलम् ।
चतुर्भागेन पादस्याङ्गुष्ठायामं विधीयते ॥५७॥
तत्समा सूचिका हीना मध्यमा द्वियवेन तु ।
अनामिकानखार्द्धेन हीना पर्वा कनीयसी ॥५८॥
अङ्गुष्ठस्य तु विस्तार एकादश यवा स्मृताः ।
मध्यङ्गुष्ठकयोरग्रे चान्तर (ं) त्रियवं भवेत् ॥५९॥
मध्य(चौ) नवयवा तिर्यक् साद्वा(र्द्धा)ष्टयवमध्यमा ।
अनामाष्टयवा तिर्यक्कीर्त्यते मानलक्षणे ॥६०॥
बालचूतकसंस्थाना अङ्गुल्यः परिकीर्त्तिताः ।
कूर्मपृष्ठसमाकारं पादस्योपरि कारयेत् ॥६१॥
जलूकपदसंस्थाना अङ्गुल्यः परिकीर्त्तिताः ।
पादौ समतलौ कार्य्यौ शुभ्राकारा नखाः स्मृताः ॥६२॥
अतःपरं प्रवक्ष्यामि परिणाहस्य लक्षणम् ।
षट्त्रिंशदङ्गुलं श्रेयं शिरसः परिमण्डलम् ।
ग्रीवाष्टाङ्गुलिविस्तारत्रिगुणं परिमण्डलम् ॥६३॥
कक्षयोर्मध्यविस्तारो विंशत्यङ्गुलिरत्र तु ।
जनविंशतिकलं कुर्यात्परिणाहेन बुद्धिमान् ॥६४॥
भुजयोर्मूलमध्याग्रमष्टषट्चतुरङ्गुलम् ।
स्वविस्तारप्रमाणेन मण्डलं त्रिगुणं भवेत् ॥६५॥
कुचेच मध्यविस्तारो श्रेयः पञ्चदशाङ्गुलः ।
षोड़शाङ्गुलिरस्याधः कटिरष्टादशाङ्गुलिः ॥६६॥

षड्गोलमुरुमूले च जङ्घामूले षडङ्गुलिः ।
जङ्घान्ते द्विकलं विन्द्याद्विस्तारत्वेन पण्डित: ॥६७॥
एतेषामेव सर्वेषां मण्डलं त्रिगुणं भवेत् ।
तथाङ्गुलीनां सर्वेषां ह्रस्वत्वं यत्र विद्यते ॥६८॥

पृष्ठत: श्रोणिनिष्कासं कलमेकं प्रकीर्त्तितम् ।
पृष्ठं (पृष्ठ) वंशं समं कुर्य्यात् स्फिचौ तुल्यावलम्बिनौ ॥६९॥
उरू च पिण्डिका पार्ष्णि: कुर्य्यात्तु ल्यावलम्बिन: ।
पृष्ठस्य लक्षणं विन्द्यादेतत् संक्षेपतो द्विज: ॥७०॥

मुक्ताहारादिरसना कटककेयूरकुण्डलम् ।
वस्त्रग्राटकविन्यासं शरीरस्यच्च कारयेत् ॥७१॥
अथार्चानां गुणो दोषश्चोच्यतेऽधिकहीनत: ।
दीर्घविस्तारसंयुक्तं दद्यात्स्थानन्तु सुस्थिरम् ॥७२॥

शिरश्छत्रसमं कार्यं धनधान्यसमृद्धिदम् ।
सुभ्रूरेखा ललाटे च शाश्वती ददत: (ददाति) श्रियम् ॥७३॥
सुकृता सा भवेदर्चा जायते ससुखा: प्रजा: ।
कक्षुग्रीवा भवेदर्चा सर्वसिद्धिकरी सदा ॥७४॥

शरीरं सिंहसंस्थानं सुभिक्षं बलवर्द्धनम् ।
भुजौ करिकराकारौ सर्वकामार्थसाधकौ ॥७५॥
ग्रस्यसम्पत्करं नित्यं सूदरच्च सुभिक्षकृत् ।
रम्भोरुछागगोवृद्धिर्ग्रामवृद्धि सुपिण्डिका ॥७६॥

सुपादा च भवेदर्चा श्रीलविद्या प्रसाधका ।
हृत्यर्चानां प्रशंसोक्ता हीनदोषमथाह च ॥७७॥
दुर्भिक्षो राष्ट्रभङ्ग: स्याद्धीना विस्तारदीर्घयो: ।
देहहीना भवेत् कुक्षौ नासाहीना च रौगिक: ॥७८॥
वामदृष्टिर्यशोनाशमूर्द्धदृष्टिर्धनक्षयम् ।
अल्पाक्षी मण्डलाक्षी च केकराक्षी तथैव च ॥७९॥
हीनदृष्टिरधोदृष्टिर्दूरत: परिवर्जयेत् ।
निष्कुक्षि भवेदर्चा ग्रस्यवाग्यं सदा भवेत् ॥८०॥

उत्तहीना भवेदर्चा गर्भः पतति शाश्वतः ।
त्रयो ह्रस्वा महादोषा नासिका मेढ्रमङ्गुलिः ॥८१॥
त्रयोदीर्घ(ा) महादोषा जङ्घाग्रीवाचिबुस्तथा ।
त्रयः सूक्ष्मा महादोषाः शिरः कर्णौ च नासिका ॥८२॥
त्रयः स्थूला महादोषा सन्धिकुक्षिनखस्तथा ।
त्रयो निम्ना महादोषा हस्तौ पादौ च लोचनौ ॥८३॥
त्रयो ह्रस्वा महादोषा ग्रीवासो (ग्रीवांस)भुज एव च ।
इति दोषगुणं ज्ञात्वा कर्तव्यार्चा विपश्चिता ॥८४॥
नवतालल्लक्षणायामपरिणाहा च द्वौ समौ संप्रकीर्त्तिताः ।.
नवव्यक्तो ध्रुवं देव अष्टाद्वा देवमानुषाः ।
मनुष्यमष्टतालञ्च जनन्या चार्द्धसम्मम् ॥८५॥
मुखं षट्सप्ततालानाम्परिणाहसमुच्छ्रयम् ।
कीर्त्तितञ्च यथान्यायमाद्येयलक्षणनिर्मितमिति ॥८६॥
दीर्घ(ं) चाष्टमुखं कृत्वा (कुर्यात्) देवीनां लक्षणं बुधः ।
मुखं षट्कलं कृत्वा (मुखं च षट्कलं कुर्यात्)
देहं चैकादशाकला ॥८७॥
त्रयो ग्रीवस्तथैव अङ्गे चुचुमुखान्तरौ
(तिर्यग् ग्रीवा स्तनश्चैव अङ्गं चुचुमुखान्तरम्)
सर्वैते मुखमर्द्धं च देवीनाञ्च विधीयते ॥८८॥
मध्यञ्चाष्टाङ्गुलं कृत्वा (कुर्यात्) श्रोणी पञ्चकला स्मृता ।
कटी विंशाङ्गुलं कुर्यादुरू चैकादशी कली ॥८९॥
जानुनो त्र्याङ्गुलौ चैव पिण्डीका विंशदङ्गुला ।
गुल्फं च द्व्यङ्गुलं कुर्याद्देवीनां लक्षणं शुभम् ॥९०॥
कृत्वा (कुर्यात्) त्रिंशाङ्गुलञ्चैव शिरसि परिमण्डलम् ।
पञ्चाङ्गुलं भुजौ मूलं त्रिगुणं मण्डलं भवेत् ॥९१॥
त्र्याङ्गुलं मणिबन्धञ्च मण्डलं स्यात् तथैव च ।
जठरमध्यकला षड्भिस्त्रिगुणं परिमण्डलम् ॥९२॥
मध्ये पञ्चाङ्गुलं जङ्घामण्डलं त्रिगुणं भवेत् ।
सर्वत्र त्रिगुणं कार्यमङ्गुलीनां तथैव च ॥९३॥

अथाङ्गलोचनश्चैव स्तनौ तु कटिरेव च ।
दैर्घ्यमानाधिकं कुर्यादेतद्दृष्टिसुखं भवेत् ॥९४॥
इति देवीलक्षणमष्टतालम् ।
अथातः सम्प्रवक्ष्यामि बालानां मानलक्षणम् ।
षड्गुणं बालरूपोणं (पिणः) सेनापत्यश्च षड्गुणम्
(सेनापतेश्च लक्षणम्) ॥९५॥

विनायकानां यक्षाणां प्रतिमालक्षणं शुभम् ।
गोलकं मूर्द्धि विज्ञेया मुखं षड्गोलकस्य तु ॥९६॥
ग्रीवां द्व्याङ्गुलां कुर्वीत देहे (हं) विंशाङ्गुलं भवेत् ।
अर्द्धगोलकला नाभ्यां खनित्रमङ्गुलं तथा ।९७॥
उरू सप्तकला कुर्याज्जानुनी गोलकं तथा ।
पिण्डोकं षट्कलं कुर्यादङ्गुलफलिकाङ्गुलं स्मृतम् ॥९८॥
पार्ष्णीकं त्र्याङ्गुलश्चैव यथावदनुपूर्वशः ।
पादौ पञ्चकलं दीर्घमङ्गुष्ठगोलकं ततः ॥९९॥
सूच्यङ्गुष्ठसमा कुर्यात्तोनद्वियवमध्यमा ।
नखहीनमनामस्तु पर्वहीना कनीयसी ॥१००॥

अष्टाङ्गुलेन द्विकाकासो (द्विकांस)बाहू चैव नवाङ्गुलम् ।
प्रबाहुः पञ्चगोलश्च करदोर्घं द्विगोलकम् ॥१०१॥
मध्यमाङ्गुल (ं) द्वौ (द्वि)गोलं नखहीना प्रदेशिनी ।
मध्यपर्वनखाहीनं (मध्यमार्द्धनखहीना) कार्येत्तदनामिका ।
अनामिका पर्वहीना दोर्घाङ्गुष्ठकनीयसा ॥१०२॥

अथातः सम्प्रवक्ष्यामि विस्तारेण कलानि च ।
द्विकलार्द्धं भवेन्मूर्द्धि त्रिगुणं परिमण्डलम् ॥१०३॥
षट्कलं मुखमध्ये च कर्णनासाग्रमेव च ।
त्रिकलं ग्रीवामध्ये च कुक्षौ तु षोडशाङ्गुलम् ॥१०४॥
मध्ये षड्गोलकायस्य (कायस्य षड्गोलं)
कटिश्च सप्तगोलकम् ।
उरुमध्ये चतुर्गोलं जानुद्विकलषड्यव(म्) ॥१०५॥

मध्यमं चाङ्गुलं (मध्ये पञ्चाङ्गुलं) जङ्घा गुल्फं त्र्यङ्गुलमेव च ।
द्विकलार्द्धाङ्गुलं पादौ विस्तारेण प्रकीर्त्तितम् ॥१०६॥
नवयवाङ्गुष्ठकञ्चैव अन्तरं त्रियवं स्मृतम् ।
यवाष्टसूचिकं कुर्याद् यवसप्त च मध्यमम् ॥१०७॥
यङ्यवानामिकात्यस्य (कार्या ?) यवपञ्च कनोयसी ।
एवं कारयते विद्वान् पादाङ्गुलसुशोभनम् ॥१०८॥
त्र्यङ्गुलञ्च तथा पार्ष्णिर्विस्तरेण प्रकीर्त्तिता ।
[अष्ट वाङ्गुष्ठका चैव न(य)वसप्तञ्च मध्यमा ॥१०८॥]
आत्रेयतिलके षड्लक्षणः ॥

अतःपरम्प्रवक्ष्यामि दशतालस्य लक्षणम् ।
ब्राह्मन (ब्रह्मणः) चर्चिकादेवी(व्याः) ऋषीणां
ब्रह्मराक्षसाः (?साम्) ॥११०॥
दिव्यानां चैव बुद्धानां कारयेत्प्रतिमा(मां) शुभाम् ।
एतेषां कारयेद्विद्वान्नन्ये(न्ये)षां नैव कारयेत् ॥१११॥
द्विगोलकं भवेच्छ्रि(च्छी)र्षं मुखषड्गोलकमेव च
(मुखं षड्गोलमेव च) ।
ग्रीवा (') द्विगोलकं कुर्याद्देहं षड्विंशमङ्गुलम् ॥११२॥
नितम्बं द्विकलं विद्धि कटि पञ्चकलं भवेत् ।
षड्विंशाङ्गुलकमूरू जानू पञ्चाङ्गुलौ स्मृतौ ॥११३॥
षड्विंशाङ्गुलकौ जङ्घौ गुल्फौ त्र्यङ्गुलकौ स्मृतौ ।
अधोभागाः(गः) प्रकर्त्तव्याः(व्यः) पञ्चाङ्गुलसुसम्मिता(ः) ॥११४॥
वाहुभागाः(गः) प्रकर्त्तव्या(व्यः) अष्टगोलकमेव च ।
दशगोलक विज्ञेया प्रवाहुक विपश्चिता ॥११५॥
करपल्लवभागञ्च षट्कलन्तु विजानतु ।
एतेषां चैव मानानां कर्त्तव्यं शास्त्रचिन्तकैः ॥११६॥
आत्रेयतिलके दशतालल्लक्षणम् ॥०॥

अथातः सम्प्रवक्ष्यामि सप्ततालस्य लक्षणम् ।
शिरस्त्र्यङ्गुलविज्ञेयं मुखं षट्कलमेव च ॥११७॥
ग्रीवा त्र्यङ्गुलविज्ञेया कम्बुग्रीवञ्च कारयेत् ।
जानविंशाङ्गुलं देव(हं)मानहस्तसुशोभितम् ॥११८॥

एकाङ्गुलि नितम्बञ्च गोलकं कटिदेशत(क)म् ।
जानविंशाङ्गलमूरु जानु त्रयङ्गलमेव च ॥११९॥
जानविंशाङ्गलं जङ्घा(ङ्घा) गुल्फमेकाङ्गलम्मतम् ।
द्वयङ्गुलञ्च अधोभागम्प्रतिमा सप्ततालकम् ॥१२०॥
अष्टाङ्गलं प्रकर्त्तव्यं ग्रिवा चांसाग्रमेव च ।
बाहु अङ्गुलिर्विज्ञेया एकतालं प्रकीर्त्तितम् ॥१२१॥
प्रबाहु सप्तगोलञ्च कर्तव्यं मुनिसत्तमैः ।
करपल्लवभागञ्च अष्टाङ्गुल (') प्रकीर्त्तितम् ॥
मानुषस्य प्रमाणन्तु कर्तव्यं शास्त्रचिन्तकैः ॥१२२॥

आत्रेयतिलके सप्ततालल्लक्षणम् ॥०॥

अथातः सम्प्रवक्ष्यामि चतुस्तालस्य लक्षणम् ।
एकाङ्गलि शिरः कुर्यान्मुखं द्वादशमङ्गलम् ॥१२३॥
ग्रीवा एकाङ्गलं विद्धि देह द्वादशमङ्गुलम् ।
अर्द्धाङ्गुलं नितम्बञ्च कटिमेकाङ्गलम्मतम् ॥१२४॥
नवाङ्गुलं भवेदुरुर्जानु एकाङ्गलं स्मृतम् ।
जङ्घा नवाङ्गुला ज्ञेया गुल्फमर्द्धाङ्गुलं भवेत् ॥१२५॥
अधोभागाः प्रकर्त्तव्या एकाङ्गला प्रकीर्तिता
चतुष्कालञ्च विज्ञेया ग्रिवा चांसाग्रमेव च ॥१२६॥
बाहु त्रिगोलकं चैव प्रबाहु अष्टमङ्गुलम् ।
सप्ताङ्गलस्तृतं ज्ञेयमुच्छ्रितं (सप्ताङ्गलन्तु विज्ञेयमुच्छ्रितं)
करपल्लवम् ॥१२७॥

यथाशोभेन विज्ञेया कर्तव्या मांसवर्तनम् ।
शास्त्रस्य प्रमाणन्तु कथितं मुनिसत्तमैः ॥१२८॥

आत्रेयतिलके चतुस्तालस्य लक्षणम् ॥०॥

मध्यप्रतिम(ा)विन्यासं प्रवक्ष्याम्यधुना शृणु ।
दशपञ्चाधिकैर्हस्तैः प्रतिमा व(क)थ्यसौ स्मृताः ॥१२९॥
द्विगुणा मध्यमा ज्ञेया ज्येष्ठा तु त्रिगुणाः स्मृताः ।
अतःपरञ्च कुर्वीत यदीच्छेच्छ्रेयमात्मनः ॥१३०॥

दग्धा जीर्णा च भग्ना च स्फुटिता चापि देवता ।
स्थिता वा स्थाप्यमाना वा सदा दोषकरा भवेत् ॥१३१॥
दग्धामर्चां अनादृष्टिर्जीर्णामर्चां धनक्षयम् ।
भग्नामर्चां कुले नाशं स्फुटितां युद्धमादिशेत् ॥१३२॥
अर्चां वा यदि वा लिङ्गं देवी मातृगणस्तथा ।
शीघ्रमुत्पाटयेदेव विधिदृष्टेन कर्मणा ॥१३३॥
पुष्पार्घञ्च तथा धूपं नैवेद्यबलिमेव च ।
दत्त्वा च वाससी चैव होमकर्मसमन्वितः ॥१३४॥
विप्र(घ्न)ाग्न्युदकं चैव वेदमन्त्रेण कारयेत् ।
बालरज्जुस्तथा मौञ्जो दुकूलश्चोमकस्तथा ॥१३५॥
विधिरेव समुद्दिष्टो रज्जुश्चात्र विधीयते ।
वृषस्य ककुदि बद्ध्वा आकर्षेज्जीर्णदेवताम् ॥१३६॥
शै(शि)ली(ला)मयी भवेदर्चा तीर्थे वह्नदकेषु च ।
नदीसङ्गमसंस्थाने तस्मिंश्चैव तु निक्षिपेत् ॥१३७॥
सौवर्णी(र्णी) रजतं (राजती) चैव ताम्रं (ताम्री)
चैत्यमयीमपि (रौतिमयीरपि)
द्रावयेदग्निना सर्वं(र्वां) यदीच्छेच्छ्रेयमात्मनि ॥१३८॥
दारुमयी भवेदर्चा नववस्त्रेण वेष्टयेत् ।
घृतेन मधुना स्निग्धं(ग्धां) दीप्तमग्नौ प्रदापयेत् ॥१३९॥
पार्थिवी च भवेदर्चा यदि स्यान्मृण्मयीमपि ।
भू खनित्वा शिरोमात्रं न्यसेत्तस्मिन् प्रपूरयेत् ।१४०॥
अर्चां वा यदि वा लिङ्गं पुनः शीघ्रन्तु स्थापयेत् ।
सर्वलक्षणसम्पन्ना विधिदृष्टेन स्थापयेत् ॥१४१॥
द्विज...नां (द्विजानां बालवृद्धानां) मानुषाणां शुभाय च ।
राजा जयमवाप्नोति शस्यवृद्धिकरं भवेत् ॥१४२॥
जीर्णोद्धारणमर्चानां कृतं येन महात्मना ।
युगकोटिशतसाहस्रं (युगकोटिसहस्राणि)
देवलोके महीयते ॥१४३॥*॥

आत्रेयतिलके जीर्णोद्धारः समाप्तः ॥०॥

नवतालस्येकत्वेनाङ्गुलि १०८ शिरोऽङ्गुलि ४ मुखाङ्गुलि १२ ग्रीवाङ्गुलि ४ देहाङ्गुलि २४ नितम्बाङ्गुलि २ कट्यङ्गुलि ४ उर्वङ्गुलि २४ जान्वङ्गुलि ४ पिण्डयङ्गुलि २४ गुल्फाङ्गुलि २ अधोभागाङ्गुलि ४ शिक्कांसाग्राङ्गुलि १७ बाहुभागाङ्गुलि १६ प्रबाहुङ्गुलि १८ करभागाङ्गुलि १२ यवभागपरिसंख्या एकत्वेन ८६४ ॥०॥

अष्टतालस्येकत्वेनाङ्गुलि ८६ शिरोऽङ्गुलि २ मुखाङ्गुलि १२ ग्रीवाङ्गुलि २ देहाङ्गुलि २२ नितम्बाङ्गुलि १ कट्यङ्गुलि २ उर्वङ्गुलि २२ जान्वङ्गुलि २ पिण्डयङ्गुलि २२ गुल्फाङ्गुलि १ अधोभागाङ्गुलि २ शिक्कांसाग्राङ्गुलि ८ बाहुङ्गुलि १४ कराङ्गुलि १२ एकत्वेन यवसंख्या ७६८॥०॥

षट्तालस्य एकत्वेनाङ्गुलि ७२ शिरोऽङ्गुलि २ मुखाङ्गुलि १२ ग्रीवाङ्गुलि २ देहाङ्गुलि १६ नितम्बाङ्गुलि १ कट्यङ्गुलि २ उर्वङ्गुलि १६ जान्वङ्गुलि २ पिण्डयङ्गुलि १६ गुल्फाङ्गुलि १ अधोभागाङ्गुलि २ शिक्कांसाग्राङ्गुलि १४ (८) बाहुङ्गुलि १० प्रबाहुङ्गुलि १२ करपल्लवाङ्गुलि ८ एकत्वेन यवसंख्या ५७६॥०॥

दशतालस्य एकत्वेनाङ्गुलि १२० शिरोऽङ्गुलि ४ मुखाङ्गुलि १२ ग्रीवाङ्गुलि ४ देहाङ्गुलि २६ नितम्बाङ्गुलि ४ कट्यङ्गुलि ५ उर्वङ्गुलि २ जान्वङ्गुलि ५ जङ्घाङ्गुलि २६ गुल्फाङ्गुलि ३ अधोभागाङ्गुलि ५ शिक्कांसाग्राङ्गुलि १६ बाहुङ्गुलि १८ प्रबाहुङ्गुलि १६ (२०) करपल्लवाङ्गुलि १२ एकत्वेन यवसंख्या ८६०॥०॥

सप्ततालस्येकत्वेनाङ्गुलि ८४ शिरोऽङ्गुलि ३ मुखाङ्गुलि १२ ग्रीवाङ्गुलि ३ देहाङ्गुलि १८ नितम्बाङ्गुलि १ कट्यङ्गुलि २ उर्वङ्गुलि १८ जान्वङ्गुलि ३ पिण्डयङ्गुलि १८ गुल्फाङ्गुलि १ अधोभागाङ्गुलि २ शिक्कांसाग्राङ्गुलि ५ बाहुङ्गुलि १२ प्रबाहुङ्गुलि १४ करपल्लवाङ्गुलि १० एकत्वेन यवसंख्या ६७२॥०॥

चतुस्तालस्येकत्वेनाङ्गुलि ४८ शिरोऽङ्गुलि १ मुखाङ्गुलि १२ ग्रीवाङ्गुलि १ देहाङ्गुलि १२ नितम्बाङ्गुलि × कटि १ उरु ८ जानु १ पिण्डि ८ गुल्फ × पार्ष्णि २ शिक्कांसाग्र ८ बाहु ६ करपल्लव ७ एकत्वेन यवसंख्या ३८८॥०॥

परञ्च ॥ विधुचापसरस्यैव वक्ष्यिवेदगुणस्तथा। न्यूनाधिकं यथा कुर्याच्च-वरास सुपालहा (?) ॥०॥

प्राचीनताड़पत्र-पुस्तकादुद्धृतमिदम् ॥

PRATIMĀMĀNALAKṢAṆAM [1]

(Translation with Notes)

Adoration to Buddha.

1-2: Whatever characteristic signs about the measurements of images (details) have been recounted by the ancient sages in the *Ātreya-tilaka* and other old Buddhistic śāstras [2]—after collecting them all together and piling (arranging) them in order and after bowing down to the all-knowing god, [3] the characteristic signs about images are being narrated (by me).

[1] According to P. Bose, this text is described in the Tibetan version in two ways, *viz.*, (1) *Pratimāmānalakṣaṇam* by the sage Ātreya, and (2) *Ātreya-tilaka*, while the Sanskrit original suggests three different names, *viz.*, (1) *Devīlakṣaṇam*, (2) *Ātreyalakṣaṇam*, and (3) *Ātreyatilaka* (P. Bose, *Pratimāmānalakṣaṇam*, Introduction, P. V). But *Devīlakṣaṇam* can on no account be taken as a name of the text; as our text puts (just after verse 94)—*iti devīlakṣaṇam aṣṭatālam*, which can only mean that the devī icons are eight *tāla* in measurement. The section on *aṣṭatāla* in Bose's text (v. 88—v. 87 in our text) contains a distinct reference to this feature of the devī images—*Dīrgham cāṣṭamukham kuryāt devīnām lakṣaṇam budhaḥ.*

[2] This text is thus based on *Ātreya-tilaka* and other old Buddhistic texts (or the first line may also be translated as 'in the Buddhist text *Ātreya-tilaka* and other old texts'). But this does not mean that the canons are applicable to Buddhist images only; they are presumably of general application, though these are collected here by a Buddhist. Reference to the old sages is interesting; compare my observations in Chapter I, pp. 14-16. Atri is one of the 18 Vāstuśāstropadeśakas.

[3] *Sarvavidaṃ* meaning the all-knowing (*Sarvajña*, *Samyaksambuddha*) Buddha is a much better reading than Bose's *sarvamidam*.

3: Twelve *aṅgulas* make one *tāla*[1] known also as *vitasti* and *mukha*, while two *aṅgulas* make one *golaka*, known also as *kalā*.

4-5: The fourth part of the *pallava*[2] is known as the measuring *aṅguli*[3]; an expert should know that a *yava* is the eighth part of the *aṅgula*; this (the latter) is meant for the measurement of the different limbs of the images. One who knows should measure an image according to this rule.

6: After dividing the height of whichever the object (out of which the image is to be made[4] into nine (equal) parts, the face (of the image) should be made one *tāla* (*i.e.*, one of the nine parts) in length and its width should also be the same.

7-9: Faces (of the images) are (differently) shaped,—some like the letter *va*, others like a mango, others again like the egg of a bird and (a fourth type) like the sesamum (seed); that (type of face) which is less by 1½ *aṅgulas* is known as the *va*-shaped, that face which is less by 2 *aṅgulas* is of the shape of a mango, (a third variety) which is less by 2½ *aṅgulas* is called a bird-egg in appearance, while (the type) in which three *aṅgulas* are left out is named *sesamum*-shaped; in these four (varieties of) faces, the (above reductions) should be shunned in the cheeks (*i.e.*, the length of the faces should only be reduced, not their width).[5]

[1] *Aṅgula* and *tāla* have been fully explained by me in Chapter VIII.

[2] *Pallava* is *karapallava*; here it means the section of the hand just a little above the place where the fingers shoot out from the palm.

[3] It is a relative unit (*mātrāṅgula*); though there is no explicit reference to the owner of the *pallava*, it appears that the palm of the image is meant here.

[4] The passage—*Yatkiñcidrūpakāyāmaṁ* which has been translated as above reminds one of Utpala's passage—*Yasmāt kāṣṭhāt pāṣāṇādikādvā pratimā kriyate taddairghyam*, etc., fully explained by me in Chapter VIII.

[5] Reference to the four types of faces is interesting. It is clear that this comparison is based on the outline view of faces; if the above reductions are made in the length of their various types, they appear in outline like the four different objects. *Va* is the old

10: Faces of female (figures) only should be of the sesamum (seed) variety. The head of the family dies, if the face (of the image) is not made according to the śāstric injunctions.

11: If the face is made according to the śāstric injunctions, (the donor of the image) prospers with his friends. A sage should make (the face of) images, after acquiring proficiency in all the *śāstras*.[1]

12: The head should be made 4 *aṅgulas* (a *gola* = 2 *aṅgulas*) and should be shaped as an umbrella.[2] The forehead is said to measure 4½ *aṅgulas*.[3]

Bengali *va*, shaped like an equilateral triangle, here seen in an inverted position—its base corresponding to the forehead and its apex to the chin. In Tantric texts, the letter is sometimes compared with the female organ. A. N. Tagore refers to two types of faces, one having the form of a hen's egg (*kukkuṭāṇḍa*) and the other suggesting a '*pān* (betel leaf)'; the former is the *khagāṇḍābha* variety of our text and the latter closely conforms to the *tilākṛti* of the same (the outline of the sesamum seed being the same as that of the betel leaf—the sesamum flower is likened in Bengali poems to a well-shaped nose—*tilphul-jini-nāsā*). Tagore remarks, 'It is for this reason probably (a certain well defined fixity of form in the different specimens of the lower animals and plant organism), that our great teachers have described the shapes of human limbs and organs not by comparison with those of other men but always in terms of flowers or birds or some other plant or animal features' (*Some Notes on Indian Artistic Anatomy*, p. 7, fig. 6). These four types of faces differ evidently from those in which the length and the breadth are the same.

[1] There is same mistake in the last line of the couplet. If the reading in our text is correct, then it is practically a repetition of the same idea. Bose's emendation of this line—*Evaṃ śāstrāgamaṃ kṛtvā arccāṃ tāṃ kārayedbudhaḥ*—is also not very happy.

[2] This characteristic shape of the head is one of the *Mahāpuruṣa-lakṣaṇas*. The *Mahābhārata* describes the great gods Nara and Nārāyaṇa as characterised by such heads (XII, 343, 38—*Ātapatreṇa sadṛśe śirasi devayostayoḥ. | Evaṃ lakṣaṇasampannau mahāpuruṣa-saṃjñitau*). Varāhamihira describes the heads of Cakravarttins as resembling the shape of an umbrella (*Bṛ. Saṃ.*, ch. 67, v. 79—*Chatrā-kāraiḥ śirobhiravanīśāḥ*).

[3] In most other texts the forehead is said to measure 4 *aṅgulas*.

13-15: The curvature (sidewise) of the forehead is always 10 *aṅgulas*. The length of the nose is said to be 4¼ *aṅgulas*; its width at the top is ¼ *aṅgula* (two *yavas*) and its projection[1] is 1½ *aṅgulas*. The height of the two sides (of the nose) is 2 *aṅgulas*, and the nasal septum is 3 *yavas* (in width); and the circular (orifices of the nose) are equal, measuring ½ an *aṅgula* each (in diameter), while the root of the nasal septum is 2 *yavas*; the outer surfaces of the nasal orifices (*i.e.*, the outside of the nostrils) is 3 *yavas* each and are conch-shell-like in appearance.

16-19: The mouth[2] with the following measurements is praiseworthy. (The nose) is similar to the sesamum flower and it can also be compared to the face of either a parrot or a falcon.[3] The lower portion of it (the face and not the mouth) is said to be 3 *aṅgulas* and 2 *yavas*,[4] while the mouth proper[5]

[1] *Āyāma* does not mean height in this context, but length, which is ¼ *aṅgula* more than that laid down in many other texts. *Niṣkāsa* has been several times used in our texts; it was not translated by Bose. It no doubt means the mean projection of the nose from the facial surface.

[2] The curious word used in the text is *jihvāpiṇḍī*. *Piṇḍī* means base or the place of rest. Bose says that in the Tibetan version the line appears as—*Iti mānaṃ samyagjñānena jihvāgāre praśasyate*. Thus, this word may justifiably be translated as 'mouth' (Bose also has done so).

[3] This line is out of place here. The mouth cannot be compared to a sesamum flower or the face of a parrot or a falcon. It appears that arrangement of the two lines in the couplet is reversed due to the copyist's error and according to this suggestion of mine this line can very well go along with the preceding ones in which the different sections of the nose are described. The other line introduces the description of the mouth and its various parts. Bose could not render the word *samākāśa*; it is evidently a long form of *saṃkāśa* meaning similar.

[4] Bose's reading gives 1 *aṅgula* and 2 *yavas*.

[5] *Bhojaka*; Bose emends it into *Oṣṭhaka* and translates it as upper lip, rendering the next *caraṇa* (*uttaroṣṭhaṃ caturyavam*) as 'the lower lip is four *yavas*.' This is evidently incorrect. '*Adhara*' (lower lip) is mentioned below.

should be made 6 *yavas* (in width), the upper lip being 4 *yavas*; the *goji* (the short vertical dimple between the centre of the upper lip and the nasal septum) placed above it should be made 3 parts of an *aṅgula* (*i.e.*, 6 *yavas*).[1] The lower lip should be like the mouth proper (in height or thickness, *i.e.*, 6 *yavas*), its width being 2 *aṅgulas*; a line (red, like) the *bimba* fruit should be made 6 *yavas*, in the middle or parting (of the two lips). The sides of the mouth (*sṛkkaṇī*) should be made a little drooping, (measuring) ½ an *aṅgula* each.

20-23: The chin should be 2 *aṅ.* sidewise and 10 *yavas* long (*i.e.*, high)[2]. (A space) of half an *aṅgula* should be between the two eye-brows, their length should be 5 *aṅ.* (each); the unbroken and bow-shaped line of the eye-brow should measure ½ a *yava* (in width)[3]. The eye should be 2 *aṅ.* 2 *yavas* (in length), its width being just 3 parts of it.[4] Then the pupil is said to be ⅓ part of the eye; it is well-known that 3 parts of the former should be made black. The inside of the eyes should be of the tinge of the leaves of the water-lily and lotus and (should be shaped) like the belly of a fish; the outer corners of the eyes should be known as 2 *kalas* (?) and their inside 2 *aṅgulas*.[5]

[1] Bose reads the first line of v. 18 as *Tribhāgāṅgulikā kāryā oṣṭhakasyoparisthitā*. But our reading is much better and the line is exactly the same as the last line in verse 8 of the other iconometric text, *Pratimālakṣaṇam* edited by me (*cf.* p. 11).

[2] Bose renders the line as 'the chin should be 2 *aṅ.* broad and 10 *aṅ.* long'; but the translation given above seems to be better in keeping with the text.

[3] Bose reads *cāyākṛti* in place of *cāpākṛti* (clear in our text), and thus cannot translate the passage correctly.

[4] Bose says that 'the eye is the three-fourth part of the eye-brow,' which is incorrect for 2 *aṅ.* and 2 *yavas* cannot be regarded as three-fourth of 5 *aṅgulas*.

[5] There seems to be some mistake here in the text. *Jyasodaram* is meaningless. Bose's emendation of the second *caraṇa* as *padmapatrasya sodare* is unsupportable. The *Kriyāsamuccaya* refers to the different measurements of the eyes of 3 types of divinities,

24-26: The ears are 2 *aṅ.* broad and 4 *aṅ.* long; the projection of the ears from the back is said to be 2 *aṅ.* The *truṭikā* (lobe of the ear ?)[1] should be full 2 *aṅ.* and *kakuni* should be its half;[2] the raised little ridge between the temple and the earhole (*karṇāvarta*) is one-fourth part of an *aṅgula*.[3] The hole of the ear is 3 *yavas* (in diameter) and the sides (*pārṣṇikā*—? *pārśvikā*) are as beautiful; the ear-canal is said to be similar to the handle of a small chopper (?).[4]

27-31: The (section of the) head between the two ears is 18 *aṅ.*; there is no doubt that the back of the forehead is 14 *aṅ.* (The space) between the line of the eye-brow and the eye is 1 *golaka* (*i.e.*, 2 *aṅ.*); (The space) between the chin and the root of the ear is 8 *aṅ.* Then, the chin and the forehead are parallel to the eyes, and the sides of the mouth should be measured in the same line with the side of the pupil; the line of the eye-brow and the *karṇa-sūtra* should also fall in the same

viz., the Buddhas, the Bodhisattvas and the Goddesses; the shape of the eyes of the last, according to it, should be like the belly of a fish (*sarvāsāṃ śṛṅgārastrīṇām aṣṭādaśayavāyāme triyavavistārān-matsyodarākāram*). *Jhaṣodaram* which means the belly of a fish, seems to be the correct reading.

[1] *Truṭikā* I have tentatively translated as ear-lobe, it is 2 *aṅ.* long; but in the case of the images of Buddha it is as long as 4 *aṅ.* (cf. *Pratimālakṣaṇam*, verse 20).

[2] *Kakuni* in our text is meaningless. Bose reads it as *kakudā*, but his reading of the major part of the line is faulty. He reads *Truṭikā dvyaṅgulaṃ sampattadarddhā kakudā bhavet*—which has very little sense in it.

[3] My emendation of this line is based on the *Kriyāsamuccaya* commentary on the 18th verse (2nd line) of the *Pratimālakṣaṇam*, which reads—*Aṅgulasya caturthāṃśaḥ karṇāvartastu vistaraḥ*. The commentary explains the word *karṇāvarta* as *kapolakarṇachidrayor-madhye karṇāvartaḥ kalikākāro dviyavaḥ* (2 *yavas* = ½ *aṅ.*). Thus my emendation *karṇāvartastu* is far more acceptable than Bose's *karṇapālyastu* which he translates as 'the circle of the ear,' whatever he may mean by it.

[4] This line, especially its first half, is certainly faulty. I am not at all sure about my rendering.

line. The *truṭikā* and the middle of the ear should be like the above in the same line.[1]

31-32: The projection of the face(from the plane of the neck) should be 2 *gòlas* and the length of the neck should also be the same. (The space) from the root of the shoulder to the root of the ear will be 3 *golakas*. Folds of flesh below the chin should be made as beautiful (as ever) and their length measurement should be lessened by degrees.[2]

33-35: The hair on the head (should be shown in different ways) such as in the shape of a *mauli* or a *jaṭābandha* (particular modes of dressing the hair) or they may be curled; (or there should be) a *kirīṭa*, a *triśikha* (a three-peaked tiara), a crown (*mukuṭa*) or a *khaṇḍa* (? a *karaṇḍa* another type of crown). Their height should be made 8 *aṅ*, but never more.[3] I shall

[1] These directions about the correct placing of the different parts of the face are very helpful to the sculptor. The *bhrūsūtra*, *akṣisūtra* and *karṇasūtra* are mentioned here, the first two implicitly and the last explicitly.

[2] Bose's reading and translation differ greatly from mine. The second line is read by him as—*Tadālambapramāṇena cibukā karṇamūlayoḥ*, and translated thus, 'it (the rounded flesh below the chin) should fit in with the chin and the roots of the ears.' But this is not at all satisfactory. Undoubted reference is made in this couplet to the parallel folds of skin below the chin, which characterise one of the *Mahāpuruṣalakṣaṇas*, *viz.*, *Kambugrīvatā* (front part of the neck compared to the top of a conchshell which show these parallel lines). What the author means is that these skin folds should be shown by several parallel lines which will be shorter by degrees. In the Gupta and early mediaeval images, this feature is frequently present.

[3] It seems that when the hair on the head are shown dressed as above they should never be more than 8 *aṅ*. long; when they are enclosed within one or other types of the crowns mentioned above, the latter also should also not be more than 8 *aṅgulas*. But in Chapter VIII, I have drawn attention to a *Matsya Purāṇa* passage where the *mauli* is described as 14 *aṅgulas*. In Bagchi's copy of this text the copyist writes *aṣṭādaśāṅgulam* which is rythmically defective. The copyist, however, knows his mistake and puts two dots under *ḍaśa*.

speak now about the auspicious and inauspicious types of faces. (The former, *i.e.*, those which are auspicious) should be made a little smiling and endowed with beauty and grace. Know that there is no place (in art) of faces which are malicious, passionate, wrathful, sour or bitter; they should be shunned from a distance.[1]

36-39: Now I shall speak about the details of the measurements of the limbs. A sage should make the (portion of the body) from the hiccough (the dimple on the centre of the throat) to the navel two faces, *i.e.*, 24 *aṅgulas*; (the portion) from the navel to the root of the testicles, the curve of (either of) the buttocks sideways,[2] the (section) from the hiccough to either of the nipples, the space between the two nipples and (that) from the side of the neck to the top of the arm are all said to be one *tāla*. The portion between the navel and (either of) the two nipples is 14 *aṅgulas*. The hiccough and the top of the shoulders (*aṃsāgra*) should be placed in the same line; it has been well-said that the width of the space between the two shoulders is 3 *tālas*.[3]

40-41: The arm-pit should be made 6 *aṅgulas* and the space between it and the paps (*stana*) should also be the

[1] Bose reads the first part of the last line of my couplet No. 35 as *cakraṃ vadanasaṃsthānam*. But 'a circular face' ill fits with the other types which refer to their different expressions; I adhere to my reading and translation given above.

[2] Bose reads *tiryak pārśve hi te tathā* in the first line of my couplet 37. But I think my reading is much better, and it gives a clear and correct sense. The distance between the navel and the root of the testicles can never measure two *tālas*; the curvature of each of the buttocks measures also one *tāla*. A glance at fig. 1 of plate VI in my book will support the correctness of my reading and translation.

[3] Fig 1 in Plate VI seems to show that the hiccough and the top of the shoulder are not in one line. But this is due to the curvature of the latter, its centre-line and the hiccough are really in the same plane. The lowermost base of the shoulders measures 8 *tālas* from one end to the other.

same ;[1] the curvature of the region by the side of the nipple should measure one *gola*. The round nipple should be two *yavas* and the circle of the navel three *yavas*; the navel should be made deep and should be characterised by the *dakṣiṇāvarta* sign (*i e.*, the curvature of the navel should turn from left to right).[2]

42: The testicles should be 3 *aṅgulas* (each) and the penis 4 *aṅgulas* ; the height of the hip or the buttock which will be fleshy, round and beautiful in appearance should be 8 *aṅgulas*.[3]

43-45: The length of thearm which is praised by the learned is four faces; the upper arm should be 8 *kalās* and the four-arm 9 *golakas* ; the length of the palm (without the fingers) should be 3 *golas* (the measurement of) the middle finger being the same.[4] The thumb should be made 2 *golas* and the little finger similar to it ; the ring finger should be less than the middle one by one half nail and the index-finger one nail less than the middle one.[5]

46-52: The width of the thumb should be made 9 *yavas* ; the side (measurement) of the middle finger (*i.e.*, its width) should be 8½ *yavas* ; after making both (the ring finger and the index finger) 8 *yavas* (wide), the little finger (should be made)

[1] Bose reads *akṣa* for *kakṣa*, which is wrong; he cannot translate *akṣa*; the second *caraṇa* is read by him as *vakṣastanāntaram* which is also incorrect. The author first gives us the inside measurement of the armpit and then remarks that the space between the armpit and the breast (*i.e.*, the centre of the breast—the nipple) is also the same.

[2] Bose translates the passage—*dakṣiṇāvartalāñchanā*, as 'having the marks of its whirlpool,' which has no meaning. I have tried to render it correctly; the sign is one of the *mahāpuruṣalakṣaṇas*.

[3] The first part of the second line was read by Bose as *hicāvaṣṭāṅgulāvūrddhvaṃ* and translated as '*hicha* should be eight *aṅgulas*;' I have given the correct reading and translation.

[4] The palm and the middle finger being 6 *aṅgulas* each, the two taken together make up one *tāla*. In some texts, the former is 7 *aṅgulas* long and the latter 5 (cf. *Pratimālakṣaṇa*, vv. 27-8.)

[5] Verse 43 tells us that the length of the whole arm should be 48 *aṅgulas* (*mukhacatuṣṭaya*) but when the constituents of the arms are added up we get 46 only (*bāhu*—16+*prabāhu*—18+*kara*—6+*madhyamā*—6=46).

7 *yavas*.[1] The wrist is known as 5 *aṅgulas* (distant) from the root of the ring-finger; the side measurement (*i.e.*, the width) of the palm should also be known as the same. The wrist from the root of the thumb is 2 *golas*, *i.e.*, 4 *aṅgulas* (apart), while (the space) between the root of the thumb and that of the index finger should be made 1½ *kalā* (3 *aṅgulas*). The thumb should be of 2 digits while the rest should be of 3; the digits of the thumb and those of the other fingers should be known as the same. The tips (of the fingers) should be pointed and well-rounded,[2] and the finger-joints should be well-marked. The side measurement (width) of the nail should be made half of its own *aṅgula* and its length half of its digit; the sage should shape a nail where it joins its root like a crescent.[3] The palm (near its base ?) should be made 5 *aṅgulas* (wide) while its sides should be 2 *aṅgulas*. The whole of the palm should be adorned with auspicious lines.[4]

53-54: I (now) shall speak of the marks in the palms of the gods which are of an auspicious character; the following, *viz.*, a conchshell, a lotus flower, a flag, a thunder-bolt, a wheel, a *Svastika*, an ear-ring, a pitcher, moon, star, *Śrīvatsa*, an elephant-goad, a trident, a rosary and the earth goddess (*Vasudhā* ?) should be made (*i.e.*, drawn on the palm).[5]

[1] The first part of the first line of my verse 47 (the first part of the second line of v. 47 in Bose's edition) is not correctly rendered by Bose. He simply puts down that the width of both should be 8 *yavas* but the word *ubhau* undoubtedly refers here to the ring and the index fingers.

[2] Bose's reading *suvṛtta* in place of *suvartita* is metrically defective.

[3] Bose wrongly renders this line as 'the wise should make a nail like a half-moon at the tip.' The nail where it joins the finger at its root is shaped like a crescent.

[4] This refers to one of the *Mahāpuruṣalakṣaṇas*; the 29th one in the stereotyped list to be found in many Buddhist texts is *cakrāṅkita-hastapādatalaḥ*. In verses 53-4, some of these auspicious signs are enumerated.

[5] A few only of these auspicious marks are mentioned in the *Pratimālakṣaṇam* (v. 27: *Śaṅkhaṃ cakraṃ tale nyastaṃ padmaṃ ca*

55-58: The root of the thighs (*i.e.*, the region from which the thighs come down) should be placed in the same line as the centre of the navel and the private parts ;[1] the length of the thighs is 2 *vitastis*, while the same of the shanks is 2 *mukhas*. The knees should be 2 *kalas* and the ankles known as 1 *kala* each ; the heels are known as 2 *kalas* each, and they are of the shape of a ripe *bimba* fruit. The feet should be 7 *aṅgulas* wide and 10 *aṅgulas* long ; the length of the big toe should be made one-fourth part of the foot, the second toe (*sūcikā*) is equal to it (in measurement), while the middle toe is less by 2 *yavas* ; the fourth toe is less by half a nail while the little toe is less by a digit (thhn the middle toe).[2]

59-62: The width of the big toe is known as 11 *yavas* : the intervening space between its top and that of the second toe is 9 *yavas* ; the same of the middle and fourth toes is said to be 8½ and 8 *yavas* respectively, in the canons of measurements. The toes are said to be like a green mango in appearance, the top of the feet should be made like the back of a tortoise ; the toes are said to be similar to the feet of a *jaluka* (here meaning a swan). The feet should be made flat and level (to the ground) and the nails, of the form of oyster-shells.[3]

kuliśāṅkuśam | Sarvalakṣaṇarūpiṇyo lekhāḥ kāryāḥ pṛthagvidhāḥ). I have little doubt about *yavamālā* in the next being a mistake for *japamālā* (a rosary)

[1] This rendering of the line seems to me more apposite than Bose's, which is, ' the root of the thigh should be measured parallel to the centre of the navel and penis'.

[2] In many other iconometric texts, the length of the feet is one *tāla*, *i.e.*, 12 *aṅgulas* ; it is likely, the measurement of the big toe is left out in the estimate of the length of the foot in our text. It is laid down here that the length of the big and second toes is a quarter of the foot, *i.e.*, 2½ *aṅgulas*. Thus, according to this estimate, the feet with the toes will measure 12½ *aṅgulas*.

[3] The upper surface of the feet convex in appearance like the back of a tortoise is one of the *Mahāpuruṣalakṣaṇas*. Varāhamihira tells us that the toes of the lords of men should be well-set and their feet convex-shaped like a tortoise (*Śliṣṭāṅguli..... kūrmonnatau ca*

63-65: Now I shall speak about the measurements of the girth or periphery (of the different limbs). The girth of the head is known as 36 *aṅgulas*; the neck is 8 *aṅgulas* wide and three times this (*i.e.*, 24 *aṅgulas*) in its circumference. The space between the two arm-pits is 20 *aṅgulas*, while the intelligent (artist) should make the girth of this region 19 *kalās*. The root, middle and front sections of the arm are 8, 6 and 4 *aṅgulas* respectively, while their respective girths should be thrice the measurement of their own width.

66-68: The width of the belly in the middle is to be known as 15 *aṅgulas*—(the same) below it being 16. The hip is 18 *aṅgulas* (wide), the root of the thighs is 6 *golas* (wide) and the width of the root of the shanks and their end should be known to be 6 *aṅgulas* and 2 *kalās* respectively, by the learned. The periphery of all the above as also of the fingers and all other (limbs) where there is roundness should be thrice (the measurement of their width).

69-70: The projection of the head from the back is to be one *kalā*. The backbone should be made straight and be on the same plane as the buttocks; the thighs, the calfs of the legs and the heels should also be made on the same plane; a twice-born

caraṇau manujeśvarasya—Bṛhatsaṃhitā, Ch. 67, v. 2). The well-planted feet with fleshy convex shape were very carefully depicted by the early Indian artists. Reference to the toes being similar to the feet of a *jaluka* in the previous line is enigmatic. *Jaluka* means a leech; but 'toes like the leg of a leech' (this is Bose's rendering) have little sense. The passage '*jalukapādasaṃsthānā*' may be a mistake for '*jālapādasamasthānā*' which would mean like the (feet of the) swan and may refer to the webbing of the toes. One of the *Mahāpuruṣalakṣaṇas* is '*jālāṅgulihastapāda*,' which, whatever might have been its original significance, came to mean as early as the fourth century A.D.—'the feet and the hands of the *mahāpuruṣa* are netted' like those of the *haṃsarāja*—the golden mallard. For discussion about this sign, see my articles on 'The Webbed Fingers of Buddha,' *I. H. Quarterly*, Vol. VI, pp. 717-27; Vol. VII, pp. 654-56.

should know as above the characteristic sign of the back (parts of the body).[1]

71: Pearl-garlands, waist-girdles, bracelets, armlets, earrings and well-arranged drapery should be made (shown) on the body.

72-77: The merits and demerits of images according to their big or small size are being spoken of now. (To them) should be given well-fixed seat (pedestal) having (requisite) length and breadth. The head (of the image) should be made like an umbrella; (this) produces wealth, good crops and prosperity. Well-drawn lines of eye-brows on the forehead bring eternal good fortune. If the image is well-made, the subjects become full of happiness; if the image has conch-shell like neck, then it is always the bestower of all success. The body like a lion enhances plentitude and strength; the arms shaped like the trunk of an elephant fulfil all desires and ends. (Images with) well-shaped belly bring forth plentitude and prosperity; (their) thighs shaped like a plantain-tree increase (the stocks of) goats and cows, while well-shaped calfs of the legs make the villages prosperous. An image, if it be of well-carved feet, causes good conduct and learning. Thus has been described the excellence of images; now are being narrated their defects and demerits.[2]

[1] Bose's translation of the 2nd line of verse 69 is wrong. He renders it thus, 'the back should be made like a bamboo and the end of the neck should be on the same plane.' His difficulty was that he could not emend the passage *pṛṣṭhaṃ vaṃśuṃ* in the text as *pṛṣṭhavaṃśa* which means 'the back-bone'; *sphicau* means buttocks and not 'the end of the neck.'

[2] The above couplets refer to some signs of physical beauty such as *chatrākṛtiśīrṣatā*, *kambugrīvatā*, etc., which are peculiar to great men and gods. The comparison of several limbs to different animal and plant organisms in some of the lines is very apt; I have already referred to A. N. Tagore's very illuminating study of this aspect of Indian art (*Some Notes on Indian Artistic Anatomy*). These verses and those immediately following fully show that the authors of the *Silpaśāstras* were very much alive to the necessity of artists fashioning really beautiful images, even when they were asked to follow the injunctions laid down in the texts.

78-84: The deficiency in the length and breadth (of an image) causes famine and revolution. If it (the image) be deficient in body, (its maker or donor) becomes hunch-backed and if it be noseless, then he gets ill. The eye-sight of an image turned towards the left destroys one's fame, while the same raised upwards causes loss of wealth; (images) with small eyes, round eyes or eyes with squint are also of similar nature (*i.e.*, they cause loss of wealth). One should avoid from a distance (images) with eyes small (in measurement) or eyes cast down. If the image is made with a sunken belly, then there will always be destruction of crops; if its thighs be less (in measurement), then abortion will certainly be caused there. If the three, *viz.*, the nose, eyes and fingers are short, there will be great demerit; this will also be so, if the shanks, neck and chin (of the image) be too long, if its head, ears and nose are too thick, if its joints, belly and nails are too thick, if its hands, feet and eyes are too low, if its neck, shoulders and arms are too short[1]. After knowing these merits and demerits, the wise should make an image.

85-86: The length or height and girth of (images) characterised by *Navatāla* have been described as above. The gods should surely (measure) 9, and god-like men 8½ faces; (ordinary) men are 8 *tāla*, the mothers (*i.e.*, women) 7½[2].

[1] Bose's translation of the above verses is somewhat defective; *e.g.*, he renders *kekarākṣī* as 'eyes contracted,' while it certainly means 'eyes with a squint.' His reading *grīvā'syam bhuja* in verse 82 can certainly be improved upon; the passage should read *grīvāṃsabhuja* all of which should never be too short or low. *Saptotsedhatā*, *i.e.*, the seven limbs being raised is one of the *Mahāpuruṣalakṣaṇas*. The *Kriyāsamuccaya* comments on the term in this manner: *Saptotsedheti saptāvayavāḥ utsedhā unnatāśceti... katame pādadvayaṃ hastadvayaṃ skandhadvayaṃ grīvā ceti... kiñcidunnatirutsedhaḥ.*

[2] Evidently this height measurement is only applicable to ordinary women; in verse 85, it is expressly mentioned that the Devī images are characterised by a height which is 8 times their own face. Bose's reading as well as rendering of the first line of

The periphery and height (measurements) of (images) of 6 or 7 *tāla* measure are described according to the rules (detailed) in the *Ātreyalakṣaṇa*[1].

87-90: The sage should make the Devī images eight times the face in height; the face should be made 6 *kalās*, the torso 11 *kalās*. The width of the neck, breasts and the space between the two nipples—all these parts of the goddess-figures are made one-half the face (*i.e.*, 6 *aṅgulas*). The middle part (?) should be made 8 *aṅgulas*, the loins are known to be 5 *kalās*, the hip should be made 20 *aṅgulas* and the thighs or upper legs 11 *kalās*. The knees are 3 *aṅgulas* each and the calfs of the legs 20 *aṅgulas*; the ankle should be made 2 *aṅgulās*—this is the auspicious mark of the goddesses.

91-94: The periphery of the head should be made 30 *aṅgulas*; the root of the arms is 5 *aṅgulas*, while its girth should be three times this. The wrist is 3 *aṅgulas* (wide) and its circumference is thrice the same (*i.e.*, 3 times 3 *aṅgulas*, *viz.*, 9 *aṅgulas*). The middle part of the thighs is (characterised) by 6 *kalās* and its girth is 3 times it (*i.e.*, 18 *kalās* or 36 *aṅgulas*). The middle of the shanks is 5 *aṅgulas*, its circumference being thrice the same. In all cases, (the girth of the particular limbs) should be made three times (their width), and in the case of the fingers, this is the same. The outer corners of the eyes, the breasts, the hips (of the female figures) should be made a little more than the mea-

my couplet No. 85 is faulty; he reads it as—*Kiṃca vaktre dhruvaṃ caiva aṣṭārddha devamānuṣāḥ* and translates it as, 'In the case of the mouth of gods and men, it should be eight and half.' But there is no doubt that the author refers here to the height of two individual types, *viz.*, 'Gods' and 'men like gods' (*devakalpamanuja* in the *Matsya Purāṇa*, already referred to by me in Chapter VIII). The first line of verse 85 evidently refers to the *Nyagrodhaparimaṇḍala* type of beings.

[1] In this line, there is an undoubted reference to the original source, *viz.*, *Ātreyalakṣaṇam*, from which all these details were collected by the author.

surement (laid down in the canons), for then it will be more pleasing to the eye.

The above is the eight *tāla* Devī image.[1]

95-96: Now I shall speak about the characteristic measurements of children (gods in the shape of boys); the auspicious characteristic marks of the image of Senāpati (Kārttikeya), Vināyakas and the Yakṣas are all in the shape of boys—(their height) is 6 times (their face).[2]

96-102: A *golaka* is to be known in the top of the head (*i.e.*, the latter is to measure 2 *aṅgulas* in height), the face (should be a sum) of 6 *golakas*. The neck is to be made 2 *aṅgulas*, there should be 20 *aṅgulas* in the torso. The navel is to be ½ a *gola* or a *kalā*, the depth there being 1 *aṅgula*.[3] The thighs should be made 7 *kalās* (each), the knees being one *golaka*; the calfs should be made 6 *kalās*, while the ankle is known as 1 *aṅgula*. The heel as before is 3 *aṅgulas*, the feet 5 *kalās* and the big toe 1 *golaka* in length. The second toe should be made equal to the big toe, the middle toe is just less than it by 2 *yavas*, the fourth toe is less by a nail while the little toe, by a digit. (The space between) the hiccough and the shoulder (extremity) is 8 *aṅgulas*, the upper arm 9 *aṅgulas*, the fore-arm 5 *golas*, the length of the palm 2 *golakas*. The middle finger is 2 *golas*, the index finger is

[1] I have already pointed out Bose's mistake in reading it as *Devī lakṣaṇe* and suggesting that the term is one of the names of the text.

[2] Bose's translation of this part of the text as 'the marks of the idols of children, of generals, of the Vināyakas, of Yakṣas are six-fold and auspicious' is undoubtedly wrong. Senāpati is Kārttikeya, the war-god; Yakṣas here evidently refer to the Gaṇas, and Vināyakas, to their leader Gaṇapati and his various aspects. In other iconometrical texts, the god Gaṇapati is enjoined to be made according to the *Pañcatāla* measurement. The text is very corrupt here.

[3] Bose's reading and rendering of this line are partly faulty; he reads it—*Arddhagolakalā nābhyāṃ khanitaṃ tryaṅgulaṃ tathā*, and translates it as follows: 'the navel should be half a *gola* and one *kalā*, and three *aṅgulas* deep.' The width and the depth of the navel in figures of boys can never be 3 *aṅgulas* each.

ess than it by a nail; the ring-finger should be made half a nail less than the middle finger; the thumb and the little finger are to be less by a digit than the ring-finger.[1]

103-109: Now, I shall speak about the *kalās* (in connection with) the width (measurements of the six-*tāla* images).[2] The head should be 2½ *kalās*, its circumference being thrice as much; the middle of the face is 6 *kalās*, the space between the ear and the tip of the nose being as much. There are 3 *kalās* in the middle of the neck, 16 *aṅgulas* being the belly; in the middle of the torso (the width) is 6 *golas*, the hip being 7 *golakas*. The middle of the thigh is 4 *golas* (wide), the knee is 2 *kalās* and 6 *yavas*; the shank in its middle is known as 5 *aṅgulas* (in width), the ankle is 3 *aṅgulas*. The feet in their width are said to be 2 *kalās* and ½ *aṅgula* each. The big toe is 9 *yavas*, the intervening space (between it and the next toe) is known as 3 *yavas*; the second toe should be made 8 *yavas*, the middle toe, 7 *yavas*. The fourth and the little toes are to be made 6 and 5 *yavas* respectively; thus should the learned make the toes beautiful. The heel is said to be 3 *aṅgulas* in its width. Or, the big toe is 8 *yavas* and the middle toe 7.[3]

[1] I accept Bose's emendation of this passage as '*madhya-mārddhanakhahīnāṃ*' which has much better sense than *madhyam-parvanakhahīnaṃ* of the Sanskrit original. The Tibetan version fully supports his correction.

[2] Bose has inserted just before this line *Iti saptatālaḥ* on the authority of the Tibetan version. But it is evident that the verses preceding it (95-102) deal with the length or height measurements of *Ṣaṭtāla* images; the word *ṣaḍguṇam* (6 times the face) in verse 95 means *ṣaṭtālam*. His preference for *ṣaṭtālasya lakṣaṇam* in the first line of my verse No. 103 to *vistāreṇa kalāni ca*, on the authority of the Tibetan version, is unjustifiable. The author of the text gives us details of the width measurements of the *Ṣaṭtāla* images in verses 103-109, and their length or height measurements in verses 95-102.

[3] This line is omitted in the Tibetan version and Bose omits it accordingly, But it refers to an alternative measurement of two of the toes and can be accepted as genuine.

These are the characteristics of the six-*rūpa* (*tāla*—images) in the *Ātreya-tilaka*.[1]

110-11: After this, I shall speak about the characteristics of the *daśatāla*. The auspicious images of such deities as Brahmā, the goddess Carcikā, the Ṛṣis, the Brahmarākṣasas, the celestial beings and the Buddhas should be made (according to this *tāla* measurement) and no images of others (should be made according to it).

112-16: The head should be 2 *golakas*, the face 6 *golakas*; the neck should me made 2 *golakas*, and the torso 26 *aṅgulas*. The buttocks are to be known as 2 *kalās* (each), the hip should be 5 *kalās*; the thighs are 26 *aṅgulas*, the knee is known as 5 *aṅgulas*. The shanks are 26 *aṅgulas*, the ankle is known as 3 *aṅgulas*; the portion below it (*i.e.*, the heel) is to be made 5 *aṅgulas*, as is well-ordained The portion of the upper arm is to be made as 8 *golakas* and the learned should know that the fore-arm is 10 *golakas*. Know that the section of the palm with the fingers is 6 *kalās*. Those who are well-versed in the *śāstras* (*śilpaśāstras*) should make these measurements (of height or length in the *daśatāla* images).

These are the characteristics of the *daśatāla* (measurement) in the *Ātreya-tilaka*.[2]

117-18: Now I shall speak about the characteristics of the *sapta-tāla*. The head is to be known as 3 *aṅgulas*, the face 6 *kalās*; the neck is known as 3 *aṅgulas*, and it should be made with the conch-shell mark. The torso is 19 *aṅgulas*, well-adorned with (proper) proportions and roundness.

[1] Bose reads *Ātreyalakṣaṇe ṣaṭtālasya lakṣaṇam*.

[2] The author of the text gives only a summary of the length measurements of the *daśatāla* images. In verse 143, the height of the *nitamba* and *kaṭi* is laid down as 2 *kalās* and 5 *kalās*, *i.e.*, 4 and 10 *aṅgulas* respectively. But the summary of these details given in the end of the text lays down that the *nitambāṅguli* and *kaṭyaṅguli* are 4 and 5 *aṅgulas* respectively; this would make the sum total of a *daśatāla* image full 120 *aṅgulas*, while, according to verse 113, it would be 125 *aṅgulas*.

119-22: The buttock is one *aṅgula*, the hip 1 *golaka*, the thighs 19 *aṅgulas*, the knee 3 *aṅgulas*, the shanks 19 *aṅgulas*, the ankle is known as 1 *aṅgula*; the portion below (the ankle—*i.e.*, the heel) in the *sapta-tāla* image is 2 *aṅgulas*. The portion from the hiccough to the extremity of the shoulder should be made 8 *aṅgulas*; the *aṅgulas* known to constitute the upper arms are said to be 1 *tāla* (this is a round-about way of saying that the upper arm is 12 *aṅgulas* in length), the forearm should be made 7 *golakas* (in length) by the best of the sages. The section of the palm with the fingers is said to be 8 *aṅgulas*. The (above) measurements (length-wise) of men are to be made by those well-versed in the *śāstras*.

(Thus end) the characteristics of the *Sapta-tāla* measurement in the *Ātreya-tilaka*.[1]

123-28: Now I shall speak about the characteristic features of the *catustāla* (measurement). The head should be made 1 *aṅgula*, the face 12 *aṅgulas*; know that the neck is 1 *aṅgula*, the torso 12 such; the buttock and hip are known to be ½ and 1 *aṅgula* respectively. The thigh should be 9 *aṅgulas*, the knee is known as 1 *aṅgula*; the shank is known as 9 *aṅgulas* and the ankle should be ½ *aṅgula*; the portion below the latter (*i.e.*, the heel) is said to be 1 *aṅgula*. The space between the hiccough and the extremity of the shoulder is to be known as 4 *kalās*. The upper arm is 3 *golakas*, the fore-arm 8 *aṅgulas*; the palm with the fingers is known as 7 *aṅgulas* in its length. The modelling of the above should be made as beautifully as possible. The measurement of the dwarfs is described (as above) by the best of the sages.

The above is the description of the *Catustāla* in the *Ātreya-tilaka*.

129-30: Listen! I shall now speak about the disposition of images of large size. (Among them) the smallest one is known

[1] The proportions of the *Saptatāla* images come after those of the *Daśatāla* ones; The *Navatāla* and *Aṣṭatāla* proportions are given order of precedence to the other two. *Pañcatāla*, *Tri-* *Dvi-* and *Eka-tāla* images are not referred to in our text.

to be 15 cubits (in height); the medium-sized one is twice (the above size—30 cubits), the big-sized ones being known thrice the same (*i.e.*, 45 cubits). If one wishes for his own welfare, he should not make (an image) bigger than it (45 cubits).[1]

131-36: The image of a deity, if it be burnt, worn out, broken or split up, after its establishment or at the time of its enshrinement, will always be harmful.[2] A burnt image brings forth draught, an worn-out one causes loss of wealth, a broken image forbodes death in the family, while one that is split up, war. Be it an image or be it the phallic emblem of Śiva, whether the images be those of the goddesses or Divine Mothers—all of them should be raised (from the sanctum) according to the rites laid down by the law.[3] After giving oblations of flowers, incense, food and sacrificial offerings and clothes (the house-holder or donor of the above types of images), after duly performing sacrificial rites, should have the ceremony of propitiatory water performed according to Vedic *mantra*.[4] A rope is to be made of hair, *muñja*-grass, woven silk or linen, according to rule; then the old or worn-out god (*i.e.*, the image) should be taken away after tying him (with the rope) to the hump (*i.e.*, the neck) of a bull.

137-40: If the image is made of stone, then it should be immersed in sacred streams full of water or in the confluences of rivers. If the images are made of gold, silver, copper or

[1] These huge images were usually made of clay; but it is certain that they reached such heights very rarely. Varāhamihira, as I have shown in Chapter VIII, speaks only of two, three or at most four cubit images.

[2] Bose wrongly renders the term '*devatā*' as 'goddess.'

[3] I prefer the reading *udghāṭayet* which means 'should be raised' to Bose's *udjāpayet* which he has translated as 'should be given farewell.'

[4] The Brahmin priests usually sprinkle propitiatory water (*śāntijala*) on the house-holder and the members of his family after the performance of each *naimittika karma*, while muttering the Vedic *mantra*:—*Om svasti na Indro vṛddhaśravāḥ svasti naḥ puṣā viśvavedāḥ*, etc.

brass, then all of them should be melted in fire, if one desires his own welfare. If the image is of wood, then it should be covered with new cloth and, after being sprinkled with clarified butter and honey, should be put into a blazing fire. In case the image is made of earth, then a pit should be dug into the ground (to the depth of its head) and afterwards it should be put into the hole, and the latter filled up.[1]

141-43: Whether it be an image or a liṅga (which is to be destroyed in the above different ways), another one endowed with all auspicious signs should again be re-enshrined according to rules (*i.e.*, a new replica of the old one is to be set up in the latter's place). This act results in the welfare of the Brahmaṇs, the young and old and all mankind in general, the king obtains victory, and (the act of restoration) conduces to the increase of crops. The noble soul by whom the old images are replaced by new ones, lives a glorified life in the heavens for more than one thousand crores of *yugas*.

Here ends the chapter on the restoration of old (images—*jīrṇoddhāra*) in the *Ātreya tilaka*.[2]

[1] Bose reads *pāṣāṇī* in place of *pārthivī*; but *śilāmayī* is already mentioned in verse 137. *Pārthivī* and *mṛnmayī*, however, denote practically the same type of images. It may be that one refers to terracotta figures, while the other means ordinary clay figures.

[2] Bose takes vv. 141-42 as later additions, because they are not in Tibetan and because they seem to have no connection with the preceding verses. But the verses are certainly not out of place or context here for several of the preceding verses expatiate on the merits of restoration. The *Agni Purāṇa* (ch. 67, vv 1-5) expatiates on the same topic; there is, however, some difference noticeable in the two texts as regards disposal of the old images.

APPENDIX B

PART II

बृहत्संहिता

(अः ५७)

जालान्तरगे भानौ यदणुतरं दर्शनं रजो याति ।
तद्विन्द्यात् परमाणुं प्रथमं तद्वि प्रमाणानाम् ॥१॥
परमाणुरजो बालाग्रलिक्षयूकं यवोऽङ्गुलं चेति ।
अष्ट गुणानि यथोत्तरमङ्गुलमेकं भवति सङ्ख्या ॥२॥
देवागारद्वारस्याष्टांशोनस्य यस्तृतीयोऽंशः ।
तत्पिण्डिकाप्रमाणं प्रतिमा तद्द्विगुणपरिमाणा । ३॥
खेरङ्गुलप्रमाणैर्द्वादशविस्तीर्णमायतं च मुखम् ।
नग्नजिता तु चतुर्दश दैर्घ्येण द्राविडं कथितम् ॥४॥
नासाललाटचिबुकग्रीवाश्चतुरङ्गुलास्तथा कर्णौ ।
द्वे अङ्गुले च हनुनौ चिबुकं च द्व्यङ्गुलं विततम् ॥५॥
अष्टाङ्गुलं ललाटं विस्तारात् द्व्यङ्गुलात् परे श्मश्रू ।
चतुरङ्गुलौ तु श्मश्रू कर्णौ तु द्व्यङ्गुलौ पृथुलौ ॥६॥
कर्णोपान्तः कार्य्योऽर्धपञ्चमे भ्रूसमेन सूत्रेण ।
कर्णस्रोतः सुकुमारकं च नेत्रप्रबन्धसमम् ॥७॥
चतुरङ्गुलं वसिष्ठः कथयति नेत्रान्तकर्णयोर्विवरम् ।
अधरोऽङ्गुलप्रमाणस्तस्यार्धेनोत्तरोष्ठश्च ॥८॥
अर्धाङ्गुला तु गोच्छा वक्त्रं चतुरङ्गुलायतं कार्यम् ।
विपुलं तु सार्धमङ्गुलमव्याप्तं त्र्यङ्गुलं व्याप्तम् ॥९॥
द्व्यङ्गुलतुल्यौ नासापुटौ च नासापुटायतौ ज्ञेया ।
स्याद् द्व्यङ्गुलमुच्छ्रायस्तुरङ्गुलमन्तरं चाक्ष्णोः ॥१०॥

द्व्यङ्गुलमितोऽक्षिकोशो हे नेत्रे तन्निभागिका तारा ।
दृक्तारा पञ्चांशो नेत्रविकाशोऽङ्गुलं भवति ॥११॥
पर्यन्तात् पर्यन्तं दश भ्रुवोऽर्धाङ्गुलं भ्रुवोर्लेखा ।
भ्रूमध्यं द्व्यङ्गुलकं भ्रूदैर्घ्येणाङ्गुलचतुष्कम् ॥१२॥
कार्या तु केशरेखा भ्रूबन्धसमाङ्गुलार्धविस्तीर्णा ।
नेत्रान्ते करवीरकमुपन्यसेदङ्गुलप्रमितम् ॥१३॥
द्वात्रिंशत् परिणाहाच्चतुर्दशायामतोऽङ्गुलानि शिरः ।
द्वादश तु चित्रकर्मणि दृश्यन्ते विंशतिरदृश्याः ॥१४॥
आस्यं सकेशनिचयं षोडश दैर्घ्येण नग्नजित्प्रोक्तम् ।
ग्रीवा दशविस्तीर्णा परिणाहाद्विंशतिः सैका ॥१५॥
कण्ठाद् द्वादश हृदयं हृदयान्नाभी च तत्प्रमाणेन ।
नाभीमध्यान्मेढ्रान्तरं च तत्तुल्यमेवोक्तम् ॥१६॥
ऊरू चाङ्गुलमानेश्चतुर्दशा विंशतिस्तथा जङ्घे ।
जानुकपिच्छे चतुरङ्गुले च पादौ च तत्तुल्यौ ॥१७॥
द्वादश दीर्घौ षट् पृथुतया च पादौ विकायताङ्गुष्ठौ ।
पञ्चाङ्गुलपरिणाहौ प्रदेशिनौ त्र्यङ्गुलं दीर्घा ॥१८॥
अष्टांशाष्टांशोनाः शेषाङ्गुल्यः क्रमेण कर्त्तव्याः ।
स चतुर्थभागमङ्गुलमुत्सेधोऽङ्गुष्ठकस्योक्तः ॥१९॥
अङ्गुष्ठनखः कथितश्चतुर्थभागोनमङ्गुलं तज्ज्ञैः ।
शेषनखानामर्धाङ्गुलं क्रमात् किञ्चिदूनं वा ॥२०॥
जङ्घाग्रे परिणाहश्चतुर्दशोक्तस्तु विस्तरात् पञ्च ।
मध्ये तु सप्त विपुला परिणाहात् त्रिगुणिताः सप्त ॥२१॥
अष्टौ तु जानुमध्ये वैपुल्यं द्व्यष्टकं तु परिणाहः ।
विपुली चतुर्दशोरू मध्ये द्विगुणश्च तत्परिधिः ॥२२॥
कटिरष्टादश विपुला चत्वारिंशच्चतुर्युता परिधौ ।
अङ्गुलमेकं नाभी वेधेन तथा प्रमाणेन ॥२३॥
चत्वारिंशद् द्वियुता नाभीमध्येन मध्यपरिणाहः ।
स्तनयोः षोडश चान्तरमूर्ध्वं कक्षे षडङ्गुलिके ॥२४॥

अष्टावंसौ द्वादश बाह्वः कार्य्यौ तथा प्रबाह्वः च ।
बाह्वः षड्विस्तीर्णौ प्रतिबाह्वः त्वङ्गुलचतुष्कम् ॥२५॥
षोड़श बाहुमूले परिणाहाद् द्वादशाग्रहस्ते च ।
विस्तारेण करतलं षड़ङ्गुलं सप्त दैर्घ्येण ॥२६॥
पञ्चाङ्गुलानि मध्या प्रदेशिनी मध्यपर्वदलहीना ।
अनया तुल्या चानामिका कनिष्ठा तु पर्वोना ॥२७॥
पर्वत्रयमङ्गुष्टः शेषाङ्गुल्यस्त्रिभिस्त्रिभिः कार्याः ।
नखपरिमाणं कार्यं सर्वासां पर्वणोऽर्धेन ।२८॥
देशानुरूपभूषणवेषालङ्कारमूर्त्तिभिः कार्या ।
प्रतिमा लक्षणयुक्ता सन्निहिता वृद्धिदा भवति ॥२९॥

... ...

... ...

सौम्या तु हस्तमात्रा वसुदा हस्तद्वयोच्छ्रिता प्रतिमा ।
क्षेमसुभिक्षाय भवेत् त्रिचतुर्हस्तप्रमाणा या ॥४८॥
नृपभयमत्यङ्गायां क्षीणाङ्गायामकल्पता कर्त्तुः ।
शातोदर्य्यां क्षुद्भयमर्थविनाशः कृशाङ्गायाम् ॥५०॥
मरणं तु सत्ततायां शस्त्रनिपातेन निर्दिशेत् कर्त्तुः ।
वामावनता पत्नीं दक्षिणविनता हिनस्त्यायुः ॥५१॥
अन्धत्वमूर्ध्वदृष्ट्या करोति चिन्तामधोमुखो दृष्टिः ।
सर्वप्रतिमास्वेवं शुभाशुभं भास्करोक्तसमम् ॥५२॥

BṚHAT SAṂHITĀ

(*Ch. 57, Verses 1-29, 49-52*)

Translation with Notes

[I have quoted the above verses from the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* just to show by way of comparison the difference between the earlier and later iconometric texts. It will be seen that the verses from the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* mainly deal with images measuring 108 *aṅgulas*, incidentally referring to a few which measure 120 *aṅgulas*. The *Pratimāmānalakṣaṇam* which I take to be a fairly good specimen of the texts of the later period, on the other hand, gives us many varieties of measure such as *navatāla*, *aṣṭatāla*, *saptatāla*, *daśatāla*, etc. It must be noted, however, it gives the honour of precedence only to the *navatāla* images.]

Verses 1-4: These have been translated and commented on by me in Chapter VIII.

Verse 5: The nose, forehead, chin, neck, ears are all 4 *aṅgulas* (in length) ; the jaws are two *aṅgulas* each (in width) and the chin is 2 *aṅgulas* wide[1].

Verse 6: The forehead is 8 *aṅgulas* in its width ; the temples on each side are 2 *aṅgulas* further off from it, their (downward, *i.e.*, lengthwise) measurement being 4 *aṅgulas*[2]. The ears are each 2 *aṅgulas* in width.

[1] In the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* (1. 3), the words *uttarāhanu* and *adharāhanu* occur in the sense of upper and lower jaws respectively. Utpala comments on the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* passage as *hanunī dve dve aṅgule ca vistṛte* 1 *Mukhagalasandhī hanunī*. So, according to him, 'the place where the face and the neck join is the *hanu* ;' Rao incorrectly translates the word as chin in his *Tālamāna*, p. 77.

[2] The *śaṅkhas*, *i.e.*, the temples are 4 *aṅgulas* when taken downwards. Utpala comments on the passage thus:—*Śaṅkhau caturaṅgulāvadhobhāgau dīrghau kāryau yataḥ śaṅkhādho gaṇḍabhāga ucyate.*

7: The upper margin of the ear should be made in the same line with the eye-brow and should be 4½ *aṅgulas* distant (from the latter); the ear-hole and the eminence near it are in the same line with the extreme corner of the eye.[1]

8: Vasiṣṭha says that (the space) between the extreme corner of the eye and ear-hole (near it) is 4 *aṅgulas*.[2] The lower lip is 1 *aṅgula* wide, the upper being its half.

9: The *gocchā* (*gojī*, *i.e.*, the short dimple between the centre of the upper lip and the nasal septum) is ½ *aṅgula* (in width), the mouth being 4 *aṅgulas* in length. When the latter is closed, it is 1½ *aṅgulas* in width, it being 3 *aṅgulas* wide (in the middle), when open.

10: The nostrils are 2 *aṅgulas* in extent; at their end rises the nose 2 *aṅgulas* in height. The intervening space between the two eyes is 4 *aṅgulas*.[3]

11: The sockets of the eyes and the eyes measure 2 *aṅgulas*, the ball of the eyes being ⅛ of the same. The vision of the pupil is ⅛ (of the ball) and the aperture of the eye is 1 *aṅgula*.[4]

[1] Utpala says that the raised tip of flesh near the ear-hole is in the same line with the rheum of the eye; his words are: *Sukumārakaṃ ca karṇaśrotaḥsamīpe unnato mārgastannetraprabandhasamam | Netraprabandhaśabdena pradūṣikocyate*. Kern wrongly quotes the last part of this commentary as *pramūṣikocyate* (*J.R.A.S.*, 1873, p 324 and n. 1).

[2] Vasiṣṭha as quoted by Utpala: *Karṇanetrāntaraṃ yacca tadvindyāccaturaṅgulam*. There is a slip in Kern's translation of the line in the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*; he puts 'the space between the extreme eye-corners and eyes, at 4 digits' (*J.R.A.S.*, 1873, p. 324).

[3] This evidently refers to the space between the two pupils, not the inside corners of the eyes; the distance between the latter is 1 *aṅgula* (*netrāntare 'ṅgule jñeyo*, *Pratimālakṣaṇam*, v. 10).

[4] Utpala explains *dṛktārā* as *madhyavarttinī kumārī*. Kern remarks that 'this is right if we take *kumārī* or *kanīnikā* in the sense of the pupil's innermost part, *cf.* Suśruta, ii, p. 303.' He further says that 'it must be taken into account that the vision in the pupil requires a larger measure in sculpture than in nature;' *J.R.A.S.*, 1873, p. 324, f. n. 2.

12: The line of the eye-brows (extending from one extremity to other) measures 10 *aṅgulas*, its width being only ½ an *aṅgula*. (The interstice) between the two eye-brows (not their line) is 2 *aṅgulas*, (each) brow being 4 *aṅgulas* in length.

13: The hair-line (*i.e.*, the line on the forehead from which the hair begins to sprout upward) should be made equal in extent to (the length of) the joint eye-brows (*i.e.*, 10 *aṅgulas*), its thickness being ½ an *aṅgula*. At the end of the eyes must be delineated *karavīraka* (*i.e.*, the inner corner) 1 *aṅgula* in measurement.[1]

14: The head is 32 *aṅgulas* in circumference and 14 in its extent (apparent width). In pictorial representations, 12 *aṅgulas* (only of the 32) are shown, twenty being invisible.[2]

15: The face along with the full complement of the hair make up 16 *aṅgulas* in length, as it is said by Nagnajit.[3] The neck is 10 *aṅgulas* wide, and 21 *aṅgulas* in circumference.

16: From the throat (the lower-most part of it) down to the heart, it is 12 *aṅgulas*; from the heart to the navel, it is the same; equal in length is the space between the centre of the navel and the penis (*viz.*, the root of the penis).

17: The thighs measure 24 according to the *aṅgula* measurement; the shanks measure also the same. The knee-caps are 4 *aṅgulas* and the feet are the same (in height).[4]

[1] Utpala says *karavīrakaṃ dūṣiketi prasiddham*. But Kern remarks that 'the inner corner, *karavīraka* is also called *mūshika* in a quotation from Kāśyapa' (*J.R.A.S.*, 1873, p. 325, f. n. 1); but evidently he is inaccurate.

[2] This is interesting. In pictures only the front of the head is shown, the deity being represented frontally. But in relievo representations, greater or lesser section of the girth of the head is to be shown, according to the nature of the relief. In sculptures fully in the round, however, the whole of the periphery is to be shown.

[3] Utpala comments: *Mukhaṃ dīrghaṃ caturdaśāṅgulāni keśarekhā dve aṅgule evaṃ ṣoḍaśa | Tathā ca Nagnajit | Dvyaṅgulā keśarekhaivaṃ mukhaṃ syāt ṣoḍaśāṅgulam |*

[4] *Jānukapiccha* is explained by Utpala as the same as *ekkalaka* (?) as is well-known to the people (*jānukapicche...ye ca loke ekkalake iti*

18: The feet are 12 *aṅgulas* in length and 6 in breadth; the great toes are 3 *aṅgulas* long, and 5 *aṅgulas* in circumference. The second toe is (also) 3 *aṅgulas* long.

19: The rest of the toes should be made less by one-eighth, in succession. It is said that the height (elevation) of the great toe is 1¼ *aṅgula*.

20: Those well-versed in the knowledge (of *pratimā-lakṣaṇa*) say that the nail of the great toe is ¾ *aṅgula*; the nails of the other toes are less by ½ *aṅgula* in succession, or a little less.

21: The circumference of the extreme top of the shanks is said to be 14 *aṅgulas* long and 5 broad; in its middle, it is 7 *aṅgulas* wide and 3 times 7 (*i.e.*, 21) in circuit.

22: The knees in their middle are 8 *aṅgulas* in thickness (width), 3 times 8 (24) being the girth. The thighs in their middle part are 14 *aṅgulas* in width, their circumference being just the double (*i.e.*, 28 *aṅgulas*).

23: The hip is 18 *aṅgulas* wide and 44 in circumference. The navel is 1 *aṅgula* in depth as well as in extent.

24: The circumference of the middle (part of the body) at the centre of the navel is 42 *aṅgulas*. The intervening space between the paps is 16 *aṅgulas*; 6 such higher up (in an oblique direction) are the arm-pits.[1]

25: The shoulders should be made 8 *aṅgulas*, the upper arms as well as the forearms 12 (in length); the upper arm is 6 *aṅgulas* in width and the lower arm 4.

26: The circumference of the arms at their upper end is 16 *aṅgulas*, the same at the wrist (*agrahasta* explained by Utpala as *prakoṣṭhapradeśa*) being 12. The palm is 6 *aṅgulas* broad and 7 long.

prasiddhe). Kern's quotation from the commentator is faulty; he writes, '*jānukapitthe* (sic.) *ye loke cakkalike iti prasiddhe*. This *cakkalikaṁ* or *cakkalikā* looks like a *prākṛt* form of the diminutive of *cakra*, "disc." He translates the word as 'insteps'; but evidently the author refers to the measurement of the knee-cap or the patella.

[1] Utpala expressly tells us '*Stanayorūrdhvaṃ tiryak kṛtvā ṣaḍ-aṅgulike kakṣye kārye.*'

27: The middle finger is 5 *aṅgulas* (long), the forefinger is half a joint (or digit) smaller ; the ring-finger is like the latter and the little one is less than the same by a whole digit.

28: The thumb has 2 digits, the remaining fingers should be made with 3 each. The measure of a nail is the same as one-half the joints of each finger.

29: ' An image should be represented in such a way that its equipment, dress, ornaments and outward form be in agreement with the country. By possessing the required characteristics an idol will, by its very presence, bestow prosperity' (Kern).

* * * *

49-52: ' A statue (of Sūrya) one cubit high is beneficial ; one that measures two cubits in altitude brings wealth; an image of three cubits promotes peace ; and one of four, abundance. An idol (of the sun) with excessive limbs bodes peril from the monarch ; one with undersized limbs, infirmity to the maker; one with a thin belly, danger of famine ; one that is lean, loss of wealth. When it shows a wound, you may predict the maker's death by the sword. By being bent to the left, it destroys his wife ; by being bent to the right, life. It causes blindness by having its eyes turned upwards, and care, by the eyes being downcast. These good and evil tokens, as told in respect to the Sun's statue, apply to all idols' (Kern).[1]

[1] The verses 49-52 contain matter somewhat similar to that contained in verses 131-33 of the *Pratimāmānalakṣaṇam;* verses 72-84 of the same text, however, supply us with a far more detailed account of the merits and demerits of images, especially *navatāla* ones ; but the same is applicable to other images also, as in the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* verse (No. 52) it is expressly laid down that ' these good and evil tokens, as told in respect to the Sun's statue, apply to all idols.'

APPENDIX B

PART III

In this part of the Appendix A are incorporated in tabular form the broader details about the height measurements of the *daśatāla* images as laid down in a few comparatively late texts. The *daśatāla*, as I have shown in Chapter VIII, is of three varieties, *viz.*, *uttama*, *madhyama* and *adhama*, measuring 124, 120 and 116 *aṅgulas* respectively. For further details about the above, the reader is requested to refer to T. A. G. Rao's *Tālamāna* or *Iconometry* (*M. A. S. I.*, No. 3), where he has collected much valuable textual data about the other *tāla* images. Since the publication of Rao's Work, *Śilparatna* of Śrīkumāra has been edited in the Trivandrum Sanskrit Series and now it is possible for one to check some of these data with the help of the edited text.

UTTAMADAŚATĀLA

	Śilparatna		*Kāraṇāgama*		*Kamikāgama*		*Vaikhānasāgama*	
	Aṅgula	Yava	Aṅgula	Yava	Aṅgula	Yava	Aṅgula	Yava
The height of the *uṣṇīṣa*	1	3	1	...	1	...	1	3
From it to *keśānta*	3	...	3	...	3	...	3	...
From *keśānta* to *akṣisūtra*	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	3
From *akṣisūtra* to nose	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	3
From nose to chin	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	3
From chin to throat	...	4	...	4	...	4	...	4
Neck	3	7	4	...	4	...	3	7
From *hikkāsūtra* to the end of the breast	13	3	13	4	13	4	13	3
From breast to the navel	13	3	13	4	13	4	13	3
From navel to the *meḍhramūla*	13	3	13	...	13	...	13	3
From *medhramūla* to the thigh	27	...	27	...	27	...	26	5
Knee-cap	4	...	4	...	4	...	4	3
Jaṇghā	27	...	27	...	27	...	26	5
Jaṇghā to *pādatala*	4	...	4	...	4	...	4	3
TOTAL	124		124		124		124	...

DAŚATĀLA

I. Height mesurements of a Buddha image of 120 *aṅgulas* according to *Pratimālakṣaṇa*:—

Uṣṇīṣa	4	*aṅ.*
Keśasthān	2	,,
Face	13½	,,
Neck	4	,,
Neck to chest	12½	,,
Chest to navel	12½	,,
Navel to penis	12½	,,
Thigh	25	,,
Knee	3	,,
Shank	25	,,
Gulpha	2	,,
Pārṣṇi	4	,,
Total height ...	120	*aṅ.*

II. Same, according to the *Kriyāsamuccaya* commentary:—

Uṣṇīṣa to neck	20½	*aṅ.*
Neck	4	,,
Neck to chest	12½	,,
Chest to navel	12½	,,
Navel to penis	12½	,,
Thigh	25	,,
Knee	6	,,
Shank	25	,,
Gulpha	2	,,
Pārṣṇi	4	,,
Total height ...	124	*aṅ*

So, the commentary gives us details about a Buddha of the *Uttamadaśatāla* measure.

III. Height measurements of a *daśatālapramāṇa* image according to *Śukranīti*:—

Face	...	...	13	*aṅ.*
Neck	...	...	5	,,
Neck to chest	...	...	13	,,
Chest to navel	...	...	13	,,
Navel to penis	...	...	13	,,
Thigh	...	...	26	,,
Knee	...	...	5	,,
Shank	...	...	26	,,
Pārṣṇi (*gulphādhaḥ*)		...	5	,,
Total height		...	119	*aṅ.*

It is one *aṅgula* less than the full measure. But there is no mention of the height of *gulpha* here.

IV. Same of a *madhyamadaśatāla* image (goddess) according to *Mānasāra*:—

Head (crown to hair-line)	...	...	4	*aṅ.*
Forehead (up to the eye-line)	...	...	5	,,
Nose (up to the lip)	...	...	4	,,
Thence to chin	...	...	3½	,,
Neck-joint	...	...	½	,,
Neck	...	...	4	,,
Hiccough to chest	...	...	13	,,
Chest to navel	...	...	13	,,
Navel to organ	...	...	13	,,
Thigh	...	...	26	,,
Knee	...	...	4	,,
Shank	...	...	26	,,
Foot	...	...	4	,,
Total height		...	120	*aṅ.*

It is to be noted that in most of the above tables (except in that from the *Śukranīti*), the portion above the hair-line is included in the computation of the total height. The author of the *Śukranīti* follows the earlier tradition in leaving it out (cf. *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*; see Pl. VI., Fig. 1).

APPENDIX C

When I edited the text, *Samyaksambuddhabhāṣita-Buddha-pratimālakṣaṇam*, I thought it would be interesting to compare the measurements of a few well-preserved Buddha figures of different periods in the collections of Museums in Northern India, with those laid down in the text. I wanted to find out how far the actual practice tallied with the textual data. While engaged in this work, I measured several representative specimens of Brahmanical images in the galleries of the Indian Museum, Calcutta, and the Asutosh Museum, Calcutta University, with the same object in view. The measurements which I could take with the help of anthropometric instruments were mainly of height or length and rarely of the width of the various sections of the images. Ancient and mediaeval icons are usually relievo-figures; so the periphery of their respective parts cannot be measured. Interspaces can also seldom be measured in most cases, owing to the difficulty in locating the extreme points. Again, as these images, unlike those of Buddha, very often bear on their different limbs a variety of ornaments, it is extremely difficult to be sure about the iconometric data collected from them. So, I took only those measurements about which I could reasonably be sure, and I record them in order that they may be compared with the corresponding ones laid down in the texts. I have initiated this comparison myself, and have shown that there seems to be a fair agreement between the respective data in the case of those images which are comparatively well-executed ones. Most of the images partially measured by me belong to the mediaeval period.[1]

[1] I offer my thanks here to Messrs. S. K. Saraswati, M.A., and T. C. Raychowdhuri, M.A., P.R.S., of the Calcutta University, for helping me in collecting these iconometric data. My sixth-year students of A.I.H.C. (Gr. IB) and Pali (Gr. E) departments (session 1939-40), also helped me in this work.

1. Viṣṇu (from Bihar), formerly in the Indian Museum (No. 3864), now in the collection of the Asutosh Museum; date—C. 9th century A. D.

Height (with *kirīṭa*)	...	67.7 c.m.
,, (without ,,)	...	59.0 ,,
Length of the crown	...	1.3 ,,
,, ,, face	...	7.0 ,,
,, ,, neck	...	2.6 ,,
Neck to navel	...	12 4 ,,
Navel to knee	...	21.3 ,,
Knee to instep	...	12.4 ,,
Instep	...	2.0 ,,
Full height without *kirīṭa*	...	59.0 ,,
Length of the *kirīṭa*	...	8.7 ,,
Width of the face	...	7 ,,

According to the dictum of the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, the *aṅgula* unit of this image would be $\frac{59}{108}$, *i.e.*, ·54 c.m. approximately (decimal places more than two being left out). Now ·54 × 12 is 6·48 which is ·52 less than the actual face-length. But the length and width of the face of the image are the same and there is a close conformity with the text, as regards the measurements of the neck, neck to navel, the shanks and instep sections of the figure. The crown of the head (*i.e.*, from the hair-line to the top of the head) is included here in the whole height. The length of the *kirīṭa*, or *mauli* according to the *Matsya Purāṇa* is 14 *aṅgulas*, which on the basis of the above unit will be 7·56 c.m.; but its actual length is 8·7, or 1·14 *aṅgulas* in excess.

2. Viṣṇu (No. 10. P. C. N.) in the Asutosh Museum, from Eastern India ; date—C. 10th century A. D.

Height (with *kirīṭa*)	...	43.8 c.m.
,, (without ,,)	...	38.5 ,,
,, Length of the crown	...	·7 ,,
,, ,, face	...	5·2 ,,
,, ,, neck	...	1.8 ,,
Neck to navel	...	8·6 ,,
Navel to feet	...	22.2 ,,
		38.5 ,,
Length of the forehead	...	1.6 c.m.
,, ,, nose	...	1.6 ,,
,, ,, chin	...	2.0 ,,
Total face length	...	5.2 ,,
Width of the face	...	5.2 ,,
Width along the shoulders	...	13.8 ,,
,, from arm-pit to arm-pit		8.8 ,,
,, of the waist-line	...	5.9 ,,

The *aṅgula* unit of this image would be $\frac{38.5}{108}$, *i.e.*, ·35 c.m. Now, 4.2(·35 × 12) ought to be its face-length ; but actually it is 5.2 c.m., *i.e.*, a little more than 2 *aṅgulas* in excess. This would be so according to the *Drāviḍa-māna*, but the width in that case should have been 4.2 (which is not so here). It ought to be noted here that the respective lengths of the forehead and the nose of this image approximate to 4 *aṅgulas*, while the same from below the end of the nose to the extremity of the chin is somewhat in excess. A reference to Appendix B will show that according to some texts, the last is a little longer than the first two.

3. Viṣṇu Trivikrama (from Eastern India), now in the Indian Museum (Ms. 13) ; date—C. 11th century A.D.

Height (with *kirīṭa*)	...	77.9 c.m.
,, (without ,,)	...	66.2 ,,
Face length	...	7.1 ,,
Chin to navel	...	17.9 ,,
Navel to knee-top	...	21.7 ,,
Patella	...	2.5 ,,
Shanks	...	14.45 ,,
Pārṣṇi	...	2.55 ,,
		66.2
Width of the face	...	7.1 c.m.
Length of the forehead	...	2 ,,
,, ,, nose	...	2.4 ,,
Nose to chin	...	2.7 ,,
Width of the waist	...	8.7 ,,
From shoulder to shoulder	...	21.4 ,,
,, arm-pit to arm-pit	...	14.6 ,,
Width of the middle digit of the medius	...	.9 ,,

The *dehalabdha-aṅgula* unit of this figure is ·61 c.m. The length of the face according to the textual basis would be 7·32 (·61 × 12), which is very close to the actual face length. The sameness of the length and the width of the face fully endorses the textual data. It should be noted that the three sections of the face are not equal in our sculpture; but the length of the nose very closely corresponds to what has been enjoined in many of the *Śilpaśāstras*; the actual measurement is 2·4 c.m., while the academic one is 2.44 (.61 × 4). Here, the *kirīṭa* exceeds the academic length by as much as 3.16 c.m.

4. Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu (from Jessore district, Bengal), now in the Asutosh Museum; date—C. 11th century A. D.

Height (with *kirīṭa*)	...	134.6 c.m.
,, (without ,,)	...	115.8 c.m.
Crown	...	1 ,,
Face-length	...	13.2 ,,
Neck	...	5.2 ,,
Neck to navel	...	25.7 ,,
Navel to knee	...	36.5 ,,
Shanks	...	29.8 ,,
Feet	...	4.4 ,,
Total	...	115.8 c.m.
The width of the face	...	13.6 c.m.
From shoulder to shoulder	...	38.5 ,,
,, arm-pit to arm-pit	...	26 ,,
Length of the forehead	...	4.5 ,,

The *dehāṅgula* of this image according to previous calculation will be 1.07 and on this basis its face-length ought to be 12·84 which is somewhat less than the actual face-length. If we derive its *aṅgula* on the *adhama daśatāla* basis, then the *dehāṅgula* becomes ·99. Then its academic face length will be equal to 11·88 or 12 ; but still this does not conform to actual length. The actual measurements of the other sections also do not at all conform to the textual data, in whatever manner we may derive the *aṅgula*. The sculpture is not well-executed, and the artist, it seems, did not bother much about the details of measurements.

5. Miniature Viṣṇu (from Sunderbuns, Bengal), originally in the collection of Kalidas Dutt, and now in the Asutosh Museum; date—C. 10-11th century A.D.

Height (without *kirīṭa*)	...	7.5 c.m.
Crown	...	1.4 ,,
Face-length	...	.9 ,,
Neck	...	.2 ,,
Neck to navel	...	1.3 ,,
Navel to ankles	...	3.4 ,,
Pārṣṇi	...	.3 ,,
Total	...	7.5 c.m

Width of the face	...	.9 c.m.
Length of the forehead	...	.3 ,,
,, ,, nose	...	.3 ,,
,, ,, chin	...	.3 ,,

This is a very well-carved miniature figure of Viṣṇu and the artist seems to have closely followed the details of the *nava-tāla* mode. One thing to be noted here is this: in each of the image measured up till now, the top of the crown of the head is included in the academic measurement of the whole height of the figure. In the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, the portion above the *keśarekhā* seems to be left out of it. But in later texts on iconometry, this is not the case.

6. Śiva (from Bihar), now in the Indian Museum (No. 3851); date—C. 10th century A.D.

Height (with *jaṭāmukuṭa*)	...	77.7 c.m.
,, (without *jaṭāmukuṭā* up to the hair line)	...	68·1 ,,
Length of the face	...	7.7 ,,
Neck	...	5.8 ,,
Neck to navel	...	14.4 ,,
Navel to knee	...	23.9 ,,
Knee to foot	...	16.3 ,,
Total	...	68.1 c.m.

Width of the middle digit of the medius	...	.5 c.m.
The height of the Prabhāvali with *pīṭhikā*	...	98.4 ,,
The height of the *pīṭhikā*	...	11.6 ,,
The width of the waist	...	8.6 ,,
From arm-pit to arm-pit	...	12.3 ,,
The height of the *jaṭāmukuṭa*	.	9.6 ,,

The *navatāla* measure of this sculpture does not seem to include the length of the top of the crown and this is thus laid down in the *Bṛhat-saṃhitā*. Its *dehāṅgula* is ·63 and its face-length fairly corresponds to the academic one of 7.56. The correspondence is not so approximate in the other sections of the body measured by me.

7. Sūrya (from Bihar), now in the Indian Museum (No. 3934); date—C. 10th century A.D.

Height (with *kirīṭa*)	...	72.1 c.m.
,, (without ,,)	...	62.0 ,,
Face-length	...	7.2 ,,
Neck	...	2.8 ,,
Neck to navel	...	13.7 ,,
Navel to feet	...	38.3 ,,
	Total	62.0 c.m.
Width of the face	...	6.9 c.m.
,, ,, waist	...	9.5 ,,
From arm pit to arm-pit	...	11.8 ,.
Middle digit of the medius	...	.75 ,,
Height of the *prabhāvalī* with *pīṭhikā*	...	91.3 ,,
Height of the *pīṭhikā*	...	11.2 ,,

The *dehāṅgula* of the above sculpture will be ·57 which is ·18 less than the width of the middle digit of its medius. That the former was the measuring unit is proved by the fact that the actual length of the face approximates to its 12 times. The length of the face is however a little more (·3) than its width.

The height measurements in the lower parts of the body do not conform to the textual data.

8. Hari-Hara (from Bihar), in the Indian Museum (No. 3969); date—C. 10th century A.D.

Height (without the head-dress)	...	113.6 c.m.
Face	...	15 ,,
Neck	...	3.5 ,,
Neck to navel	...	25.2 ,,
Navel to feet	...	69.9 ,,
Total	...	113.6 c.m.

Its *dehāṅgula* is 1·05. Calculating on this basis, there is some discrepancy between the actuals and the textual data.

9. Kārttikeya (from Eastern India), now in the Indian Museum (No. A.S.B -MS. 2); date—C. 8th century A.D.

Height (including head-dress)	...	47.2 c.m.
,, (without ,, ,,)	...	40.7 ,,
Face	...	4.8 ,,
Neck	...	3.1 ,,
Neck to navel	...	8.3 ,,
Navel to feet	...	24.5 ,,
Total	...	40.7 c.m.
Width of the face	...	4.8 c.m.

The *dehāṅgula* of the above sculpture is ·37. The actual face-length of the image is ·36 less than the academic one. But the former is equal to the measurement of the width of the face.

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ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS

P.	L.	
11,	29 :	Read 'arranger or compiler' in place of 'explanator or expounder.' The latter sense is secondary; in Monier-Williams' Sanskrit-English Dictionary, one of the meanings of the word Vyasa is 'a Brāhmaṇa who recites or expounds the Purāṇas, etc., in public (*pāṭhaka-brāhmaṇa*).
16,	16 & 17 :	Read 'Vardhaki' in place of 'Varddhakī.' The word has been rendered into English as 'carpenter' by Monier-Williams.
16,	30 :	The word '*balabandhu*' has not been translated by me. In the *Mārkaṇḍeya-Purāṇa* Balabandhu is given as the name of one of the sons of Manu Raivata; in the *Vāyu Purāṇa*, a son of Bhṛgu in the 10th Dvapara is known by the same name.
19,	25 :	Read '*Catalogorum*' in place of '*Catalogoarum.*'
21,	16 :	Delete, ',' after the word 'edition.'
41,	13 :	Read 'accept' in place of 'accepts.'
57,	11-16 :	The Indus Valley seals, however, supply us with the earliest examples of these hybrid forms; the latter have been somewhat elaborately treated in the first part of Chapter V
64,	19 :	Read 'VIII' in place of 'VII'
69,	31 :	Read '*krīḍaṇti*' in place of '*krīḍaṇta.*'
71,	16 :	Read '*ramramāṇaḥ*' in place of '*ramramāṇaḥ*'
96, 108, 110, 111,	1, 16, 19 23 :	Read 'Kuvera' in place of 'Kuvera.'
97,	29 :	Add after 'livelihood'—'This is supported by a verse in the *Nārada Pāñcarātrā* (*Bharadvāja Saṃhitā*, IV. 29), which says that one should never use the images of gods as the means of their livelihood. The whole verse reads : *Na ca mantropajīvī syānna cāpyarcopajīvikaḥ* / *Nānuvṛttabhogaśca na ca nindyānuvṛttikaḥ* ‖ Reference may also be made in this connection to Pāṇini's Sūtra - *Jīvikārthe cāpaṇye* already noted in the third chapter.
97,	33 :	Read 'earlier' in place of 'earliar.'
109,	10 :	Read '*M.A.S.I.*, No 30' in place of '*ibid.*'
110,	19 :	Read 'Ajakalaka' in place of 'Ajakālako.'
124,	6 :	Insert '(Pl. I, Fig. 22)' after 'article.'
128,	1 :	Read 'Rudragupta' in place of 'Rudramitra.'
135,	6 :	Read '35 in place of' 33.'
143,	6 :	Read 'datable' in place of 'dateable.'
148,	15 :	Put '82' after 'verse.'
150,	31 :	Read 'V' in place of 'M.'
157,	17 :	After 'device' insert the following—'The *Mahāmāyūrī* informs us that Kumāra Kārttikeya was the world-famed tutelary deity of Rohitaka (v. 21-*Rohitake Kārttikeyaḥ kumāro lokaviśrutaḥ*).
169,	11 :	Put a ',' after 'reproduced.'
173,	31 :	Read 'in', in place of 'on.'
178,	1 (f.n.) :	Read '393' in place of '33,'

182, 1 (f n.) : Read '336' in place of '936.'

193, 7 : Insert 'so', before 'many.'

205, 21-2 : Read 'In any case' in place of 'In many cases.'

206, 1 : Read 'XJa' in place of 'XL a.'

209, 34 : Read '107' in place of '10.'

217, 13 : Read 'XXI' in place of 'XIX.'

236, 15 : Read 'the' in place of 'these.'

239, 22 : Read '*piṇḍikās*' in place of '*piṇḍas.*'

250, 8 : Read 'Pāñcarātra' in place of 'Pāñcarātra'.

257, 23 : Read 'reminds' in place of 'remind.'

258, 5 : Insert the following sentence after 'Ravi'—'Hermes on some coins of Azes I with the scarf placed on the upper half of his body, his standing posture, his extended right hand, the manner of holding the caduceus (a wand intertwined with snakes) placed on his left shoulder reminds us also of the Śiva type on the coins of Maues, already discussed.'

258, 28 : Johnston, however, has interpreted recently these two Bhaja reliefs in a different manner. He is of opinion that the so-called Indra-relief there stands for Sūrya and the other one usually identified as Sūrya is Māra; cf. *J.I.S.O.A.*, Vol. VII.

261, 14 (f.n.) : Insert 'is' after 'observation.'

268, 21 : Put, 'us' after 'given.'

273, 8 : Read '*śāntidaḥ karaḥ*' in place of '*śāntidakara.*'

274, 11-12 : I have made no distinction between '*añjali, vandanī* or *namaskāra mudrā*, though the last denotes also the action of touching the forehead with the folded hands. The idea of reverence underlies each of the above terms

275, 27 : Read '*Samaññaphalasutta*, for *Samānñaphalasutta.*'

278, 2 (f.n.) : Read 'Ajakālaka' for Ajalkāda

281, 10 : Insert 'in remarking' after 'justified.'

285, 6-12 : It was Dr. Stella Kramrisch who first drew the attention of scholars to this unique image. I have given the reference to her article in the footnote.

287, 27 : Read 'is' in place of 'are.'

290, 29 : Read 'pl. VII' in place of 'pl. VIII.'

292, 11 : Read 'archers' in place of 'arches.'

292, 29 : Read '*samapādaṃ*' in place of '*samapadam.*'

295, 4 : Read 'gluteals' for 'glutuses.'

296, 5 : Insert 'and Fig. 16 in pl. II' after 'Plate III.'

296, 7 : Read 'Pl. II' for 'the same plate.'

300, 24 : Omit 'thus.'

302, 3 (f n.) : Insert '*devā*' after '*yatra.*'

301, 31 : Add the following after 'work'—'Nandikeśvara speaks of as many as 28 single (*asaṃyuta*) and 24 combined (*saṃyuta*) hands (*hastas*) His list differs from the *Viṣṇudharmottara* list in supplying us with a few names like *ardhapatāka, mayūra, candrakalā śarpa-śīrṣa, siṃhamukha, tāmracūḍa* and *triśūla* in the case of the former types of hands (*mṛga* in the *Viṣṇudharmottara* list is omitted and *sola padma* in his list is probably the same as *kālapadma* in the other list); the *saṃyuta hastas* in the *Abhinaya darpaṇa* are more numerous, and thus new names, such as *Śiva-liṅga, kartari-svastika, śakaṭa, śaṅkha, cakra, sampuṭa, pāśa, kīlaka, matsya, kūrma, varāha, garuḍa, nāga bandha, khaṭvā* and *bheruṇḍa* are included in the list which, however, omits four, viz, *vardhamāna, niṣidha, makara* and *gajadanta* from the

Viṣṇudharmottara one (*khaṭaka* in the latter is a mistake for *kaṭaka* which is written as *kaṭaka-vardhana* in the former). These have been elaborately described in the *Abhinayadarpaṇa*, and the joint authors of *The Mirror of Gesture* have made elaborate comments on the description and have illustrated many of these hard poses by drawings from old sculptures and from life (Coomaraswamy and Gopālakrishnāyya, *The Mirror of Gesture*, 2nd Edition, pp. 45, ff. and plates VII, VIII, XIV-XX).

305, 1 : Read 'contain' in place of 'contained.'

313, 19 : Delete 'it.'

314, 6 : Add after 'precision'—'Is it to be described as '*triśikha*' (a head-dress with three peaks) 'mentioned in some texts?'

317, 1 (f.n.) : Delete 'W' after 'E.'

321, 1 : Read 'mostly' in place of 'always.'

322, 26 : Put a ',' after 'shown.'

326, 24-35 : It was Dr. Stella Kramrisch who first enunciated this principle of dating relievo-sculptures of the early and late mediaeval periods, mostly belonging to the Eastern Indian School, with the help of the *prabhāvalī* of the image (*cf* her observations in 'Pāla and Sena Sculpture,' *Rūpam*, No. 40). I regret that I have omitted through inadvertence to mention her name in the footnote.

328, 31 : Read 'describe' in place of 'describes.'

329, 20 : Read 'bow' in place of 'cow.'

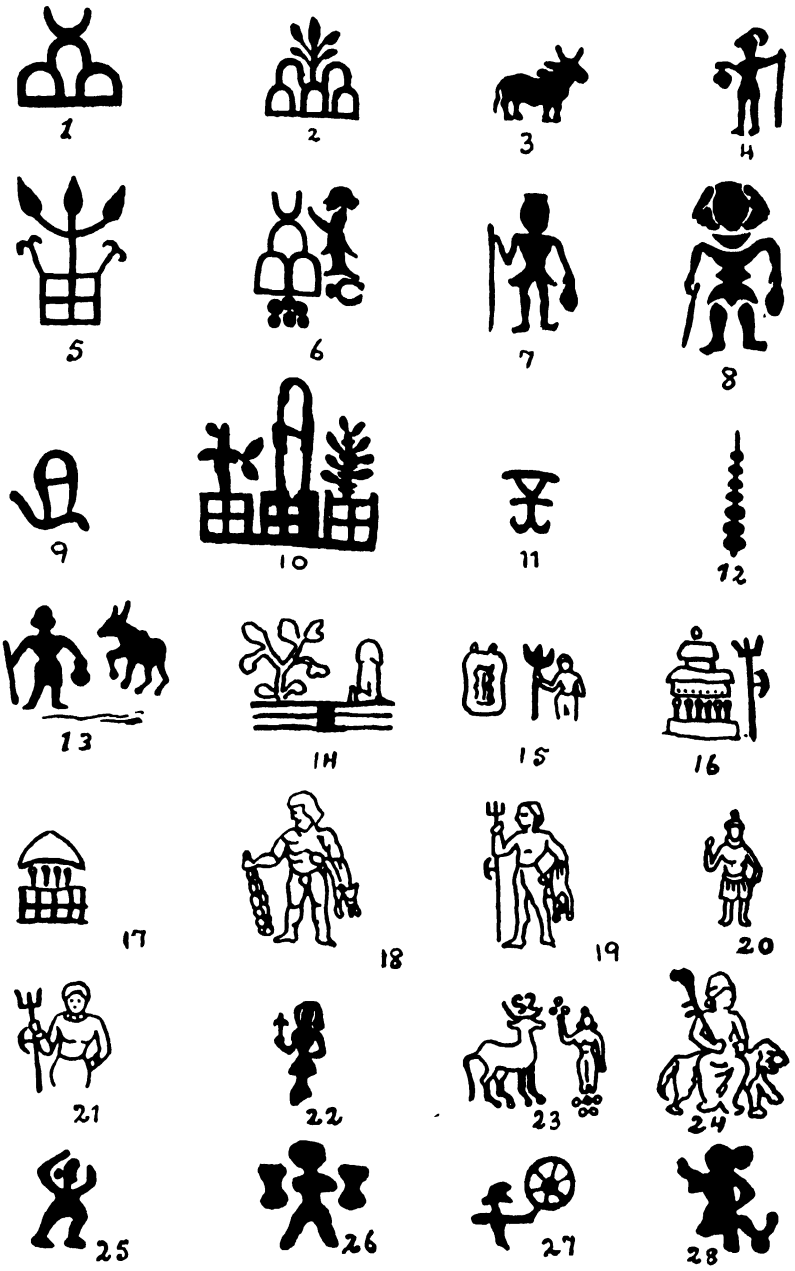
330, 3 : Read '19' in place of '129.'

330, 11 : Read 'Fig. 6' in place of 'Fig. 8.'

332, 11 : Read 'pl. VIII' in place of 'pl. VII.'

351, 6 (f.n.) : Read '*sama*' in place of '*samā*.'

PLATES



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Fig 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig 4

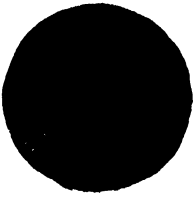


Fig. 5

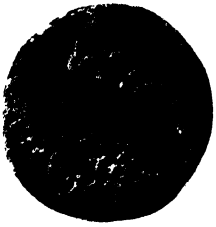


Fig. 6

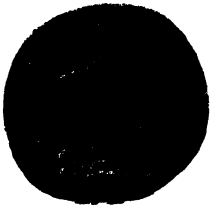


Fig. 7

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Fig. 1

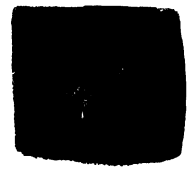


Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig 4

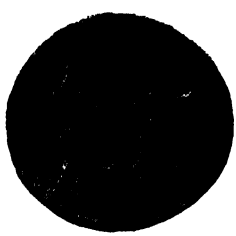


Fig. 5

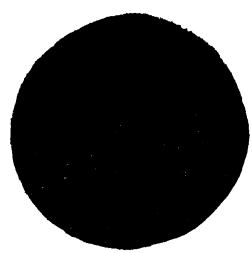


Fig. 6

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Fig. 1



Fig. 2.



Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Fig. 5



Fig. 6



Fig. 7

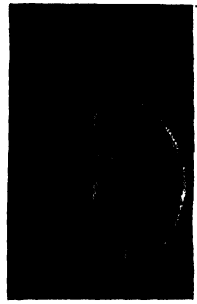


Fig. 8



Fig. 9

By courtesy of the British Museum


1


2


3


4


5


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By courtesy of the Archaeological Survey of India.