

# PRATIMA KOSHA

A Descriptive Glossary of Indian Iconography  
in Six Volumes

*Vidyalkara*

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 ŪRDHVA –DRSHṬI  
 ŪRDHVA -PUNDRA  
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 EKA-TĀLA  
 EKA-DANTA-GANAPATI  
 EKA-DEVATĀRCHANA  
 EKA-PĀDA-MŪRTI  
 EKA-BERA  
 EKA-MŪRTI-ĀLAYA  
 EKA-MŪRTI-PRADHĀNA  
 EKĀKSHARA-GANAPATI  
 EKĀDASA-RUDRA  
 EKĀNAMŚA  
 EKĀVALĪ  
 AI AINDRA MANTRA  
 AIRĀVATA  
 AIŚVARYA-LAKSHMĪ



## INTRODUCTION

The present publication is the first of the three volumes that have been planned to be brought out by the Kalpatharu Research Academy, Bangalore. The volumes follow the Sanskrit alphabetical order (akārādi) to facilitate translation into Indian languages. The entries include not only the classical Hindu gods and goddesses, but also divinities worshipped by Jains (both Digambara and Śvetāmbara divisions) and by the Buddhists of Nepal and Tibet (Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna). The details given in the volumes are relied entirely on the Śilpa-śāstras (such as Brhatsamhitā, Mānasāra, Kaśyapa-śilpa, Sakalādhikāra, Īśāna-Śivaguru-deva-paddhati and the Vaishṇava texts of Pāñcharātra and Vaikhanāsa pursuits), and texts like Sādhana-mālā (for Mahāyāna deities) and Rūpa-maṇḍana (for Jaina images). Most of the entries are illustrated by line-drawings of images in temples, basadis and museums. Topics of marginal interest (*e.g.* : temple-construction, image-making and worship rituals) have also been included here.

The first volume covers the words beginning with vowels in Sanskrit alphabet. The second volume will cover those with mute consonants in five groups, and the third volume those with the rest of the consonants. Among various and synonymous names of gods and goddesses, the better-known ones have been selected for providing detailed information, while cross-references have been indicated for others (*e.g.* : VAIVAHIKA-MURTI, see KALYANA-SUNDARA : ANANGA, See KAMA); wherever necessary, background stories for particular iconographical representations have been given.

Many of the illustrations in the volume have been reproduced here with the kind courtesy of the Director, All India Handicrafts and Design Development Centre (Government of India), Bangalore. I am indebted to him as well as to the design artists of the Centre, Sri Appukuttan Achary, Sri K.V. Bhandari and Sri M. S. Raman. The other line-drawings appearing here were made by myself. The Superintending Archaeologist of the Archaeological Survey of India, Mid-Southern Circle, Bangalore, Dr. B. Narasimhayya, has kindly allowed me to consult the valuable library of the Survey Office, for which I remain grateful.

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**S. K. RAMACHANDRA RAO**



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The Drawings on pages 5, 8, 21, 23, 29, 30, 32, 49, 60, 68, 69, 91, 94, 95, 96, 121, 126, 130, 131, 133, 143, 144, 145, 153, 167, 168, 190, 194 and 201 were made by Sri Appukuttan Achari.

The Drawings on pages 76, 85, 86, 87, 88, 97, 98, 99, 103, 104, 105, 106, 127, 128, 141, 142, 170, 175, 176, 193 and 210 were made by Sri M. S. Raman.

The Drawings on pages 40, 41 and 42 were made by Sri K. V. Bhandari.

All other Drawings have been made by the Author.

All illustrations have been made from actual sculptured icons in stone or bronze from temples or from Museum collections.



# PRATIMA - KOSHA

## Descriptive Glossary of Indian Iconography

(VOLUME ONE)

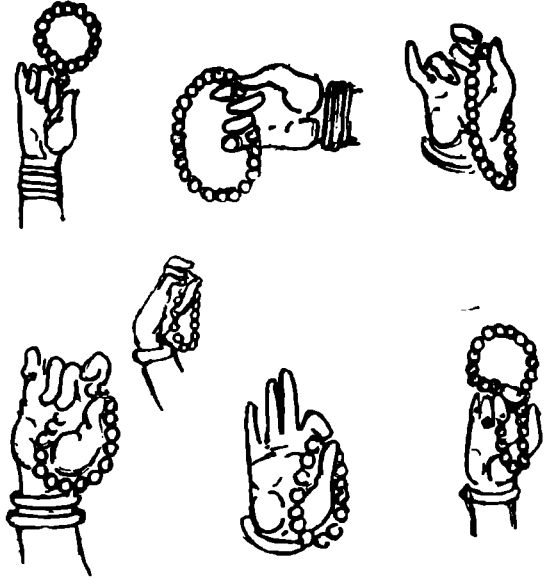
### AKSHAMĀLĀ

A string or rosary (mālā) of beads (aksha, lit. seed or berry like rudrāksha, indrāksha) used in rituals like japa. Three varieties of rosaries are distinguished : (1) varṇa-mālā (representing the fifty phonemes or letters of the Sanskrit alphabet) from 'a' to 'ksha', the latter constituting the 'meru' (the final letter) ; (2) aksha-mālā : made up of beads, seeds or berries like the seeds of the lotus plant (kamalāksha), seeds of the grass known as kuśa, seeds of putra-jīva, berries of rudrāksha, beads made from the tulasī-plant, sandal wood, conch-shell, elephant's tusk or from precious stones (ruby, coral, gem etc.) ; and (3) kara-mālā : finger-joints or parva of the right hand being employed in lieu of beads.

The number of beads in a rosary is prescribed to be 108 for success in all endeavour (material and spiritual), 54 for fulfilment of desires, or 27 for success in practical undertakings. A rosary with beads less than 27 are considered inefficacious. A rosary is required to be consecrated properly before it can be used effectively.

The mantra for consecration of the rosary is : 'māle māle mahāmāle, sarva-tattva-svarūpiṇī ; chaturvargas tvayi nyastas tasmān me siddhidā bhava' (*Vārāhi-tantra*). The bead representing the 'meru' is regarded as representing the very form of the deity (devatā-svarūpa), and is specially consecrated with the mantra 'ham sauh'.

The representation of rosary in iconography indicates the essential spiritual orientation of the deity, such as involvement in penances and austerities (tapas), study of sacred texts (vidyā), and bestowal of wisdom



AKSHA-MALA

(prajñā). It can be seen in the right hand of icons like those of Śiva (especially in the form of Dakṣiṇāmūrti), Brahma, Sarasvatī, Gāyatrī, Uccishṭa-gaṇapati, Aṣṭa-bhuja Vīra-lakṣmī, Tripurā-bhairavī, Bālā-tripura-sundarī, Brahma-śāstā, Vajra-prastāriṇī, several yoginīs and sages. Often, the hand carrying the rosary will also be in the gesture of exposition (vyākhyāna-mudrā) or imparting the liberating wisdom (chin-mudrā). Sometimes the rosary is stylized as an āyudha, a circular implement, with a handle.

### AKSHOBHYA

"Imperturbable", name given to one of the most popular divinities in the Mahāyāna pantheon, especially in China and Tibet. Sometimes, he is identified with the primordial



and transcendental reality, Ādibuddha (see Ādibuddha), but more often as an emanation thereof (a jina or dhyāni-buddha). As an emanation, he represents the transcendental reality reflected in the phenomenal world as consciousness (vijñāna-skandha) (see Dhyāni-Buddha for the idea of the five-fold family of divinities called Kulas).

He is placed in the eastern quarter in the maṇḍala pertaining to the pentad of emanations ; his abode is the 'land of great delight' (abhi-rati), and he is said to originate from the seed-syllable 'hūm' (blue in colour), situate within the solar orb. He represents the winter season, noon-time, pungent-taste, power of audition, the phenomenal dimensions of ākāśa and sound, and the palatal group of letters in the Sanskrit alphabet (cha-varga). He is symbolized by the thunderbolt (vajra). His consort is Māmakī, who however is rarely represented, and his offspring is Vajrapāṇi ('wielder of the thunderbolt'), who is popular in Tibet and China.



AKSHOBHYA

Iconographically, he is represented as a Buddha (Tathāgata), having two arms, the left hand resting on the lap, sometimes holding the wish-fulfilling jewel (chintāmaṇi), and the right hand in the 'earth-touching gesture'

(bhūmi-sparśa-mudrā) (see Mudrā). Rarely, he has four arms, carrying in his free hands (*viz.*, besides the normal right hand which assumes the characteristic bhū-sparśa-mudrā), thunderbolt (vajra), discus (chakra) and lotus (padma) ; or six arms, carrying the additional weapons, bell (ghaṭṭā) and the wish-fulfilling jewel (chintāmaṇi). He is seated in the posture called 'vajra-paryāṅka' (see Āsana), crossed legs with soles of the feet turned upward. Often, he is represented alone, but sometimes he is shown united with his consort Prajñā-sparśa-vajra in the 'yuganaddha' (or Yab-Yum) posture.

His vehicle (vāhana) is a pair of elephants. His icons are frequently found in Nepal, Tibet and China.

(For details see account in *Advaya-vajra-saṁgraha*).

## AGASTYA

One of the most eminent sages, especially associated with the spread of culture in South India. Son of Mitrā-Varuṇa, the twin Ādityas (see Āditya), he is also called Kumbha-sambhava (because he was born of the pot into which the semen of the Ādityas fell when they were excited by the beauty of the celestial nymph Urvaśī). Vaśiṣṭha, another eminent sage, is said to have been his half-brother. A variant legend makes him the son of Pulastya and Havirbhuk (daughter of Kardama-Brahma). He is reputed to have drunk the entire ocean in order to expose the demons known as Kāleyas who had hidden in its depths. He is also said to have eaten up the wicked asura Vātāpi, who was tormenting the mankind (*Arthaśāstra*, 1, 6, 11 also Mbh. Vanaparvan). He was responsible for depriving the impatient and arrogant Nahusha of his position as the chief-tain of the celestial realm, having cursed him to become a serpent for ten thousand years. He married Lopāmudrā, daughter of the ruler of Vidarbha. The place of marriage is said to be Pañchavaṭī, near Nasik (in Maharashtra).

Agastya is celebrated to have made the Vindhyan ranges (which separated the Āryāvarta, *viz.* the northern tracts of India, from Dakṣiṇāpatha, *viz.* southern tracts) bend low. Legends relate that the Vindhya mountain was growing to great heights, aspiring to become

as tall as the mythical Meru and that Agastya snubbed effectively this attempt (hence the name Agastya, which means 'one who subdued the mountain', *agam vindhyām styāyati stabhnāti*).

The episode (related in *Devī-Bhāgavata*, 10), however, refers to his crossing the Vindhyan ranges to enter into the southern region. He is said to have come down south, and stayed for some years in Pāñchavaṭī, near Nasik, on the northern outskirts of the Daṇḍa-kāraṇya forests, and later on the Malakūṭa mount near Vātāpi (the present-day Badami in Karnataka), before he moved over to Poḍiyil hill (Malayam, one of the southern-most hills in the Western ghāṭ ranges), which was therefore named 'Agasthiyar-kūṭam'.

He is mentioned in the Tamiḷ classics (like *Paripāḍal* of 6th cent.) as the patron-saint of the Tamil country. He was the member of the first Tamiḷ Śāṅgam. The origin of the



AGASTYA  
(Stone, Punjai temple in Tamil Nadu)



AGASTYA  
(Stone, temple at Tiruvaduturai in Tamil Nadu)

Tamiḷ language, at any rate the first grammatical work in Tamiḷ (*Agattiyam*), is ascribed to his authorship. The author of *Toḷkāppiyam*, the earliest known grammar in Tamiḷ, is said to have been a disciple of Agastya. Many Tamiḷ works on magic, medicine and mysticism are likewise to ascribed him. From the Tamiḷ country, he is said also to have visited Malaya, Indonesian islands, Java and Cambodia.

He is held in high esteem as one 'who brought peace to the world'. After his death, he is said to have become a celestial body (nakshatra). South India has many iconographical representations of this sage, and there are a few shrines also exclusively for him. The Naṭarāja temple of Chidambaram

(Tamiḷ-*nāḍu*) has an excellent sculpture of Agastya-muni, in a relaxed standing posture, short of stature (hence called Kuru-muni, dwarf), right hand in the wisdom-gesture (*chinmudrā*) and the left hand carrying a water-pot (*kamaṇḍala*), and with a prominent belly.

There are shrines associated with Agastya along the banks of the river Kāveri in Karnāṭaka as well as in Tamiḷ-*nāḍu*, because according to *Skanda-purāṇa* (Kāveri-māhātmya), the river owes its origin and course to this sage. There is a *liṅga* called Agastyeśvara even at the source of the river (Brahma-giri) in Koḍagu (Coorg). The Viṣṇu shrine at Kurtālam (in Tamiḷ-*nāḍu*) was transformed by Agastya into a Śiva shrine, according to *Skanda-purāṇa* (Asura-kāṇḍa).

## AGASTYEŚVARA

There are many Śiva shrines in South-India associated with the sage Agastya, as in Anaṅgūr (Māyūram taluk of Tanjore district in Tamil Nadu) or in Perunguḍi (Tiruchy district in Tamil Nadu). But it is usual that the earlier names of these shrines were different, like 'Tirukkarāḷi Mahādevaṛ' or the stone shrine of Mahādeva) for the Anaṅgūr shrine, and 'Tirupperumuḍi Parameśvaraṛ' for the Perunguḍi shrine suggesting that the association with Agastya was a later event.

## AGNI

Agni (literally, 'one who moves upward', *āṅgati ūrdhvaṃ gacchati*) is one of the most prominent of the Vedic gods, who is described as the bearer of the oblations to all other gods (*havya-vāhana*), the sanctifier of the worshipper (*vīti-hotra*), the resplendent one (*bhūri-tejā*), the bright one (*śukra*), the all-pervader (*vaiśvānara*) and the all-knower (*jātavedas*). He is also pictured as burning (*jvalana*), flaming (*kṛśānu*), the 'seven-tongued' one (*sapta-jihvā*, *saptārchi*), with smoke as his banner (*dhūma-ketu*, or *kṛshṇa-vartma*, 'whose path is dark') and having wind as friend (*vāyu-sakhā*). His status in the Vedic pantheon is as the mediator between human devotees and the divine protectors: "only



AGNI  
(Stone, National Museum)

through Agni are the gods reached''. He is not only 'swiftest among messengers' but 'divinest among sages'. He protects the humans, purifies the devotees and guards the elements (*vasu*). His physical form is that of fire on earth, lightning in the mid-region, and sun in the heaven.

His origin is variously given: as the son of the sky (*dyaus*) and earth (*pṛthivī*), and called 'proud' (*abhimāni*); as one of the sons of Kaśyapa and Aditi, and hence included among the 'ādityas'; as the son of Āṅgiras, the ruler of the ancestral spirits, as the eldest son of Brahmā, as one who issued forth from the mouth of the Cosmic Man (*virāṭ-puruṣa*). His wife is Svāhā, which is the standard expression for the offering of oblations in the fire. His three children are Pāvaka ('the purifier'), Pavamāna ('the purifying') and Śuchi ('purity'). He is also celebrated as the guardian of the south-eastern direction (*dikpāla*), and



AGNI

(Stone, Temple in Hemavati, Anantpur dist. of Andhra Pradesh)



AGNI

(Stone, Patna Museum, originally from Mundesvari Hills in Shahabad district)

as 'the forward light' (puro-jyoti) (*Hari-varṇśa*). He is said to be nourished by the offerings of clarified butter during sacrifices.

Iconographically, he is represented in human form with two faces, four horns, six eyes, seven arms (or tongues), and three legs. His body-colour is golden red or tawny (piṅga), and eyes yellow, but his robes are black, and smoke is his helmet or standard. He carries in his hands rosary (aksha-sūtra), burning javeline or pestle (tomara), pot filled with water (pūrṇa-kumbha), sacrificial laddle (sṛk), sprinkler (prokshaṇa), lotus (abja), and flaming spear (śakti). His vehicle (vāhana) is shown as ram (chhāga). But he is also represented as seated in a chariot drawn by four parrots, with wind (Vāyu) as the charioteer. Alternately, he is shown as riding the chariot drawn by golden steeds. He is, according to *Mayamata*, seated on a half-moon seat (ardhachandrāsana), placed in the sacrificial pit (quadrangle). He is frequently represented as an old man (symbolizing his great antiquity), strongly built but with a large belly, adorned with flames, or with a halo of light around his head (for he is the counterpart of

the Sun). He is also shown as flanked by his two wives, Svāhā (expression for offering oblations to gods) and Svadhā (expression for offerings made to the manes). *Āditya-purāṇa* gives the following dhyāna-śloka—

piṅga-bhrū-śmaśru-keśākshah  
pīnāṅga-jaṭharo 'ruṇah  
chhāgasthah sāksha-sūtro'gniḥ  
sapātrchih śakti-dhārah.

"Agni has tawny eye-brows, mustaches, hair and eyes; he is large-made with prominent belly, and is red in body-colour; he rides a ram, and carries a string of beads (rosary) and the flaming spear called śakti; he is resplendent with seven flames".

*Prapañchasāra-saṅgraha* has another dhyāna-śloka :

śakti-svastika-pāśāṅkuśa-varadābhayān  
mukūṭādi-vividha-bhūṣo'avatāt chiram

Pāvakah prasanno vah.

Agni has three faces (tri-mukha), and six hands, carrying the flaming spear (śakti), a weapon shaped in the form of a Greek cross whose arms are bent in the same direction (svastika), noose (pāśa), elephant-goad (aṅkuśa) in his four hands, and the remaining hands being in the gestures of boon-bestowing (varada) and protection-offering (abhaya). There is still another dhyāna-śloka given in the same text which makes him carry besides śakti and svastika, a sheaf of sacred grass (darbha), rosary (aksha), sacrificial wooden laddle (sṛk), another laddle shaped like a spoon (srava) (See also Dik-pala).

## AGNI-KEŚA

An iconographic detail of representing the hair on the head in the shape of flames of fire (in Tamil, śuḍar-muḍi). This may be seen in the images of fierce deities such as Kālī, Pratyāṅgirā, Bhairava, Virabhadra and Sudarśana.

## AGNI-DURGĀ

A form of Durgā, represented as having three eyes (trinetri), and moon adorning her head. She is resplendent like a column of lightning; she is seated on the back of a lion, and is brilliant like lightning and fierce of



AGNI-KESA

aspect (bhīṣaṇa). She is flanked by two damsels each of whom carries a sword (kara-vāla) in one hand and club (kheṭa) in the other. She herself has eight hands, carrying discus (chakra), sword (asi), club (kheṭa), small arrow (viśikha), bow (chāpa), elephant goad (aṅkuṣa), and a flame of fire (anala) in her hands; the eighth hand (the normal right hand) assumes the boon-bestowing gesture (varada). This is the prescription given in the dhyāna-śloka in *Śāradā-tilaka-tantra*. Other texts substitute flame of fire with the gesture of warning (tarjanī-mudrā) in the normal right hand, the left hand assuming the gesture of boon-bestowal (varada). Her body-colour is golden yellow.

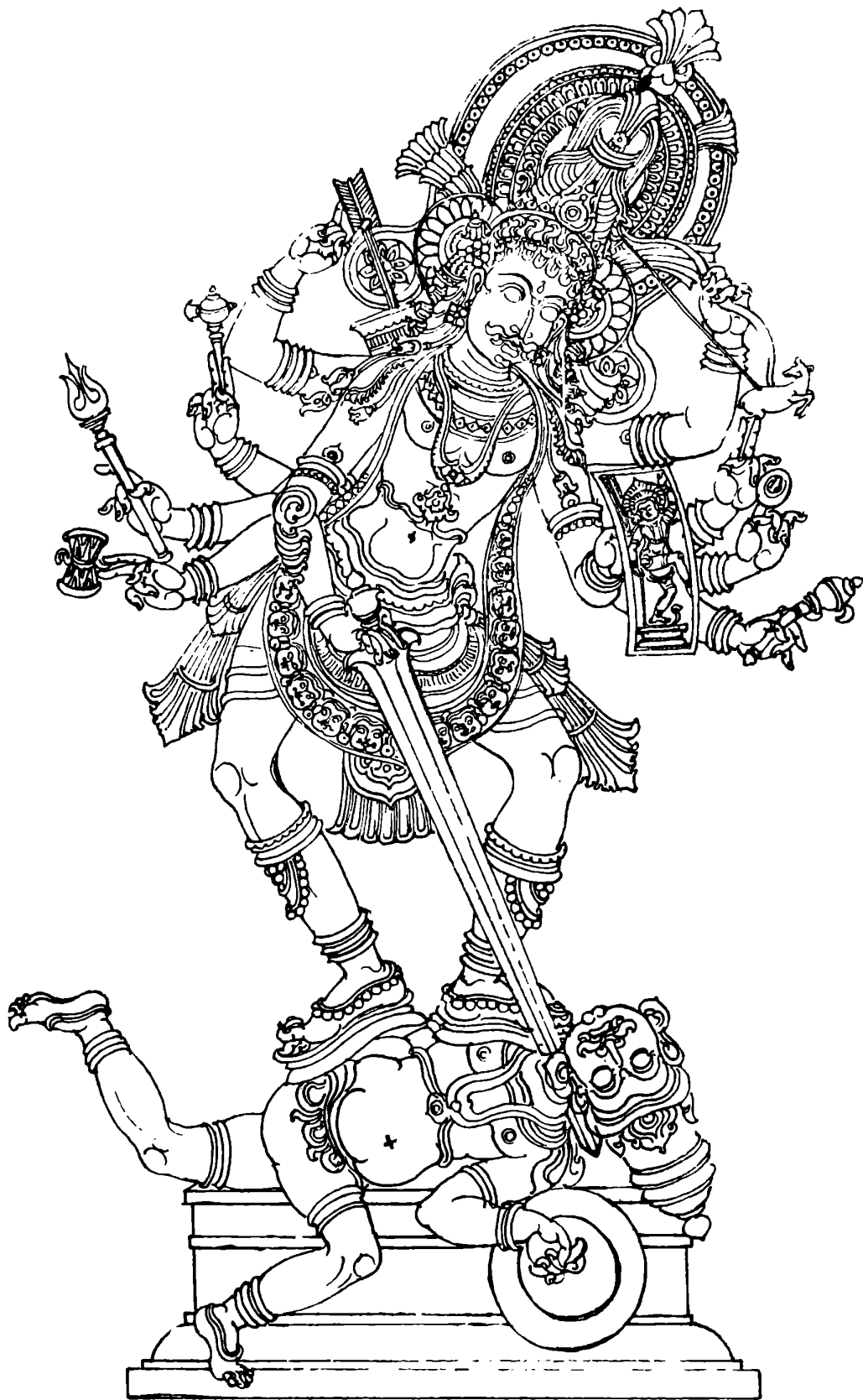
### AGNI-MANTRA

The iconographic representation of Agni has evolved from the mantra specific to that deity. The sage (ṛshi) to whom the mantra was revealed is Bhṛgu, the metre (chandas) of the mantra is gāyatrī; and the power (śakti) of the mantra is "svāhā". The aspects of Agni focussed in the mantra are thousand-rayed (sahasrārchi), beneficent (svastipūrṇa), indwelling (puruṣa), smoke-pervading (dhūma-vyāpī), seven-tongued (sapta-jihvā) and bow-wielding (dhanurdhara). The mantra itself is "Om bhūr-bhuvas-svāhā".

### AGHORA

Literally meaning "not terrific" (saumya or mild and benevolent), one of the two forms of Śiva (Rudra), the other being "terrific" (ghora). Actually, however, the expression signifies "exceedingly terrific" (cf. the Vedic hymn, aghorebhyo the ghorebhyo ghora-ghora-tarebhyah). Aghora is one of the five faces of Śiva (others being Īśhāna, Tatpuruṣa, Vāmadeva, and Sadyojāta); it is regarded as the southern face (dakṣiṇāśya). The five faces represent the five elements, Aghora representing fire.

There are many forms of Aghora, three of which are iconographically significant: one with eight arms, another with ten arms, and still another with thirty-two arms. All the forms of Aghora, however, are terrible in aspect (ghora), dark-blue in body-colour, wearing live serpents as ornaments and a garland of live scorpions round his neck; his body, resembling a dark cloud, (*kāla-megha*), is draped in blood-red garments, and his hair takes the form of flames (*jvālā-keśa*) rising from his head; his mouth is awesome with terrible fangs (*ugra-damṣṭra*). He has three eyes, and the third eye emits fire (*kṛśānu-nayana*). His eyes are tawny red (*piṅgākṣa*). A garland of short daggers (*khaḍga-mālā*) hangs from his neck. His forehead is adorned with ash (from burnt corpse) in the form of crescent moon (cf. *Uttara-kāraṇāgama*).



AGHORA  
(Stone, Minakshi temple at Madurai, in Tamil Nadu)

The form with eight arms (ashṭa-bhuja) carries battle-axe (paraśu) kettle-drum (ḍamaru), sword (khaḍga), club (kheṭa), arrow (bāṇa), bow (ishvāsa), spear (śūla), and human skull (kapāla). Another account replaces spear with a flaming trident (triśikha). The description given in *Rūpa-maṇḍana* specifies that his right hands must carry trident, battle-axe, sword and staff (daṇḍa), while his left hands carry khaṭvāṅga, skull, club and lasso (pāśa). The text also prescribes that he must be shown as valiant and strong (vīrya-bala) and full of great enthusiasm (mahotsāha). Near the Aghora of this form, a bull must be shown, according to *Uttara-kāraṇāgama*.

The form with ten arms, has the above weapons in the eight hands and the remaining two hands are in the gestures of protection (abhaya) and boon-bestowal (varada). According to the account in *Lalitopākhyāna*, this form must be shown as embracing Kālī, with drunken eyes, seated on a lion-seat (simhāsana). The form is worshipped for the obtainment of all prosperity (sarvaiśvaryābhivṛddhi), victory in war (yuddha-jaya), and riddance of all sin (pātaka-doshaghna).

The form with thirty-two arms is represented as joyous in appearance (sadānanda), and as wearing a garland of severed heads (ruṇḍa-mālā). He must be shown as standing on the head of the god of death, and as offering protection from all ill (sarvābhaya-prada). The large number of hands carry, beside the above ten, several gestures (like Jñāna mudrā and kaṭi-hasta), weapons, like khaṭvāṅga, war-bell (ghaṇṭā), snake-lasso (nāga-pāśa), goad (aṅkuśa), fire (agni), mace (gadā), mallet (mudgara), plough-share (muśala), and symbolic objects like book (pustaka), pot (kumbha), rosary (aksha-mālā), lotus (padma), blue lily (kumuda), antelope (mṛga) and jewel (ratna).

*Kāraṇāgama* mentions a form with four faces, and eight arms, carrying hammer (kuṭhāra), club (kheṭa), goad (aṅkuśa), lasso (pāśa) spear (śūla), skull (kapāla), drum (ḍhakkā) and rosary (akshaguṇa).

He is shown as eating up the evil spirits (enemies, dragons and wicked beings). Despite the terrific form, he offers protection to the devotee, tearing asunder his fears and obstacles and granting fulfilment of his desires.

The eight aspects (kalā) of Aghora are darkness (tāmasī), intelligence (medhā), hunger (kshudhā), sleep (nidrā), death (mṛtyu), delusion (māyā), fear (bhaya) and fever (jvara). He is related to deities like Paśupati, Khaḍga-rāvaṇa and Śarabha-sāluva (Kālāgni-rudra), which are involved in magical rites. There is a composite deity known as Aghora-nṛsimha. There are variant representations of Aghora with four faces (*Kāraṇāgama*), ten arms (Pāñcharātra texts), or thirty-two arms (*Śiva-tattva-ratnākara*).

There is a temple, large and splendid, to Aghoreśvara in Ikkeri (Shimoga district in Karnataka) built by the Keladi king Saṅgaṇṇa-nāyaka (1540-1559).

## AṆKURĀRPAṆA

The ceremony of 'sprout-offering' which marks the commencement of a five-day, seven-day or a nine-day temple-festival (especially the festival stretching for nine to fifteen days, known as 'Brahmotsava') (see Utsava). Preparatory to this ceremony (which is to be performed at night, for moon who is the lord of the plants, oshadhīśa, should be the witness), the processional image (utsava-bera) is bathed (snapana) in the morning; and in the afternoon mud is ritualistically collected from a garden or a river-bed (mṛtsaṅgrahaṇa) and brought in procession to the temple after going round the township; a ritual diagram (maṇḍala) with 64 cells is drawn in cow-dung and decorated with various coloured powder in front of the processional image; the ten kinds of seeds, viz. rice (vrīhi), kidney-bean (mudga), gingelly (tila), millet (śyāmāka), a bean-legume (śimba), mustard (sarshapa), tail-pepper (priyaṅka), blackgram (māsha), a variety of pulse known as kulattha (*Dolichos uniflorus*) and cleaned corn (nishpāva) are washed in milk, duly worshipped, tied in cloth and sown in metal or earthen pālikās, filled with mud, to the accompaniment of mantra-recitation; and the spirits in the eight directions are invoked with offerings to protect the seeds from harm (bhūta-krūra-bali).

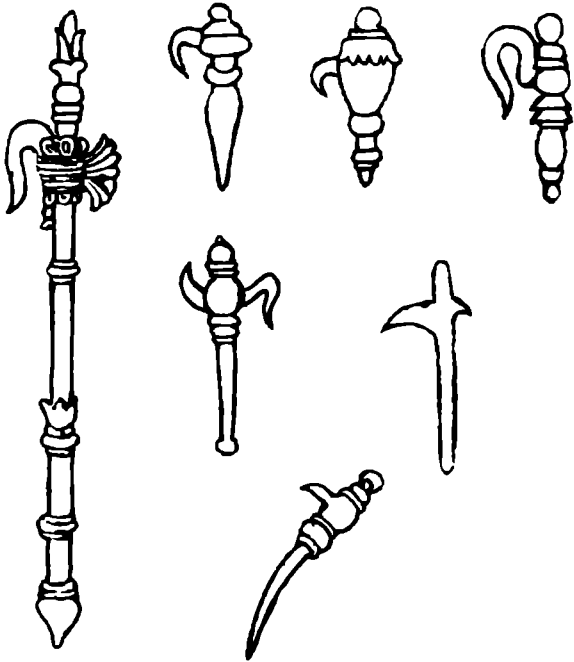
The festival which commences with this ceremony is said to bring about plentiful wealth of all kinds (sarva-sampatsamṛddhi). There are festivals which commence with the



beating of the drum (bherī-tāḍana), to invite the gods to participate, or with hoisting of the flag (dhvajārohaṇa) to signify welfare of the kingdom (See Utsava). More often, however, all three details are involved in the inauguration of a temple-festival. In such an event, the textual prescription is that āṅkurārpaṇa should precede dhvajārohaṇa which should be accompanied by bherī-tāḍana (also called bherikā-ghoṣa).

## ĀṆKUŚA

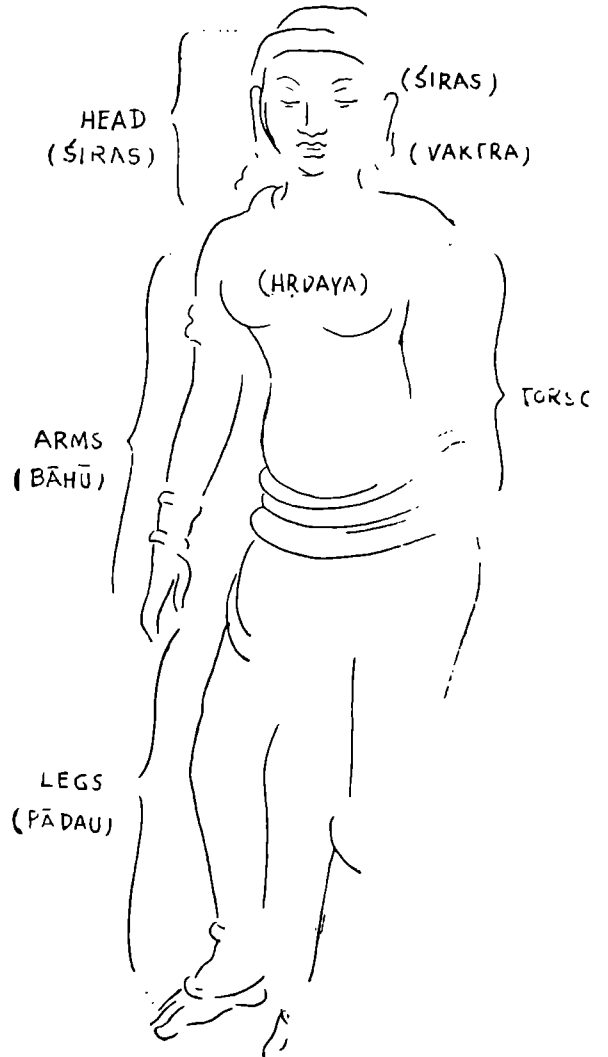
Also called sṛṅgi, it means an elephant-goad, a sharp hooked instrument employed in controlling the elephant. In iconography, it is carried by several deities, principally Gaṇapati and many forms of Śakti (like Tripura-sundarī, Rāja-rājeśvarī, Sarasvatī, Bhuvaneśvarī, Kāmeśī and Chāmuṇḍā). It can also be in a few forms of Śiva, like Aghora, but seldom in the iconographic representations of Viṣṇu. It is usually accompanied by lasso (pāśa), both stylistically portrayed. The goad symbolizes suppression while the lasso represents binding, the former symbolizing will while the latter sensory restraint.



ĀṆKUŚA

## ĀṆGA

The major limbs (avayava) or members of the body represented in an icon: the head, the torso, the arms and the legs. They are distinguished from the minor parts of the limbs (like the eyes, mouth, nose and ears in the head, or the fore-arm, and hand in the arm), called 'upāṅgas' (See Upāṅga and Pratyāṅga). The expression is sometimes used as a general term for the body.



ĀṆGA

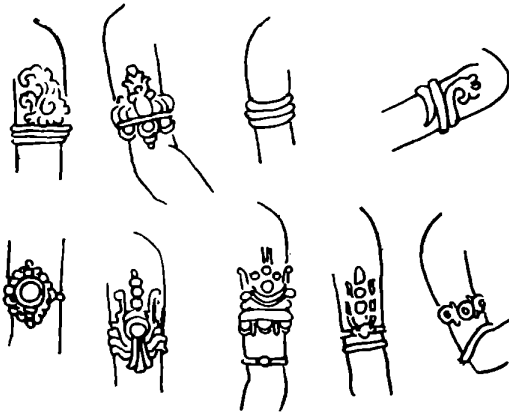
In Śaiva āgama, the expression 'āṅga' (division) refers to head (śiras), mouth (vaktra) and heart (hṛdaya), while 'pratyāṅga' includes chest (vaksha), neck (kaṇṭha), breasts (stana) arms (bāhu), navel (nābhi), genitals or vulva (guhyāṅga), stomach (udara), eyes (netra), nose (nāsikā), mouth (āśya), ears (karṇa), hands (pāṇi), feet (pāda) and fingers (aṅguli) (See Āṅga-Bhāva)

## ANĠA-ĀLAYA

A shrine (often separate) attached to the sanctum (garbha-gṛha) of a temple as its limb or member. Usually several of these limb-shrines are built around the sanctum, as for instance seven of them in the Kailāsanātha temple in Kāñchipuram. Architecturally, they are meant to support the vimāna (superstructure atop the sanctum). These shrines are distinguished from shrines or niches to attendant-divinities (parivāra-devatās) (See PARIVĀRA-DEVATĀ) in that they (the limb-shrines) house only different forms of the deity in the sanctum (as Samhāratāṇḍava, Somāskanda, Bhikṣhātana, Gaṅgādhara and Tripurāri forms in the limb-shrines in the Kailāsanātha temple, above mentioned).

## ANĠADA

A thick golden ornament worn on the upper arm (bāhu-bhūṣaṇa), an armlet. It is also called 'keyūra'.



ANḠADA

## ANĠA-BHĀVA

The expression 'bhāva' is used in the texts of Śaiva-āgama in the sense of mental disposition, contemplation or the act of relating. More specifically, it suggests the reciprocal involvement of the two principles, one indistinct, inarticulate, and devoid of details (nishkalā) and the other distinct, articulate and having details (sakalā). The former is the pure, undifferentiated, and incorporeal Abso-

lute, technically called Śiva-tattva, (a unitary principle), while the latter is the divine manifestation of the glory of the former in terms of the phenomenal universe (called Maheśa-tattva) illustrated iconographically in the twenty-five 'līlā-mūrtis' of Śiva.

The combination (*viz.*, mutual projection) of the two principles is called Sadāśiva-tattva, expressed in five aspects: Śiva, Īśa, Brahma, Īśvara and Īśāna. Each of these aspects appearing in an act of contemplation is a 'bhāva'; and each of the aspects, articulate as they are when impregnated with the inarticulate Śiva-tattva is known as 'sāda' (attempt at articulation).

This is five-fold: Śiva-sāda (purity), amūrta-sāda (incorporeality), mūrta-sāda (corporeality), kartṛ-sāda (purity) (agency in action), and karma-sāda (action). The last four constitute the body (deha) while the first sāda is the soul (dehī). The relation between the body and the soul is also suggested by the expression 'bhāva'. The last 'sāda' (*viz.* karma-sāda) manifests itself in terms of the aniconic liṅga (See LIṅGA) as well as the humanized forms of Śiva (līlā-mūrti).

The contemplation of the visible, humanized form having parts, divisions or members of the body is technically known as 'anḡa-bhāva'. Contemplation on the divisions is regarded as four-fold: (1) 'anḡa', (2) 'pratyāṅga', (3) 'sāṅga' and (4) 'upāṅga'.

(1) 'anḡa', the three major organs of the iconic representation; head (śiras), mouth or face (vaktra) and heart (hṛt);

(2) 'pratyāṅga', minor organs of the icon, *viz.* chest (vakṣha), neck (kaṇṭha), breasts (stana), arms (bāhu), navel (nābhi), genital organ or vulva (guhyaṅga), stomach (udara), eyes (netra), nose (nāsikā), mouth (āśya), ears (karṇa), hands (pāṇi), feet (pāda) and fingers (aṅguli).

(3) 'sāṅga', dispositions of the iconic forms characterized by weapons and emblems like trident (triśūla, representing the three guṇas of prakṛti, *i.e.*, sattva, rajas and tamas), battle-axe (paraśu, representing power or śakti), sword (khaḍga, representing valour or pratāpa) etc. (See ĀYUDHA); and

(4) 'upāṅga', minor details of the icon like dress (vastra), necklaces and garlands

(mālā), ornaments (ābharaṇa) etc. (See UPĀṆGA).

Further, the Maheśa-tattva manifests itself in several iconic forms of Śiva, each of which illustrates a legend glorifying Śiva. These are called 'līlā-mūrti's (sportive forms') and twenty-five of them are counted : Chandra, śekhara, Umā-sahita, Vṛshārūḍha, Nṛtta-mūrti-Vivāha-rūpa, Bhikshāṇa, Kāmāri, Kālāri, Tripurāri, Jālandhara-vadha, Gajāsura-samhāra, Virābhadrā, Harihara, Ardhanārī, Kirātārjuna, Kaṅkāla, Chaṇḍeśānugraha, Vishāpaharaṇa-Chakra-dāna, Vighneśa-prasāda, Somāskanda, Ekapāda, Ānanda, Dakṣiṇāmūrti and Lingod, bhava (See ŚIVA). The organization of the several 'aṅgas' and 'pratyaṅgas' is also technically known as 'aṅga-bhāva'.

## AṅGĀRAKA

The planet Mars (also called Maṅgala), after whom Tuesday is named in India, is one of the nine-planets (nava-graha) extensively worshipped. Personified, Aṅgāraka is regarded as the offspring of Earth (hence called Bhauma, Bhūmija, Dharātmaja and Kuja). His birth is variously narrated in the Purāṇas. *Brahma-vaivarta-purāṇa* (9) describes that when the Earth-goddess looked at Upendra (a form of Viṣṇu), she became love-lorn and begat Aṅgāraka. *Padma-purāṇa* (Svarga-khaṇḍa, 11), narrates that when Viṣṇu was traversing the three realms, he was fatigued, and a drop of his sweat fell on the earth, and thus Aṅgāraka was born. *Matsya-* and *Vāmana-purāṇas* make Śiva responsible for the birth of Aṅgāraka. The former text tells us that the terrible Virābhadrā was born from the sweat of Śiva, who was furious with Dakṣa, as it fell from Śiva's forehead on the earth. After the destruction of Dakṣa, Virābhadrā continued to be a terror to the world, and Śiva thereupon pacified him and made him a planet, named Aṅgāraka. The latter text, however, associates the birth of Aṅgāraka with Śiva's killing of Andhakāsura. Because the sweat of Śiva, which fell from his face upon the earth, assumed the form of a cluster of live coal (aṅgāra-puñjābha), the deity born thus was named Aṅgāraka.

In worship and iconology, Aṅgāraka is always represented as one of the nine planets.

He is made to face the Sun. He is described as reddish hue in form but cruel in looks. He rides a ram (Aries of the Zodiac), and frequents the forests. He is especially powerful during after-noons. He is fond of bitter or pungent taste. He resides in the southern direction ; he belongs to the warrior-caste (kshatriya), and his personality is dominated by tamo-guṇa. He is worshipped for the elimination of diseases and for getting rid of indebtedness.

The image of Aṅgāraka is prescribed to be four aṅgulas in height (chaturaṅgula-pramāṇa). He is represented as four-armed, carrying a spear called Śakti (his distinguishing weapon) and a mace (gadā) in his two upper hands, his two lower hands showing 'boon-bestowing' (vara) and 'protection-offering' (abhaya) gestures (See Navagraha).

## AṅGULA

A unit of measurement in Indian sculpture, iconography and architecture, its employment has been very ancient. We find references to the expression even in *Ṛgveda* (e.g. 'Purusha-sūkta', in the 10th maṇḍala), and other early religious literature (e.g. *Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa*, 10, 2, 1, 2). Altars for sacrifice were constructed, and implements were fashioned in terms of this unit. Strictly, the expression means "finger" or "finger's breadth". Probably, this was the smallest unit of measurement in early times.

In iconography, it is closely associated with 'tāla' (meaning 'short span'), twelve aṅgulas constituting a 'tāla' (see Tāla). An early description of an aṅgula is that it is the one-fourth part of one's own fist (sva-sva-muṣṭeś chaturthāmsō hy aṅgulam' *Śukra-niti-sāra*, 4, 4, 82). A similar account elsewhere (*Pratimā-māna-lakṣaṇam*) defines the measure in terms of the palm of one's hand (pallava), the palm and the fist being interchangeable in terms of width ('pallavānām chaturbhāgo māpanāṅgulikā smṛtā'). It also specifies that the finger-breadth is the lowest measure of man ('tasyaishāvamā mātrā yad aṅgulam').

Indian artists and sculptors (especially icon-makers) conceive of two broad varieties of aṅgula : 'mānāṅgula', which is the absolute measure, and the 'mātrāṅgula', which is a relative measure.

'Mānāṅgula' is the standard unit of measurement. According to *Brhat-samhitā* (57, 1), when the sun's rays pass through a close net-work (jāla, lattice), the breadth of a single beam of light, which is extremely minute (aṇutara) is identified as a 'paramāṇu'. This, of course, is not discernible by the human eye, although it is conceded that adepts (yogins) can develop the power to perceive it. If eight of such 'paramāṇu' measures are lined up, the area covered would be a 'rajas' (lit. 'a speck of dirt') or 'trasa-reṇu'. Eight of these would constitute the measure of the tip of the single strand of hair (vālāgra or romāgra), and eight of these latter would make the measure known as a 'liksha' (lit. 'the egg of a louse'). Eight 'likshas' would constitute a 'yūka' (lit. 'the louse'), and eight 'yūkas' together would be the measure of a standard grain of barley ('yava'). And eight 'yavas' placed side by side would be the measure of a standard 'aṅgula'.

But there are three alternative measures in an 'aṅgula': eight 'yavas' constituting the 'superior' measure of aṅgula (uttama-mānāṅgula), seven 'yavas' constituting the 'middling' measure (madhyama-mānāṅgula), and six 'yavas' constituting the 'inferior' measure (adama-mānāṅgula). If, instead of the barely-corn, a grain of the kind of paddy known 'śāli' is used, then the three varieties would have 4,  $3\frac{1}{4}$  and 3 grains respectively. However, whenever the expression 'aṅgula' is used, it usually refers to the 'superior' measure.

Twelve of these 'aṅgulas' constitute one 'span' (vitasti), which, according to the Brāhmaṇa and Smṛti texts, is the measure between the thumb and the little finger when the palm is extended. There are references to the 'hasta' being an equivalent of two vitastis (e.g. *Mārkaṇḍeya-purāṇa*, 49, 39 'dve vitastī tathā haste'), and measuring twenty-four 'aṅgulas' (*Bhārata* and *Kālikā-purāṇa* quoted in *Tithyādi-tattva*. "adīrgha-yojitair hastaiś caturviṃśatibhir aṅgulaiḥ"). There are other derivatives of 'aṅgula', like kishku ('fore-arm'), cubit, 24 aṅgulas), 'prajāpatya' (25 aṅgulas), 'dhaurgraha' (26 aṅgulas), and 'dhanur-muṣṭhi' (27 aṅgulas). Four 'dhanur-muṣṭhis' constitute a 'daṇḍa' ('rod', 108 aṅgulas).

These derivatives of the 'aṅgula' measure, however, are not employed in iconography or

sculpture. Their use is more frequent in architecture and town-planning.

'Mātrāṅgula' or the relative aṅgula measure is more widely employed, especially in iconography. There is a textual prescription that the icons for use in household worship should be made only in this measure (e.g. *Sakalādhikāra*, 1, 24 "mātrāṅgulair gṛhārchānām pratimānām tu nānyathā"). This measure is defined as the length (dīrgha) or breadth (tata) of the middle digit (parvan) of the middle finger of the right hand of the man for whom the icon is made. There are two alternatives in this measure according to the 'length' or 'breadth' of the digit.

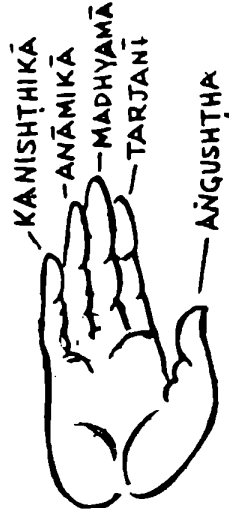
There is another measure known as 'deha-labdhaṅgula'. It is derived from the length of the icon's body (in the vertical plane). For instance, in the 'nava-tāla' images (See Tāla), the proposed height of the image ('abhipreta-pramāṇa') is divided into nine parts, each part in turn being further divided into twelve parts (totalling 108 parts). Each one of these latter twelve parts is regarded as the icon's 'own aṅgula' (svaṅgula, 'pratimāyāḥ svam āfmiyam aṅgula-pramāṇam'). This 'aṅgula' is entirely relative to the body of the icon ('deha-labdha') (*Kāraṇāgama*).

The 'aṅgula' measure, is closely associated with 'tāla' (Tāla), for the aṅgula here is defined as one part of the entire height of the icon according to its 'tāla'. If the image is in 'aṣṭa-tāla', the aṅgula is one of 96 parts; if in 'nava-tāla', one of 108 parts; or if in 'daśa-tāla', one of 120 parts (*Vaiḥānasāgama*, 22).

There is also a measure known as 'golaka' or 'kalā', which is equal to two aṅgulas, which is employed in figuring out the relative sizes of the major and minor 'limbs' of an icon (*Nāradya-Samhitā*, 13, 128, 'anenaiva tu mānena aṅga-pratyāṅga-kalpanā').

## AṅGULI

The finger of the hand or member of the foot. The five fingers are: 'aṅguṣṭha' (thumb), 'prādeśikā' or 'tarjanī' (fore-finger), 'madhyamā' (middle finger), 'anāmikā' (ring-finger) and 'kanishṭhikā' (little finger). The length of the finger, especially the middle finger, is a unit of measurement (see Aṅgula). The distance between the tip of the thumb and the

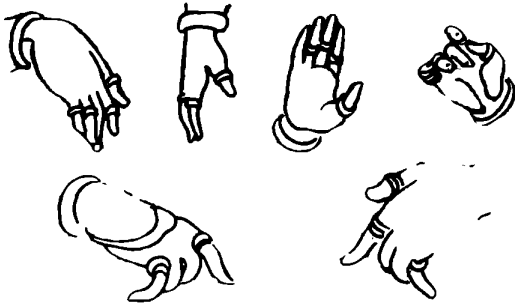


ANGULI

tip of the fore-finger when the palm is fully extended is known as 'prādeśa'; hence the expression 'prādeśika'.

### AṄGULĪYAKA

Ring on the finger, usually made in gold and studded with jewels (hence ratnāṅ-guliyaka).



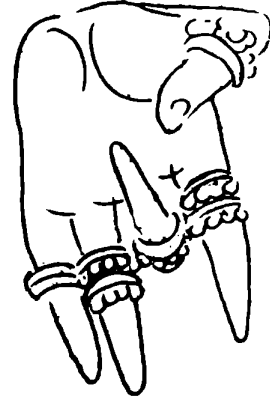
ANGULIYAKA

### ANGUSHṬHĀ

The thumb, especially of the hand.

### ACHALA-BERA

The immovable image in the temple (also called sthāvāra or stationary), usually made of



ANGULIYAKA

stone or wood, sometimes in brick and mortar (stucco), located in the inner sanctum (garbhagṛha). It is fixed to a stone pedestal which in turn is fixed to the ground. The fixture of such images is done in an elaborate ritual known as pratishṭhā involving burying of nine kinds of jewels in a pot (nidhi-kumbha) beneath the image. The image is subsequently not moved from its location or taken out of the sanctum. The main worship in the temple is conducted only for this image.

It is usual to have movable metallic images (chala-bera or jaṅgama) for various purposes like daily bath (snapana), processional rounds (utsava), or food-offering to the other deities within the temple-precincts (bali-haraṇa). These images, however, derive their authority only from the immovable or original image in the sanctum, and in fact deputize for the latter (cf. Śilpa-ratna, 2, 5).

The immovable image in the sanctum may be self-manifest (svayam-bhū), in which case great sanctity is attached to it, or installed by revered sages in the distant past, or got made and installed by human beings (royal patrons or pious folk) in the recent past. The sanctity attached to the images installed by sages is more than that attached to those which are installed by human beings. Legends also relate that some immovable images have been installed and worshipped by gods like Indra, Yama, Agni, Varuṇa and Vāyu. The installation by gods or sages would not have necessitated elaborate rituals (pratishṭhā-vidhi), whereas installation by human beings would be invalid without them.

The Immovable images are usually large in size (sometimes even eight to nine feet in height), in contradistinction to the movable ones. There is a prescription that the movable images must be within nine aṅgulas in height (from the soles of the feet to the hair-line on the head), and that any image taller than nine aṅgulas must be regarded as immovable. But *Aparājita-prcchā* recommends that the wooden images (dāruja) must not be below sixteen aṅgulas or above one hundred and forty-four aṅgulas in height. It also says that no stone liṅga is to be made below one 'hasta' (twenty-four aṅgulas) in height. *Īśāna-śiva guru-deva-paddhati* allows the crystalline liṅga (sphatika-liṅga) to be as tall as eighteen aṅgulas. If the liṅga is below six aṅgulas in height, it is regarded as 'inferior', if between seven and twelve 'midling', and if between thirteen and eighteen, 'superior'.

### ACHYUTA

The 'un-fallen' (viz. one who never slips from his original state) is one of the names of Viṣṇu, and is included among the twenty-four forms (chatur-vimśati-mūrti) of Viṣṇu (See Viṣṇu). Iconographically, he is represented as a standing image (sthānaka), having four arms, carrying lotus (padma) in his upper right hand, discus (chakra) in his upper left hand, mace (gadā) in his lower right hand and conch (śaṅkha) in his lower left hand (*Agni-purāṇa*, 'achyutaś śrī-gadī padmī chakrī śaṅkhī', the emblems in clockwise or pradakṣhiṇa order). His body-colour is like that of the rising sun (reddish hue); and his consort is Sukha-devī, a form of Lakṣmī.

### AJA

'Un-born', one of the eleven forms of Rudra (See Ekādaśa-Rudra). He is also called Mahā-Rudra, and is iconographically represented with sixteen arms, carrying spear (śūla), goad (aṅkuśa), human skull (kapāla), kettle-drum (ḍamaru), snake (sarpa), mallet (mudgara), discus (Sudarśana) and rosary (on the right side), gesture of warning (tarjanī), khaṭvāṅga, mace (gadā), spike (paṭṭiśa), war-

bell (ghaṇṭā), spear called Śakti, battle-axe (paraśu) and pitcher (kuṇḍikā) (on the left).

### AJITA

'Unconquered' or 'unsubdued' (by the phenomenal forces and natural events like birth, growth, decay and death) is one of the names of Viṣṇu, recounted in the celebrated *Viṣṇu-sahasra-nāma* (53rd name). The name Ajita is employed in some Pāñcha-rātra texts (like *Lakṣmī-tantra*, 25, 14, 33, 40 etc) as symbolizing the letter 'ja' in the Sanskrit alphabet. It is also involved in the aṅga-mantra 'jvā dhvajāya namaḥ' (*ibid.* 33, 94).

### AJITA-NĀTHA

The second among the twenty-four great 'ford-makers' (tīrthaṅkaras) of the present period, of the Jaina pantheon. He was born in Sāketa as the son of Jitāśatru and Vijayā-devī, and after a course of events common to all 'ford-makers' became a 'Victor' (jina) and teacher of mankind. He is regarded as one of the 'satata-devatas' (divinities). As a divinity, his characteristic colour is golden, and emblem elephant. All the 'ford-makers' are represented iconographically in identical forms, two-armed and naked, standing in the contemplative pose (kāyotsarga) or seated in padmāsana, but each of them has a distinguishing symbol (usually an animal, but sometimes a bird or a plant). Ajita-nātha is identified by the elephant, carved beneath the image in the pedestal. He is also accompanied by the attendant guardian-spirits Mahāyaksha and Rohiṇī-yakshi. The leader of the community (gaṇa-dhara) during his dispensation was Siṃha-sena.

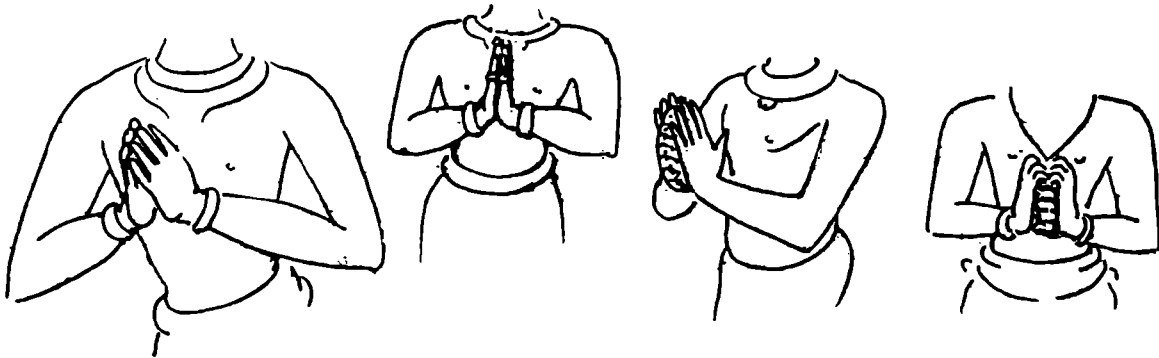
### AJAIKAPĀT

The 'un-born', 'one-legged' god is regarded as the highest god even in the earliest hymnology (e.g. *Rgveda*, 6,50,14; 10,64,4 and 10,66,11). He has been regarded as a god to whom worship is due (cf. *Taittirīya-samhitā*, 4,4,10,3, 'aja-ekapād devatā'; and *Taittirīya-*

*brāhmaṇa* 3,1,5,10, 'ajāyāikapade svāhā'). In later literature he is variously identified with the sun, the serpent (ahir-budhnya), the wind, Rudra and Viṣṇu. He is regarded in *Mahābhārata*, *Harivamśa* and *Viṣṇu-purāṇa* as one of the eleven Rudras (See Rudra) cf. *Mahābhārata*, saṃbhava-parva, 1,123,65, and as intimately associated with Ahir-budhnya (See Ahirbudhnya). In *Viṣṇu-saṃhitā*, he is identified with Viṣṇu ('chatur-ātmā chaturbhāvaś cha chatur-veda-vid eka-pāt').

The exact significance of 'one-legged' (eka-pāt), however, is not clear. The 'un-born' and 'one-leg' are together interpreted as signifying Primordial Nature (prakṛti), which is unique and undifferentiated in its aboriginal condition, and which is a mosaic of three colours (standing for the three constituent guṇas of prakṛti), viz. red (rajas), black (tamas) and white (sattva) (*Taittirīya-āranyaka*, 10, 10, 1 'ajām ekām lohita-kṛṣṇa-śuklām', also in *Śvetāśvatara upanishad*, 4, 5 and *Mahā-nārāyaṇīya*, 9). The expression 'aja' also means in Sanskrit 'goat', and the expression 'ajaikapāt' is explained as 'having one leg in the form of a goat's leg'. The 'goat' is also a figurative expression for 'prakṛti'. Brennhofer has suggested that 'ajaikapāt' in *RgVeda* is really a term denoting Pole-Star. For details, see A. A. Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology*, Strassburg 1897, pp. 73-74.

In South Indian temples a one-legged form of Śiva known as Eka-pāda-mūrti can be seen, having his upper part of the body flanked by Brahmā and Viṣṇu (The three gods denoting the three guṇas). This is an iconographic representation of Ajaikapāt (See Eka-Pāda-Mūrti).



ANJALI-MUDRA

## AÑJALI-MUDRĀ

A gesture in dance, worship and sculpture where both open hands are folded and joined (samyukta-hasta) to form a slight hollow or cavity, to mark a reverential attitude or supplication. The iconographic representation of this gesture can be seen in minor divinities (like Hanumān, Garuḍa, and Nandī) in the act of attending on major gods (like Rāma, Viṣṇu and Śiva respectively) or in sages (like Patañjali and Vyāghrapāda in the temple of Naṭarāja at Chidambaram) or in human devotees (like the Vaishṇava Ālwārs or Śaiva Nāyanmārs, royal patrons and donors).

## ATI-CHAṆḌĪ

Considered in some texts as one of the nine Durgās (See Nava-Durgā), this fierce form of the goddess is more often seen among the nine-fold retinue (parivāra) of Chaṇḍī (See Chaṇḍī), as for instance in *Skanda Yāmala*. Chaṇḍī is surrounded by the forms Rudra-chaṇḍā, Prachaṇḍā, Chaṇḍogrā, Chaṇḍa-nāyikā, Chaṇḍā, Chaṇḍāyanī, Chaṇḍarūpā, Ati-chaṇḍī and Ugra-chaṇḍā. Ati-chaṇḍī has sixteen arms, and is of the colour of *chāmpā* flower (viz. yellow).

## ATI-BHAṆGA

One of the four 'flexions' or bodily attitudes in which the standing icons (sthānaka) are represented (See Bhaṅga). It is a variety of the 'three bend' (tri-bhaṅga) attitude, employed to depict superhuman vigour and action. The upper part of the body (the torso) is made to swing to the right or left,



ATIBHANGA





ATIBHANGA



ATIBHANGA



ATIBHANGA

with an arm forcefully stretched out, clutching a weapon (like bow or sword). The attitude can be seen in deities engaged in fight, or in deities roused to anger. Some forms of the

dancing Śiva (See NATARAJA) and some other forms like Kirāta-mūrti and Tripura-saṃhāra-mūrti are instances of this posture.

## ADBHUTA-RŪPA

The form of the god or goddess that inspires awe, and wonderment (āścharya). It remains one of the unusual and portentous sights like the fall of a meteor, rainbow on a clear sky, earth-quake, fire in the four quarters and a shower of blood or of live coal. It is calculated to produce excitement, confusion, paralysis; and it signifies a superhuman achievement. Instances are the forms of Viṣṇu like Ugra-Narasimha (with eight or sixteen arms bursting out of the pillar or tearing open the bowels of the demon), Trivikrama (measuring the three realms with his own strides and breaking open the heavenly vault by his uplifted foot) or Bhū-varāha (rescuing the earth), the forms of Śiva like Ūrdhva-tāṇḍava (with one of his legs turned up in a marvellous dance-posture) or Gajāśura-saṃhāra (tearing the body of the elephant-demon), and the forms of Śakti like Chāmuṇḍā, Mahisha-mardinī (in the act of killing the buffalo demon), or Pratyāṅgirā (lion-faced goddess, riding a lion).

## ADHAMA-DAŚA-TĀLA

A measure prescribed for the images of minor male divinities like Sūrya, Chandra, Kārttikeya (Subrahmaṇya), Chaṇḍeśa, Indra and Kshetra-pāla. The total height is divided into one hundred and twelve parts (digits, aṅgulas, See ANGULA and TALA-MANA as below:

|                                                                                                           |           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| From the top of the headgear<br>(ushṇīṣhāt) till the hairline<br>(keśa-paryantam) ...                     | 4 parts   |
| The length of the face, from<br>the hairline till the jawline<br>(keśāntādi hanvantam) ...                | 12½ parts |
| The height of the neck<br>(gala-tuṅgakam) ...                                                             | 4 parts   |
| From the bottom of the neck<br>till the lower limit of the<br>heart-region (galāntād-<br>dhṛdayāntah) ... | 12½ parts |



ADBHUTA-RUPA : DURGA



ADBHUTA-RUPA : BHU-VARAHA



ADBHUTA-RUPA : UGRA-NARASIMHA

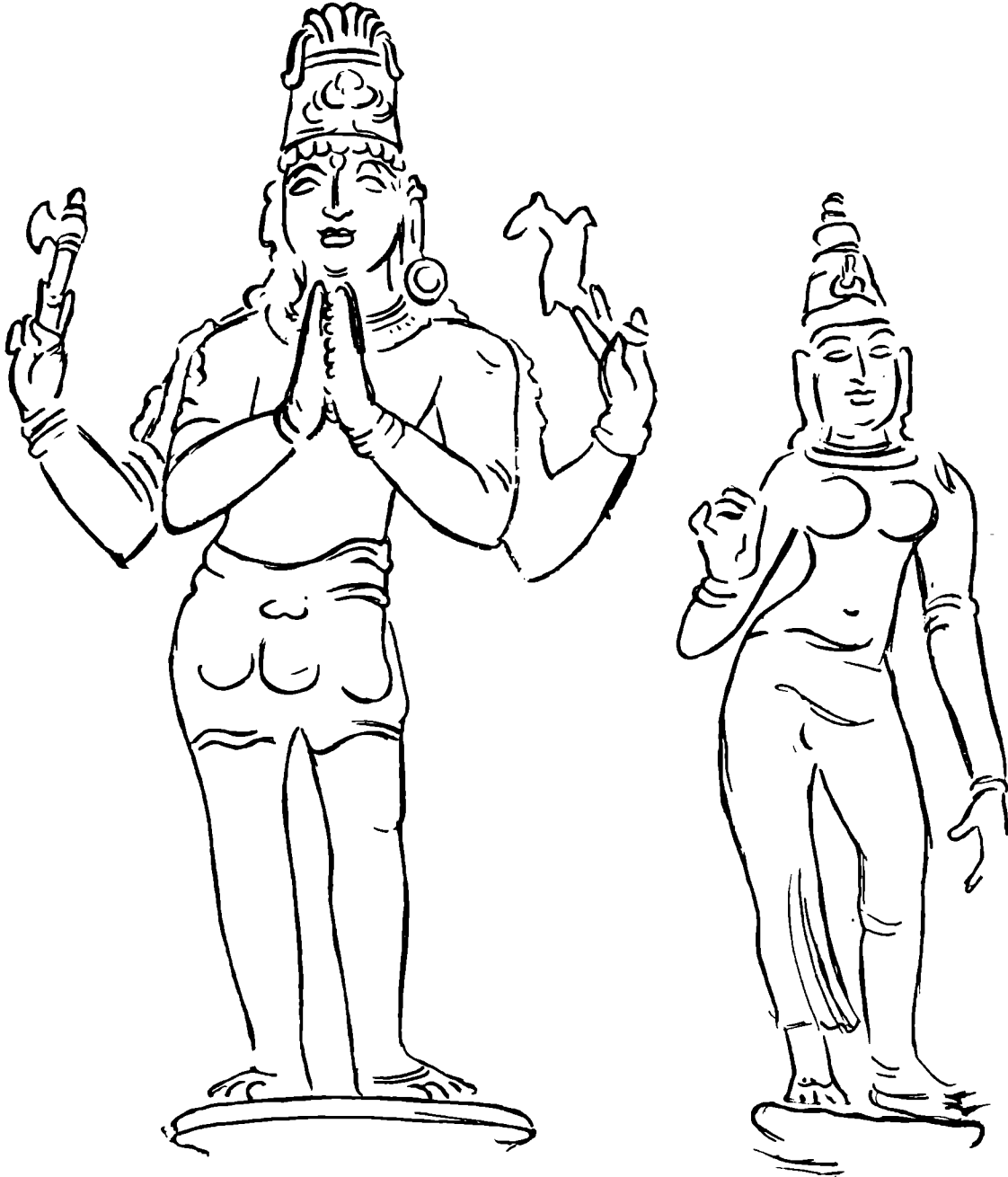
|                                                             |                  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| The belly till the navel<br>(udaram nābhi-simakam) ...      | 12½ parts        |
| From the navel till the penis<br>(maḍhrāntam) ...           | 12½ parts        |
| The height of the thigh,<br>till the knee<br>(ūrudairghyam) | 25 parts         |
| The shank (jaṅghā), same<br>height as thigh ...             | 25 parts         |
| The height of the foot (pāda) ..                            | 4 parts          |
| Total height                                                | <u>112 parts</u> |

## ADHAROSHṬHA

The name of the lower lip.

## ADHIKĀRA-NANDĪ

Nandī (Nandikeśvara), the vehicle, devotee and attendant of Śiva (See NANDI), is known as Adhikāra-Nandī, when he is entrusted with authority to guard the apartment of Śiva and to screen the devotees before they are ushered



ADHIKARA-NANDI (Bronze, Govindaputtur Temple, Tamil Nadu)

in to Śiva's presence. He is represented in human form, showing the gesture of supplication (añjali-mudrā) and also carrying a rod or stick (vetra-yashti) of authority. He is, in the available iconic representations, shown as having four arms, and carrying battle-axe (paraśu) and antelope (mṛga) in his two hands, the other two being in a gesture of supplication (añjali). But for the latter detail, the icon resembles the form of Śiva known as Chandraśekhara. The resemblance is further emphasized by the jaṭā-makuṭa on the head, along with the crescent-moon stuck on it.

*Vishṇudharmottara* prescribes that this form must have four hands, carrying trident (triśūla) and javeline (bhiṇḍipāla) in his two hands; the third hand must be laid on his own head (śirogatam); and the fourth must assume the gesture of warning (tarjani). His gaze must be far away, as if he is looking at devotees of Śiva coming from afar ('ālokayan-tam dūrād āgāminam janam').

This form has also a consort, standing to his left, resembling greatly Pārvatī by the side of Śiva. The iconographic representation of Adhikāra-Nandī appears to have been borrowed from the model of Umā-sahita Chandraśekhara. For legends concerning this detail, see NANDI, and for the circumstance in which Nandī was invested with authority (adhikāra) by Śiva, see ANUGRAHA-MURTI.

## ADHI-DEVATĀ

The deity presiding over an event, an organ, a place, or an image. It is an abstract concept, of which the event and so on are concrete representations.

## ADHIVĀSA

Literally meaning 'residence', the term refers to the ritual of consecration of an icon for worship; the 'godhead' or divine presence is thereby invoked to dwell in the icon during the period of worship if the icon is of the 'chala' (movable) or 'kshaṇika' (temporary) variety, or for all time if the icon is of the 'achala' (permanent) variety. The ritual of consecration involves the employment of several items like mud (mṛttikā), sandal-paste (gandha), stone

(śilā), grains (dhānya), the dūrva grass, flowers, fruits, curds, clarified butter, svastika, red lead (sindūra), conch (śamkha), collyrium (kajjala), yellow pigment (rochanā), white mustard (sarshapa), gold, silver, copper, fly-flap (chāmara), mirror (darpaṇa) and light (dīpa). These materials are first brought into contact with the forehead of the icon to be consecrated and then into contact with the ground on which consecration is to be conducted, and placed in a large bowl or platter (praśasta-pātra) specially meant for this purpose. During this preliminary ritual, mantras from *Yajurveda* are recited. The actual ceremony of consecration consists of the formal presentation of these items in due order and with appropriate mantras. It is only after this ritual is complete that the icon becomes fit for worship.

The expression refers more specifically to the ritual of preliminary consecration, prior to the main event of installation of the icon (pratishṭha). Details of this ritual are given in *Brhatsamhitā* (59). A pavilion is erected in the southern or eastern quarter, and equipped with four ornamental arches (torāṇa), the top of the pavilion being covered by leaves of certain sacred trees. An altar (sthaṇḍila) is erected and kuśa grass is ceremonially spread over it. Then, the icon specially meant for this consecration is placed on it. The icon may be made of wood, clay, some precious metal, gold, silver, copper or stone. After worship, the icon is taken from the pavilion to the sanctum. When the icon meant for the preliminary consecration is retained in the pavilion and a temple is erected over it (different from the shrine over the icon duly and finally installed), the temple is called 'bālā-laya' (ilāṇ-koil in Tamil). But the icon may be discarded after the preliminary consecration, or it may be buried under the sanctum. Texts prescribe that the icon for final installation (pratishṭhā) should be different from the icon for preliminary consecration (adhivāsa).

## ADHISHṬHĀNA

Base or 'seat' of a shrine, especially the foundational tier (tala) of the ornate superstructure over the sanctum known as vimāna. The images of deities that must find a place in



this tier are also specified in the texts. In a Viṣṇu temple of the Pāñcha-rātra persuasion, for instance, Gaṇeśa must be in the south-eastern corner, Śiva in the southern quarter, Viśva-rūpa in the western quarter, Brahmā in the northern quarter and Devī in the north-eastern corner.

### ADHOKSHAJA

A name of Viṣṇu ("one who never slips down from his own nature" or "one who is beyond sensory perception"), and one of the twenty-four forms (See CHATUVIMSATI-MURTI). In this form, Viṣṇu carries lotus (padma), mace (gadā), conch (śaṅkha) and discus (chakra) in his four hands in the pradikṣiṇa (or clockwise) order. His body-colour is given as dark-blue (śyāmala), and the form of Lakṣmī as his consort in this form is Śubha-devī.

### ADHOVARMA

The name for the lower eye-lid.

### ANAṆGA

Meaning 'Devoid of body', it is one of the names of Kāma-deva, the Indian god of beauty and love. The origin of this particular name is the episode of Śiva, with the fire of his third eye, burning him down when he dared disturb the penance he was engaged in, after Pārvatī (as Dākṣhāyānī) immolated herself in the sacrificial fire of her father Dakṣha. Kāma's wife Rati (lit. "enjoyment") prayed to Śiva, whereupon Śiva granted the boon that Kāma continued to live, albeit without a physical body. Kāma lives in the heart and mind of all living beings. For the iconography of this minor divinity see KAMA.

### ANANTA

Meaning "endless" (or infinite) it is one of the names of Viṣṇu (Ādi-Śeṣha), and also a name of the mythical dragon, Śeṣha. This is Viṣṇu's tāmasic form, which resides in Pātāla



ANANGA (Ivory door in Mysore)

(netherworld, thirty thousand yojanas wide). He has a thousand heads, carrying a thousand gems which illumine the three worlds. His eyes constantly revolve and keep a watch over everything in the universe. His form is syncretic, human and serpentine. He has two arms, carrying a ploughshare (lāṅgala) and a pestle (or club, muśala). He wears garments which are blue in colour, and a garland of white gems. He also wears the sacred svastika-mark as an ornament. The entire earth rests on his head like a crown. Śrī-devī and Vāruṇī-devī (both forms of Lakṣmī) serve him in this form. He is identified with Saṁkarṣaṇa. At the time of the great deluge (pralaya), Rudra is believed to emanate from the mouth of Ananta, and consume the three worlds. Kṛṣṇa's half-brother, Bala-rāma, is regarded as a partial incarnation of Ananta.

In the form of the mythical dragon, he is among the sons of Kaśyapa-prajāpati and Kadru (these sons being the progenitors of the snake-world, like Vāsuki, Takshaka, Karkoṭaka etc). He supports the entire universe, along with six others (Dharma, Kāma, Vasu, Vāsuki, Kāpila and Takshaka). He is pictured as

possessed of a thousand hoods (phaṇā-sahasra). An account in *Kālikā-purāṇa* (ch. 27) relates that he approached Viṣṇu, reclining on the waters of Kṣhīra-samudra and offered his services to the great god. He employed his body as a cot for him, and spread his hoods on his head as a cover. Viṣṇu then went into deep trance.

*Kūrmā-purāṇa* (ch. 48) distinguishes between two forms of Ananta : Vāsudeva, whose nature is transcendental wisdom and who is beyond the guṇas, and Śeṣha or Kāla (the principle of Time), which is the tāmasic counterpart of Vāsudeva, and which devours all things.

*Bhaviṣya-purāṇa* has provided an iconographic account of Ananta, as a form of Viṣṇu: "With a thousand hoods, he is four-armed and carries conch, lotus, discus and mace (emblems of Viṣṇu) ; he wears a splendid crown, a grand yellow garment, and several ornaments ; His eyes and hair are tawny red. He resides in the middle of the Kṣhīrābdhi (the legendary Ocean of Milk)".

Ananta is also one of the forms of Śiva (See SIVA). He is in this form represented as tranquil (śānta), pleasant (saumya), seated on a red lotus and bedecked with all ornaments (sarvābharaṇa-bhūṣita). He has a tiered crown (karaṇḍa-makuṭa) on his head. He has three eyes and four arms, carrying in his two hands hatchet (ṭaṇka), and spear (śūla) and showing in the other hands the gesture of protection (abhaya) and boon-bestowal (varada).

## ANANTA-NĀTHA

One of the twenty-four tīrthaṅkaras of the Jain pantheon (See TIRTHANKARA), he was born in Ayodhyā as the son of Simha-sena and Jaya-śyāmā. He is distinguished by the Bear emblem ; otherwise his iconography is similar to that of the other tīrthaṅkaras (viz. nude, short curls on the head, standing in the kāyotsarga posture or seated in the dhyāna aspect). He is attended by the yaksha named Pātāla and his female counterpart named Ananta-matī. The leader of the community (gaṇadhara) during his dispensation was Jaya.

## ANANTA-MUKHĪ

One of the twelve dhāraṇī divinities of the Mahāyāna Buddhist pantheon, belonging to the family of the 'dhyāni-buddha' Amogha-siddhi. They are all of them personifications of so many magical spells (dhāraṇī). Ananta-mukhī is, like the other dhāraṇīs, two-armed, and carries the symbol of crossed thunderbolt (viśva-varja) in her right hand. Distinguishing her from the other dhāraṇīs is the pot of inexhaustible treasure (akshaya-mahānidhi-kalaśa) which she carries in her left hand. Her body-colour is green, like the priyaṅgu flower, and she is seated on a red lotus.

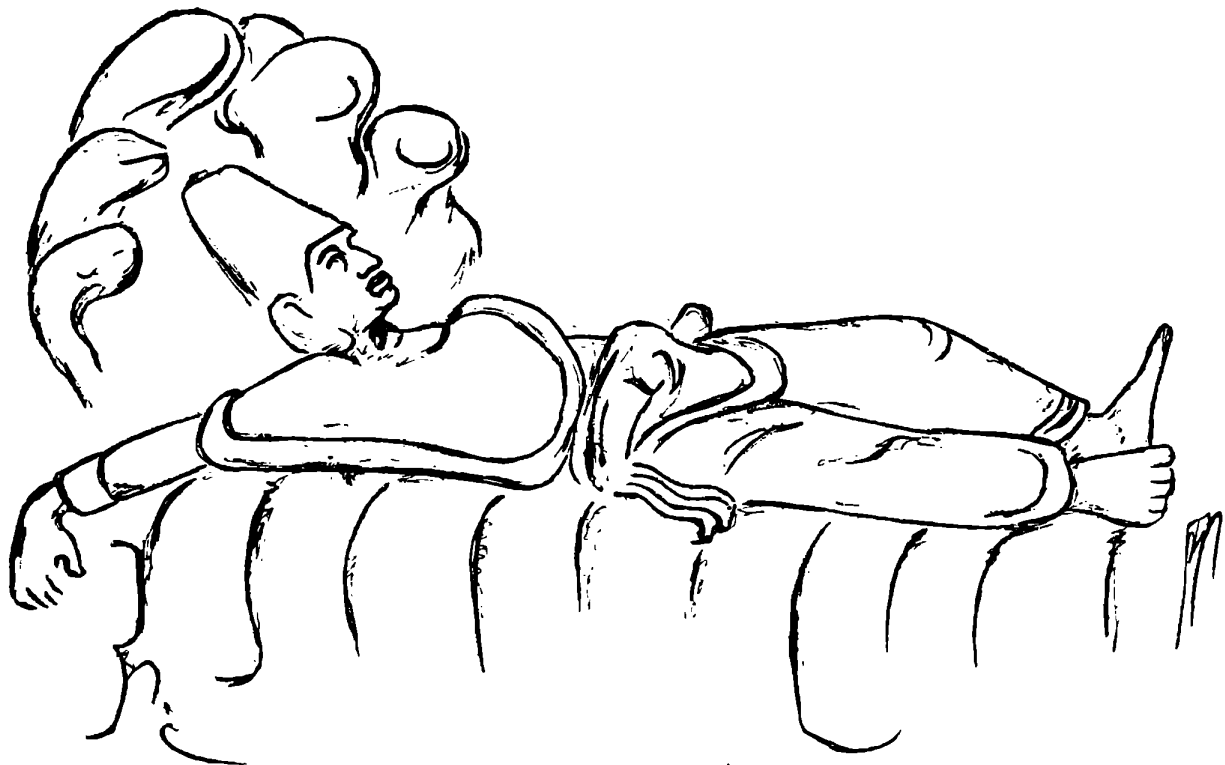
## ANANTA-ŚAYANA

Meaning 'Reclining on Ananta', this is the recumbent form of Viṣṇu (śayāna-mūrti), which is rather a rare form, even for Viṣṇu, and almost non-existent for other gods and goddesses (except for the Tāntrik forms of Śiva under the feet of Kālī, or serving as a cot for Rājārājeśvarī, and for Gaṇapati under the feet of Gaṇapati-samākrāntā, a vajrayāna deity). Ananta here symbolizes the principle of Time and the operation of tamas (See ANANTA).

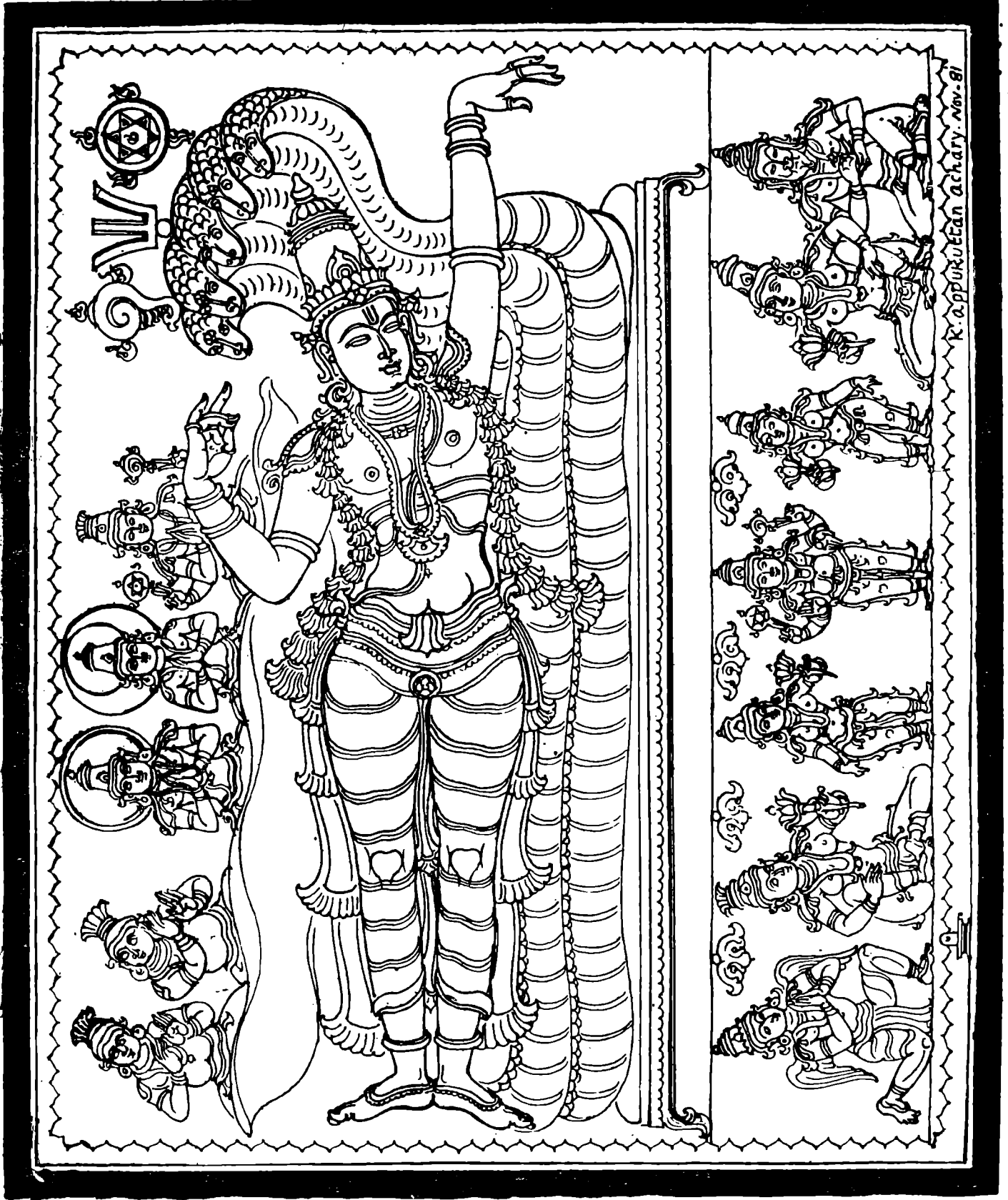
Iconographically, Viṣṇu is here represented as reclining on the coils of a five-or seven-hooded serpent (Ananta, Śeṣha, or Ādi-Śeṣha) ; the hoods of the serpent are spread over the head of Viṣṇu as a canopy (chhatra). He may be two-armed, or four-armed ; and carries the usual emblems of Viṣṇu, viz., conch, discus, mace, and lotus. From his navel, a long stalk of lotus emanates, and on the lotus is seated Brahmā, the creator. Hence the name Ananta-padmanābha (Ananta, viz. Viṣṇu, whose navel has the lotus). Seated at his feet is his consort Śrī-devī (Prosperity), sometimes with Bhū-devī (Earth-goddess). Represented below the recumbent Viṣṇu in some sculptures (for instance, the terra cotta plaque in the Indian Museum at Calcutta or in the Deogarh stone relief) are the demons, Madhu and Kaiṭabha (whom Viṣṇu killed after battling with them). It is the encounter with these demons that fatigued Viṣṇu, and made him lie down.



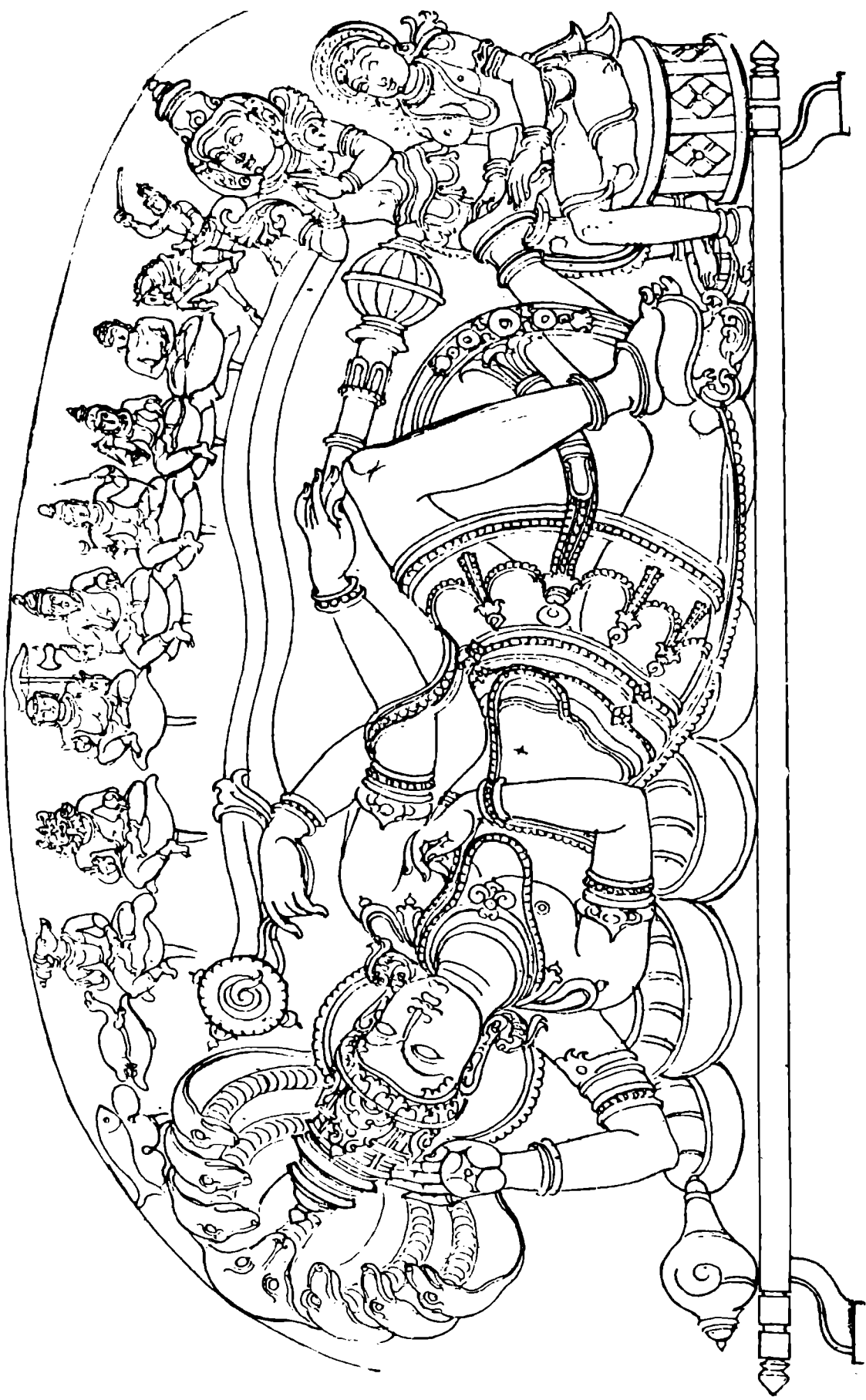
ANANTA-SAYANA (Stone, on Jahangira rock, Sultanganj, Bhagalpur dist.)



ANANTA-SAYANA (Stone, Shore temple, Mamallapuram, Tamil Nadu)



ANANTA-SAYANA (Stone, Adi-Kesava temple, Tiruvattar, Tamil Nadu)



ANANTA-SAYANA (Stone, Salar Jung Museum, Hyderabad)

While the recumbent form of Viṣṇu is extremely rare in North India, South India has many shrines where the main icon in the sanctum is in this form. The most celebrated are Raṅganātha temple at Śrīraṅgam (near Tiruchirapalli in Tamil Nadu), the Ananta-padma-nābha temple at Trivandrum (Kerala) and Ranganātha temple at Śrīraṅgapaṭṭaṇa (Karnataka). Some other temples where Viṣṇu is worshipped in this form are at Karambanūr (near Śrīraṅgam), Chidambaram (Tillaitirucchitrakūṭam, Govinda-rāja Perumāl), Tiruppu-ṭaṅguḍi (near Tinnevely), and Kapisthalaṃ (Champakāraṇya), all in Tamil Nadu. A splendid representation of this form can be found in the shore temple at Mahābalipuram, thirty seven miles from Madras.

### ANĀMIKĀ

'The nameless', this is the name for the ring-finger. It is so called because the literary critics could not name a poet immediately next in eminence to Kālidāsa (who was counted on the little finger). The story refers to an ancient custom of enumeration by counting on the fingers.

### ANIRUDDHA

'Un-obstructed' is one of the names of Viṣṇu and also one of the four 'Vyūhas' (aspects) of Vāsudeva. The Pāñcharātra-Āgama represents Aniruddha (symbolizing 'power' śakti and 'splendour', tejas aspects) as an emanation of Pradyumna (symbolizing 'lordship', aiśvarya, and valour, vīrya), who, in turn, is an emanation from Saṃkarṣaṇa (symbolizing 'wisdom', jñāna and 'strength' bala). Legends make Aniruddha the grandson of Kṛiṣṇa (being born to Pradyumna, who is the son of Kṛiṣṇa and Rukmiṇī), learn the science of archery from Arjuna, and marry Ushā, the daughter of the asura chieftain Bāṇa.

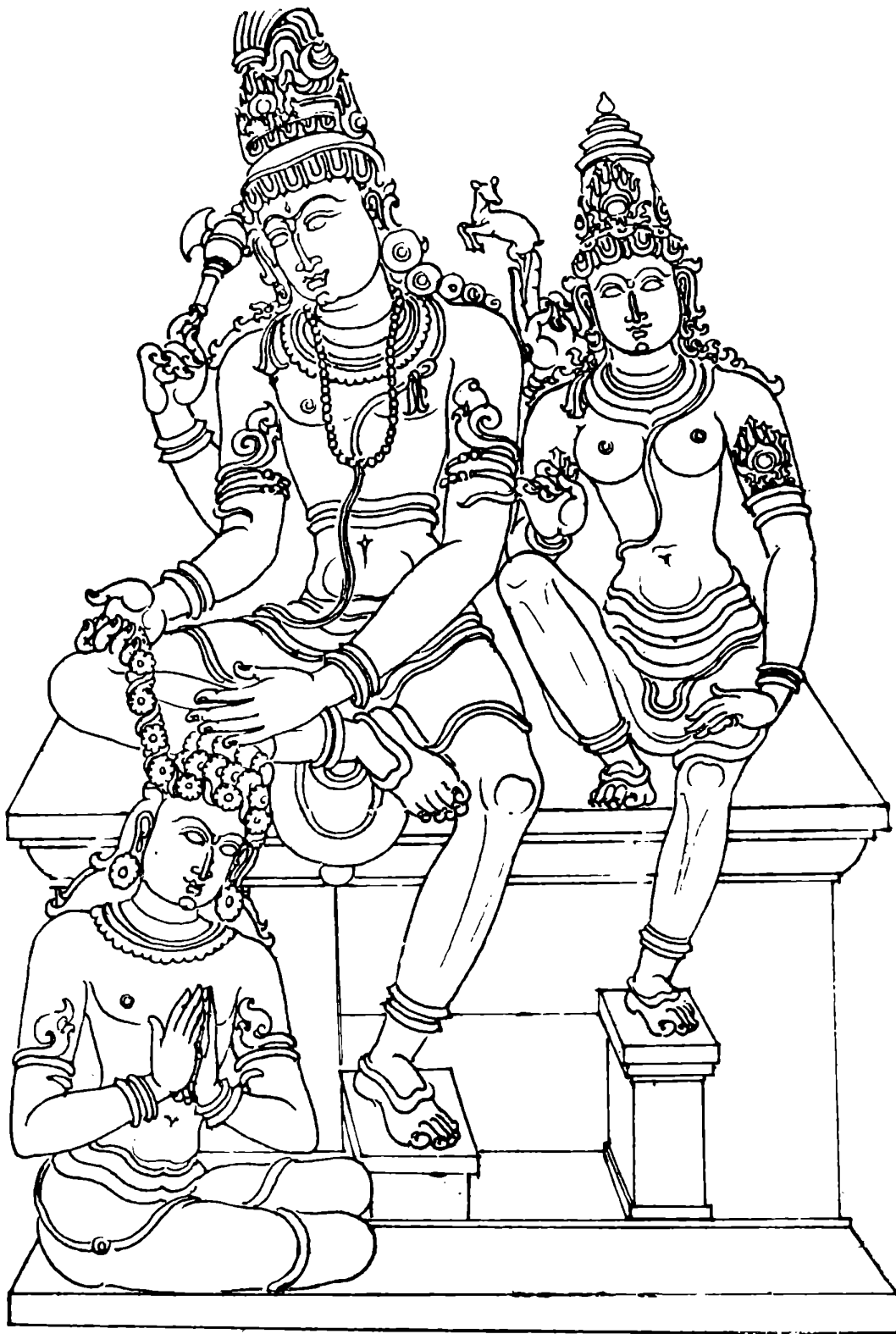
He is one of the twenty-four iconic representations of Viṣṇu (see CHATURVIMSATI-MURTI and VISHNU). He is distinguished by the order of the emblems: discus (chakra), mace (gadā), conch (śamkha) and lotus (padma), in the pradakṣhiṇa (or clockwise) order. His consort in this form is Ānandā (a form of Lakṣmī), and his body-colour is that of fire.

### ANUGRAHA-MŪRTI

The 'grace' is one of the five 'powers' (śakti) or 'activity' (kṛtya) of Godhead that Pāñcharātra and Śaiva āgamas speak of (others being, causation, preservation, destruction and veiling) (cf. *Lakṣmī-tantra*, 13, 1-15). The 'grace' is manifested in releasing the individual soul, bound by karma. It involves compassion for the unfortunate mortals caught up in the inexorable wheel of transmigration, and desire to save them from sorrow and misfortune. The symbolism behind the iconic representation of the dance of Śiva (viz. Nāṭarāja) is said to be the five-fold 'activity' of the Supreme Being (cf. *Uṇmai-viḷakkam*, 36).

Among the five varieties of the iconic or anthropomorphic images of Śiva (viz. śānta, anugraha, saṃhāra, ugra and nṛtya, See SIVA), the 'anugraha' (or the icon representing bestowal of grace) is illustrated by (1) Chaṇḍeśānugraha (bestowing grace on his door-keeper and attendant Chaṇḍeśa), (2) Chakra-dāna (gifting discus or chakra to Viṣṇu), (3) Vighneśānugraha (bestowing grace on Gaṇapati), (4) Rāvaṇānugraha (giving pardon to the Lord of Laṅka, Rāvaṇa, who was a great devotee of Śiva), (5) Kirātārjuna (offering the boon of Pāśupatāstra to Arjuna, who performed penance in the Himalayan region) and (6) Nandīśānugraha (bestowing grace upon his devotee and attendant, Nandī).

(1) Chaṇḍeśānugraha-mūrti is a variation of the Umā-sahita Chandraśekhara form (See UMA-SAHITA and SIVA). Śiva here is accompanied by Umā, seated to his left. Śiva, seated, has four hands, his right normal hand being in the gesture of boon-bestowal (varada) (instead of the gesture of protection in the Umā-sahita form), and the left normal hand placed on the head of Chaṇḍeśa (instead of it being in the kaṭaka pose). *Uttara-kāmikāgama* prescribes that Śiva must be shown in the act of decorating Chaṇḍeśa's head with a garland. Chaṇḍeśa must be shown as folding his hands in devotion ('hṛdaye añjalisaṃyukta'); he may be standing or seated in a relaxed posture (sukhāsana). The figure of Chaṇḍeśa (See CHANDESA) is required to be made in the lower daśa-tāla measure. *Śilpa-ratna* describes this form of Śiva as similar to Somāskanda form (See SOMASKANDA and SIVA) but without Skanda.



ANUGRAHA-MURTI (Stone, Gangaikonda-Cholapuram temple, Tamil Nadu)

(2) Chakra-dāna-murti, also called Vishṇvanugraha, shows Śiva seated with his right leg dangling down, and accompanied by Umā (who is seated to his left), presenting discus (chakra) to Viṣṇu (who sought Śiva's help in vanquishing the asuras). Śiva is tranquil (śānta) three-eyed, and four-armed, carrying antelope and battle-axe in his two hands, the third hand being in the gesture of boon-bestowal (varada) and the fourth-hand shown in the act of presenting the discus (*Śrī-tattva-nidhi*). Alternately, he carries in his four hands hatchet (ṭaṅka), antelope (kṛshṇa-mṛga), the gesture of boon-bestowal (varada) and discus (chakra) to be presented to Viṣṇu. There is a temple in Tamil Nadu (Tirumālperu near Kāñchipuram) which celebrates this form of Śiva.

Viṣṇu who stands in front of Śiva, facing him, must be to his left. The text prescribes that he must be dark-complexioned, wearing yellow silken garments, and having four hands two of which are folded in the gesture of supplication (añjali) and the other two carrying conch-shell (Śaṅkha) and discus (chakra). The Kaustubha must adorn his chest. *Uttara-kāraṇāgama* suggests that to the left of Śiva must be Gaurī and to the right Parameshṭhi (viz. Brahmā).

The background story is that Viṣṇu had undertaken the vow of worshipping Śiva daily with a thousand lotus flowers. One day, there was a single flower wanting to complete the number, and without hesitation, Viṣṇu proceeded to pluck out one of his eyes (which was lotus-like) to make up the required number of flowers. Śiva was pleased with this devotion and presented him with the invincible discus (chakra).

(3) Vighneśānugraha, also called Vighneśvara-vara-dānamūrti, is similar to the above forms, but featuring Gaṇeśa, the lord of obstacles. Śiva is tranquil, three-eyed and four-armed, carrying antelope and battle-axe in his two hands, his right hand placed on Gaṇeśa's head, and the left being in the gesture of boon-bestowal. Alternately the three hands must carry goad (aṅkuśa), rosary (akṣa-mālā), the gesture of boon-bestowal, the fourth being placed on Gaṇeśa's head. Śiva is seated with his right leg pulled across and left leg dangling down. Seated on the same pedestal

is the Goddess to his left, two-armed, carrying the water-lily in her right hand and the gesture of boon-bestowal in her left. She is seated in the same manner as Śiva. *Śrī-tattva-nidhi* prescribes that the goddess must be shown as smiling (prahasita), and that she must be three-eyed. Gaṇeśa should be standing to the right of Śiva, in the posture of supplication; four-armed, his other two hands must carry lasso (pāśa) and goad (aṅkuśa). He must be red-coloured and must wear the kirīṭa-makuṭa variety of crown. *Uttara-kāraṇāgama* commends the worship of this form of Śiva for getting rid of all obstacles (sarva-vighna-vināśārtham).

(4) the legend explaining the situation of Rāvaṇānugraha is as follows: Rāvaṇa, the King of Lāṅkā, was returning in his air-chariot 'pushpaka' to his capital after defeating Kubera in an encounter. On the way, he beheld a lovely mountain resort known as Śaraṇa, but his air-chariot was unable to proceed further in that direction. Rāvaṇa alighted on the foothills, and attempted to climb the mountain. But Nandī, the tawny bull-faced attendant of Śiva, forbade him to enter the premises, as Śiva and Pārvatī were sojourning on the mountain. Rāvaṇa, arrogant and mighty as he was, made fun of him and threatened to uproot the mountain. He put his twenty hands to the bottom of the mountain and attempted to lift it. The mountain shook, and Pārvatī was frightened. Śiva thereupon pressed his thumb, and the mountain stood still, and the hands of Rāvaṇa were caught under the weight of the mountain. The mighty monarch of the rākshasas wailed in agony for a thousand years and beseeched pardon from Śiva. Śiva took pity on him and bestowed his grace on him. Since then Rāvaṇa became a staunch devotee of Śiva.

(5) Kirātārjuna-mūrti, also called Arjunānugraha-mūrti relates to the incident in *Mahābhārata*, when Arjuna, the Pāṇḍava hero, obtained from Śiva, the invincible Pāśupata weapon. During the period of the Pāṇḍava residence in the forest, Arjuna did penance for a long time on Mount Kailās, seeking Śiva's grace. To test the fervour of his devotion, Śiva appeared in the guise of a hunter (kirāta) and drew Arjuna into an argument and encounter. Finally convinced of Arjuna's devo-



tion, Śiva presented him with the Pāśupata-  
astra, against which even the great gods  
would flounder. There is a famous literary  
work in Sanskrit entitled *Kirātārjunīyam* by  
Bhāravi. And the story became popular among  
the folk. There are numerous sculptural repre-  
sentations of this episode in South India.

Iconographical representations are also  
frequent in South Indian temples. Textual  
prescriptions too are available. *Śrī-tattva-nidhi*,  
for instance, suggests that Śiva (as hunter)  
must be red in body-complexion, three-eyed,  
four-armed (carrying antelope, battle-axe, bow  
and arrow), with braids of hair done as a  
crown (jaṭā-makuṭa), and bedecked with orna-  
ments. He must have by his side (to the left)  
Pārvatī, and must be in the erect, balanced  
stance (samabhaṅga). Arjuna (as hermit)  
must be shown to his right, in an attitude of  
supplication (kṛtāñjali-puta). He too must  
have his hair done up as a crown (jaṭā-  
makuṭa). He must be shown as receiving the  
arrow (pāśupatāstra) from Śiva.

(6) Nandīśānugraha shows Śiva in the  
act of conferring on Nandī the authority over  
the gaṇas. For details and legends concerning  
Nandī, See NANDI and ADHIKARA-NANDI. Sculptu-  
ral representations of this situation follow the  
prescription in *Uttarakāraṇāgama*, a south  
Indian text of Śaiva persuasion. According to  
this text, the image of Śiva must be exactly  
like the one prescribed for Chakradāna-mūrti  
(Vishṇvanugraha) (See above). Nandī must  
be represented as one-faced, two-eyed, two  
armed and in an attitude of supplication  
(kṛtāñjali-puta); his face must be tranquil  
(śānta) and his hair must be done up in elabo-  
rate braids (suvikīrṇa-jaṭopeta).

## ANTAKA

'The ender', is one of the names of Yama,  
the god of death (see YAMA).

Some iconic representations of Śiva are  
described as 'antaka' sports (līlās), like  
Tripurāntaka ('the vanquisher of the three  
citadels'), Kālāntaka ('the vanquisher of the  
god of death' for the sake of the sage  
Mārkaṇḍeya), Gajāntaka ('the killer of the  
demon Gajāśura') and Kāmāntaka ('the killer  
of Kāma-deva, the god of love', prior to the  
birth of Skanda).

## ANTARIKSHA

The intermediate region between the sky  
(dyaus) and the earth (pṛthivī), the expression  
figures prominently in the rituals connected  
with the building sites (vāstu). Antariksha is  
personified as an evil spirit (rākshasa).  
According to *Bhāgavata* (10,59,19), he was  
the son of the asura, Mura; after Mura was  
killed by Kṛṣṇa, Antariksha fought with  
Kṛṣṇa and was killed by him. The Pāñcarātra  
texts (like *Nāradya-saṃhitā*, 14, 42) prescribe  
that the ground-plan for the temple must  
include a cell (the eighth) for Antariksha, who  
must duly be worshipped. The architectural  
manuals like *Mānasāra* (15,300) prescribe that  
sacrifices must be offered to eight rākshasas  
(of whom Antariksha is one), after propitiating  
the guardians of the quarters (dikpālas).

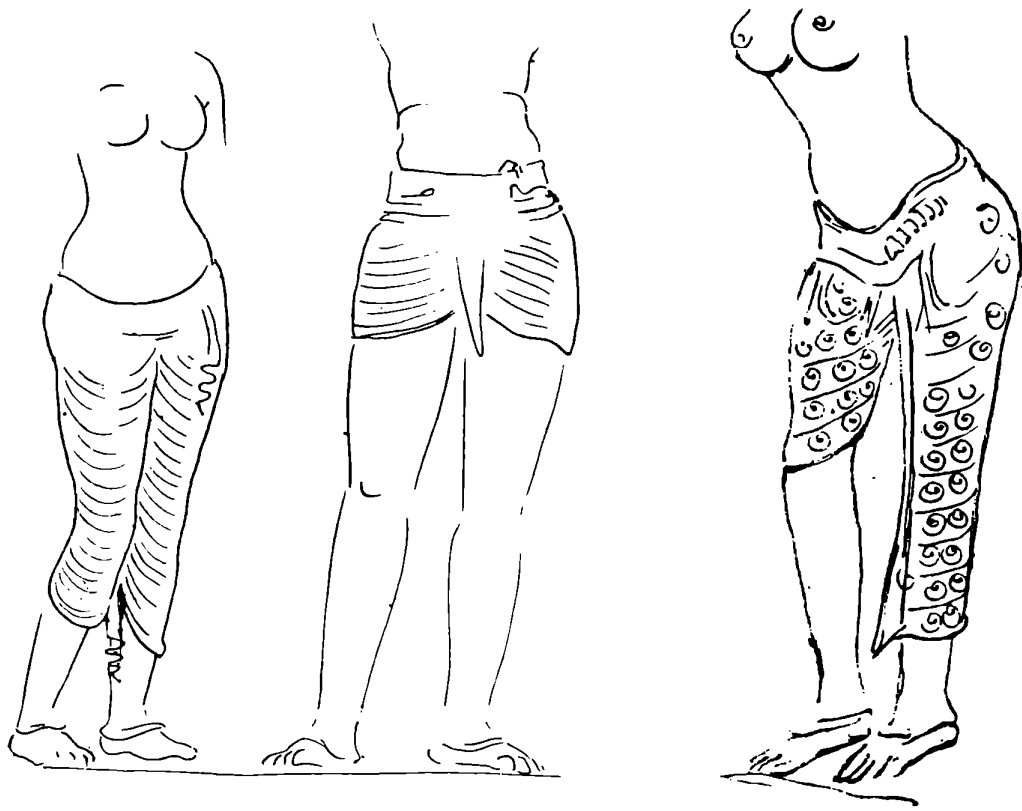
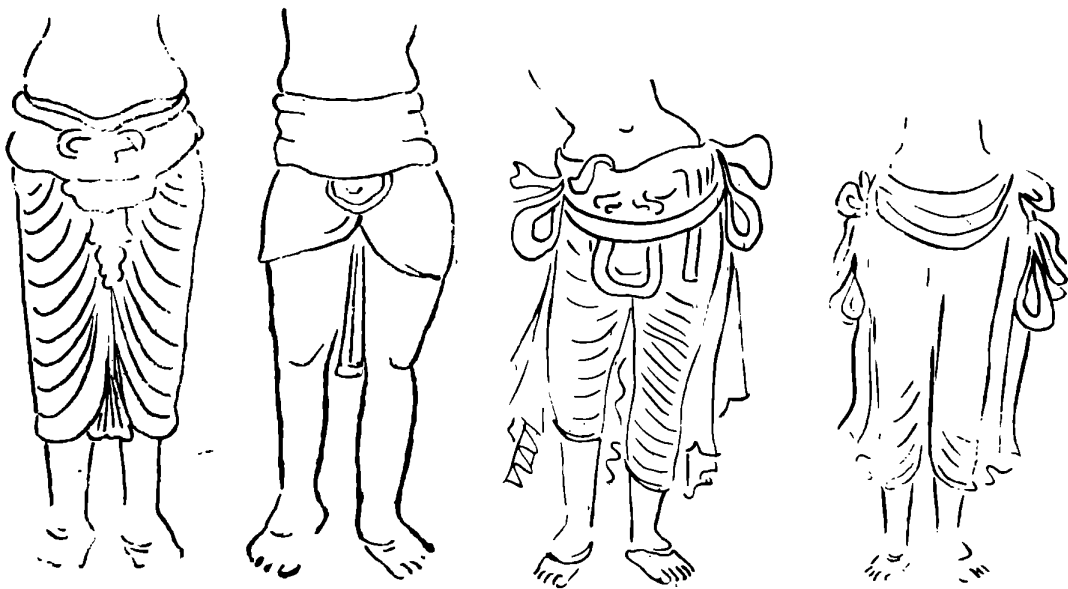
## ANTARĪYA

The lower garment, especially found in the  
South Indian bronze icons of goddesses, tied  
at the loins, covering the thighs and reaching  
down the knees. The ends of this garment  
receive artistic treatment by the Choḷa  
sculptors.

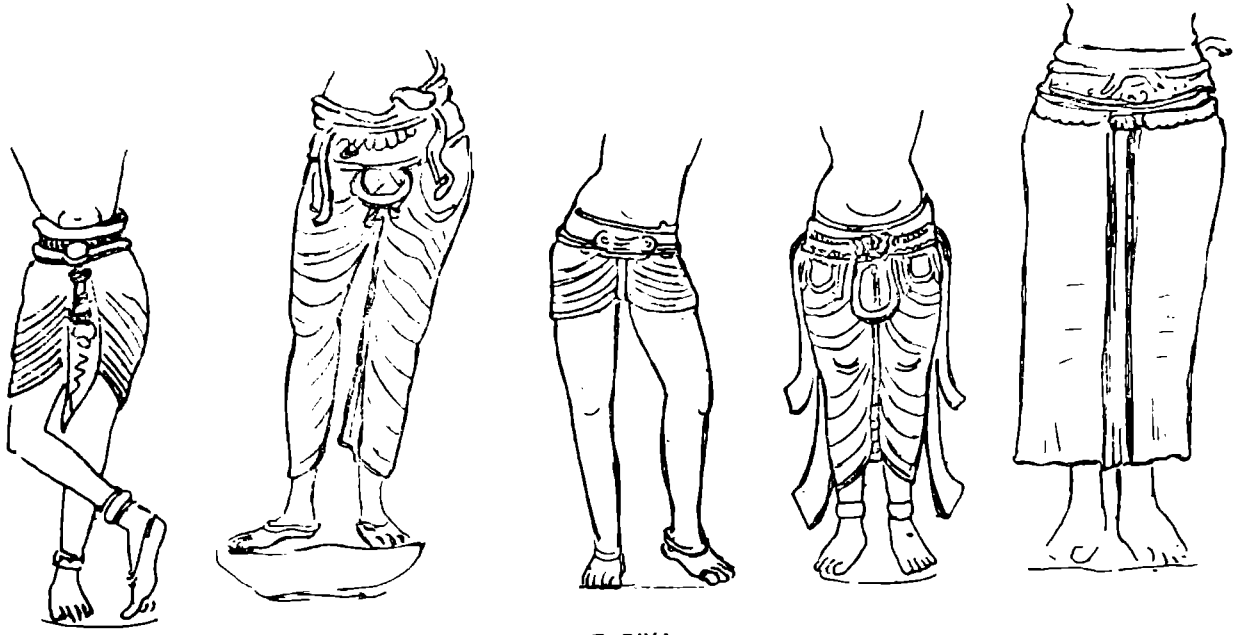
## ANTARYĀGA

There are two modes of worship (upā-  
sanā): the external (bahir-yāga) and the  
internal (antar-yāga). The former is the actual  
employment of Vedic or tāntrik rituals, with  
physical implements and materials, whereas  
the latter is symbolic and abstract, dispensing  
with the actual performance of rituals. Further,  
the external mode of worship involves the  
effort of a number of participants, while the  
internal mode is entirely individual, private.

Iconic worship can be both external and  
internal. If done in a temple or in a house-  
hold on special occasions, it is external. If,  
however, an individual devotee (sādhaka)  
utilizes the iconic form of the divinity for his  
own spiritual progress and benefits, then the  
worship is internal. The form of the icon is,  
in this context, highly symbolic. The aspects,  
flexions, gestures, weapons, ornaments and



ANTARIYA



ANTARIYA

other details are meant to unfold to the devotee meanings and suggestions that would facilitate his more intimate approach to divinity.

## ANDHAKA

A titan (asura), who fought with Śiva and was overpowered by him. One of the sportive forms of Śiva (līlāmūrti) relates to this 'vanquishing of Andhaka' (Andhakāsura-saṁhāra). Andhaka (so called because he behaved blindly, although he was not physically blind) was born out of the darkness caused by closure of Śiva's eyes by Parvatī in a playful mood. He was given as a foster-child to the asura Hiranyāksha, who at that time was engaged in penance on the Himalayan heights. Andhaka looked upon Parvatī with lust, and fought with Śiva. Śiva worsted him in the battle, and upon the asura's begging for mercy, Śiva pardoned him, spared his life and freed him from the asura-nature. *Vāmana-purāṇa* makes Andhaka take a later birth as Bhṛṅgi, one of the most ardent devotees of Śiva (see BHRNGI).

## ANNAPŪRṆĀ

A form of Śakti (mother-goddess) as the provider of food for all living beings. This form

of Śakti is in legend associated with Śiva's form as a nude beggar (bhikṣhātana-mūrti) (see BHIKSHATANA-MURTI); Parvatī offers him food. But Annapūrṇā appears to be an independent form of Śakti, although separate shrines for her are rare. *Kāraṇāgama* describes two of her forms, two-armed and four-armed. The former, red in body complexion, is pictured as three-eyed, having moon on her crown, and carrying in her left hand a jewelled pot (māṇikya-pātra) filled with honey (madhu-rasa) and in her right hand a laddle fitted with gems (ratna-darvī). The latter form carries in her four hands the gesture of protection (abhaya), goad (aṅkuṣa), noose (pāśa) and the gesture of boon-bestowal (varada) in the pradakṣiṇa (or clockwise) order. The details for the latter variety include red ornaments and sky-travel (khecharī).

The Tāntrik texts like *Prapañcha-sāra-saṁgraha* prescribe that she should be represented as watching with happiness the dance of Śiva, (Śiva-nṛtya-kṛtāmodā), engaged in gifting food uninterruptedly (sadānna-dāna-niratā), ridding the worldly ills of the devotee (bhava-dukhā-hantrī), brilliant like a thousand suns just arisen (udyad-bhānu-sahasrābhā), clothed in bright and variegated garments (vichitra-vasanā), wearing moon on her crown (chandra-chūḍā), having three eyes (triṇetrā), and seated on a lotus with six corners (ṣaṭkoṇa-padma-madhyasthā). She is attended by two other forms of Śakti, which are also food-



ANNAPURNA

gifting, Bhū (mother-earth) and Śrī (prosperity). Vaiśravaṇa (viz. Kubera, the god of wealth) is said to be the sage who visualized her form. Her mantra is "om namo bhagavati

maheśvari Anna-pūrṇe svāhā". Her dhyāna-śloka is:

"rudra-tāṇḍava-vilokana-lolām  
bhadra-vaktra-nayanām bhava-kāntām,  
anna-dāna-niratām jananīm tām  
samsmaram japatu chitra-dukūlām"

53

## APARṆĀ

A name of Pārvatī, Śiva's consort. The name is derived from the extreme form of penance, abandoning even the few leaves that she was taking as food, which she undertook for winning Śiva as her husband. Sometimes, she is represented iconically in the state of performing penance (See PARVATĪ, SAKTĪ).

## APARĀJITĀ

'The unvanquished one' is a form of Śakti, in classical Hinduism, Mahāyāna Buddhism and Jainism. In classical Hinduism, it is synonymous with Durgā. *Skānda-purāṇa* prescribes that Aparājitā must be worshipped for the sake of victory (jaya) on the tenth day (during the Navarātri festival), when the ninth has not completely disappeared. Aparājitā here is a form of Durgā. In the worship of mother-goddess, in Assam and Bengal, Aparājitā is one of the nine minor forms of Śakti (kuladevi along with Nārasimhī, Chāmuṇḍā, Vāruṇī, Kurukullā and Parijitā), and is worshipped as such, after worship is offered to the seven principal mother-goddesses (sapta-mātrkā). Worship to her is an ancient one. Kauṭilya (*Arthaśāstra*, section on Durgā-niveśa) prescribes that in the centre of the township ('pura-madhye') shrines ('koshṭhakān') for Aparājitā and other deities (like Apratihata, Jayanta, Vaijayanta, Śiva and Vaiśravaṇa) must be established; and Aparājitā heads the list of the eight deities mentioned there.

Aparājitā is also a form of Lakshmī, along with Śuddhī, Nirañjanā, Nityā, Jñāna-śakti, Shashṭhī, guarding the six directions (cf. *Lakshmī-tantra*, 8, 24).

In the Mahāyāna Buddhist pantheon, she is associated with the eight-armed divinity Kurukullā (See KURUKULLĀ). She is iconographically represented as yellow in body-complexion,



APARAJITA

with an exceedingly ferocious face, but bedecked with various jewels, and as having four arms. She has on her crown the image of the 'dhyāni-buddha' Ratna-sambhava (well-known in Nepal, Tibet and China), whose emanation she is supposed to be.

The most significant detail in the Vajrayāna iconography of Aparājītā is that she is seen as trampling upon the elephant-faced Gaṇapati; and hence she is also known as Gaṇapati-samākrāntā. Her right hand is raised in the attitude of administering a slap ('chhapeta-dāna'), and the left hand is held in gesture of threatening or warning (with raised index-finger, tarjani-mudrā); a noose (pāśa) is also held in the left hand. The account in *Sādhana-mālā* describes her as the vanquisher of all wicked beings ('aśeṣa-māra-nirdalanī'). When she is represented as an attendant of eight-

armed Kurukullā, she has four-arms, carrying in her hands staff (daṇḍa), elephant-goad (aṅkuśa), noose (pāśa) and bell (ghaṇṭā) in the pradakṣhiṇa (or clockwise) order.

In the Jaina pantheon, Aparājītā is regarded as a four-armed yakṣiṇī, greenish-yellow (haridvarṇa) in complexion, riding on a lion, and carrying in her hands a fruit (phala), sword (asi), shield (kheṭa) and the gesture of boon-bestowal (varada).

## APASMĀRA

Also called Apasmāra-purusha, he is the personification of wickedness, a demon of darkness and confusion (tamaḥ-praveśāddhata-smṛtiḥ); he is also known as Mūyalaka. A dhyāna-śloka of 'chidambara-pañchākshara-mantra' (cf. *Prapañcha-sāra-saṁgraha*) describes him as the illusion of ego ('ātma-moha'), which is trampled upon by Śiva's right foot, and explains that this suppression



APASMARA (under Dakṣiṇāmurti)



APASMARA (under Dancing Siva)

of evil (nigraha) is symbolized by the syllable 'ma' in the five-syllabled mantra of Śiva (viz. Om śivāya namah) (see NATARAJA), as the other syllables signify the divine benevolence and protection (anugraha). The Tamil work *Uṇmai-viḷakkam*, explains that Mūyalaka is actually the karma that defiles the individual's soul (mala).

This Apasmāra-purusha is to be found in two iconic representations of Śiva : Naṭarāja and Dakṣiṇā-mūrti. The form of Naṭarāja has nine varieties (see NATARAJA), and the varieties known as 'Ānanda-tāṇḍava' and 'Ūrdhva-tāṇḍava' have invariably the 'Apasmāra-purusha' represented under one of the feet of the dancing Śiva. In other varieties, the representation is optional, but is usually omitted ; in the variety known as 'sāndhyā-tāṇḍava', however, texts prohibit the inclusion of Apasmāra-purusha.

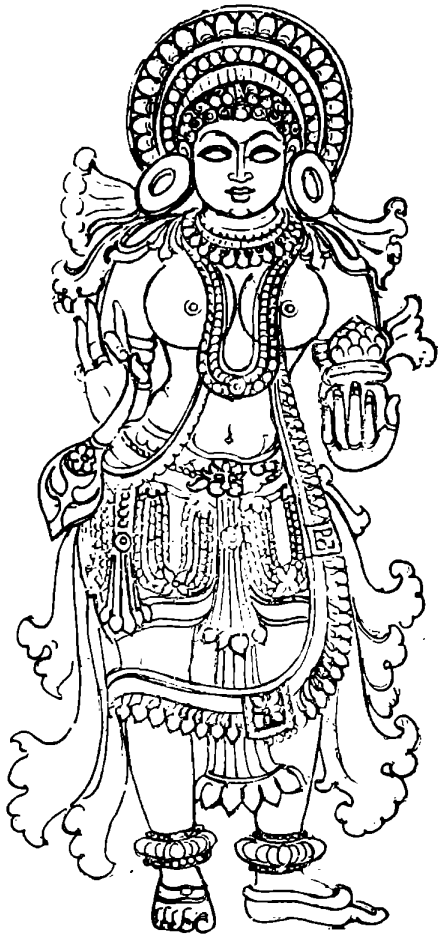
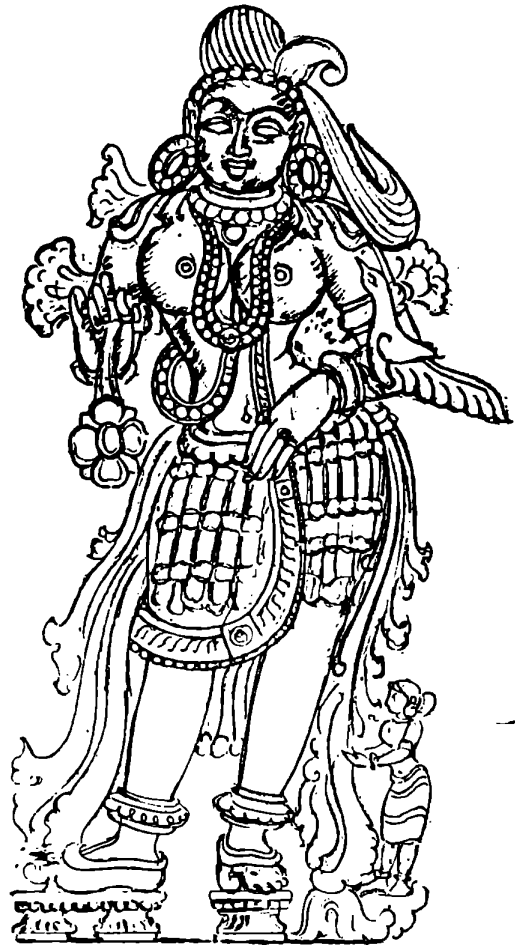
The figure is required to be made in 4-tāla pramāṇa (See TALA) or 36 aṅgulas in length by the aṅgula unit of the Naṭarāja's height (cf. *Sakalādhikāra*, 9,32) as the form is that of a demon (asura) (cf. *Śilpa-ratna*, 41). It is usually that of a dwarf with a frightened chubby face, dark complexion, and red hair and a 'jaṭābhāra' arrangement of hair on his

head, wearing a broad neck-lace (kaṇṭhī), armlets and bangles, a waist-band (udara-bandha) and anklets ; he has a pot-belly. He is shown as lying prostrate on his stomach with his face lifted up, on the lotus-pedestal (padma-piṭha), with his head towards the right of Naṭarāja. He holds a serpent in his left hand, and his right hand stretches out in the gesture of a snake (sarpa-mudrā). On his back is planted firmly the right foot of Naṭarāja (in the Nāḍānta-nṛtya) which is slightly bent (ākuñchita). In some iconic representations of Naṭarāja, as for instance at Nallur in Tanjore district (Plate XXIV in *Bulletin of the Madras Govt. Museum*, "Bronzes of South India", NS, Vol. VIII, 1963), Apasmāra-purusha is shown seated crouching under the foot of Naṭarāja. There is a similar representation of Apasmāra-purusha under the standing Śiva in the Guḍimallam liṅga.

## APSARAS

A term, in Sanskrit always used in the plural number, refers to a large number of mythical "maidens of water" (nymph), who are reputed to have emerged out of the ocean





APSARAS





AP SARAS

when it was churned by gods and titans for the sake of ambrosia. Thirteen of them are described as the daughters of Kāśyapa and Arishṭhā (as also the four gandharvas, Hāhā, Hūhū, Atibāhu and Tumburu) : Rambhā, Urvaśī, Tilottamā, Menakā, Keśinī, Miśra-keśī, Ālambushā, Manoramā and so on.

They are classed as semi-divine spirits (vyantara-devatās), and are usually associated with another group of spirits belonging to the same class, gandharvas (See GANDHARVA). They are iconically represented as lovely danseuse in Indian sculpture of Hindu, Buddhist and Jain traditions. The earliest representation probably is to be found in the Bharhut sculptures, where four of these mythical beings are

represented in a scene depicting the defeat of Māra by the Buddha : Miśra-keśī, Ālambushā, Subhadrā, and Padmāvati.

Texts like *Suprabhedāgama* and *Śilpa-ratna* prescribe that the apsaras must be represented as pretty damsels, with slender waist, and rotund breasts, wearing fine garments and bedecked with all ornaments. *Śilpa-ratna* mentions that they must be shown as slightly smiling (kiñchit-prahasitānā) and must have a balanced posture (sama-bhaṅga.)

The north Indian texts of Śilpa not only mention the names of thirty-two of these celestial damsels but describe their iconographic representations (cf. Prabhasamkar Sompura's *Bhāratiya-Śilpa-Saṁhitā*, 1975, Section 15). The thirty-two apsaras are required to be depicted in the porch etc. of the temple of Śiva or Viṣṇu : Menakā (carrying sword and shield), Lilāvati, Vidhichitā (holding a mirror), Sundarī (dancing), Śubhāṅgī (shown in the act of removing thorn from her foot), Hamsāvalī (tying an anklet to her right foot in preparation for dance), Sarvakalā (dancing), Karpūra mañjarī (engaged in bathing in nudity), Padminī (dancing with a lotus in her hand), Gūḍha-śabdā (with a baby, and showing the gesture of protection), Chitriṇī (dancing, and in the act of touching the top of head with her left hand), Chitra-rūpā (carrying a baby in her arms), Gaurī (in the act of slaying a lion), Gāndhārī (dancing), Devajñā (dancing in a circle), Marīchikā (shooting an arrow from a bow), Chandrāvalī (dancing, and showing the gesture of supplication), Patralekhā (engaged in writing a letter), Sugandhā (dancing, holding a discus), Śatru-mardini (dancing, flourishing a short sword with which to kill an enemy), Māninī (dancing, with a garland in her hands), Mānahamsā (dancing, showing her buttocks), Susvabhāvā (dancing in a variety of poses), Bhavachandrā (dancing, showing yogic gestures), Mṛgākshī (accomplished dancer), Urvaśī (holding the head of a demon in her hand, and shown in the act of severing his head with a sword), Rambhā (dancing, holding short swords in both hands), Mañjughoṣhā (dancing, holding short swords in both hands), Jayā (dancing, with a pot balanced on her head), Mohinī (dancer embracing her lover), Uttānā (dancing, with one of her legs lifted up), and Tilottamā (one who can assume any form at will, Kāmarūpā).

The celestial damsels are also shown as playing many musical instruments : Saritā (playing on viṇā), Mohanā (flute), Gārgī (drum), and Mugdhā (conch). Some carry pet-birds (like Śuka-śārikā, parrot) or babes (like Mātṛ-bhūtī), or fly-whisk (like Chāmarā). Most of them are celebrated as skilled dancers, and many of them are nude (cf. Prabha-samkar Sompura's book for illustrations).

### ABJA-YONI

'The lotus-born' is a name of Brahmā, the creator, who was born from the navel-lotus of the recumbent Viṣṇu (padma-nābha), on the coils of Ananta (see ANANTA). This detail is included in the iconograph of Ananta-śayana (see ANANTA-SAYANA).

### ABHAṆGA-VITṬHALA

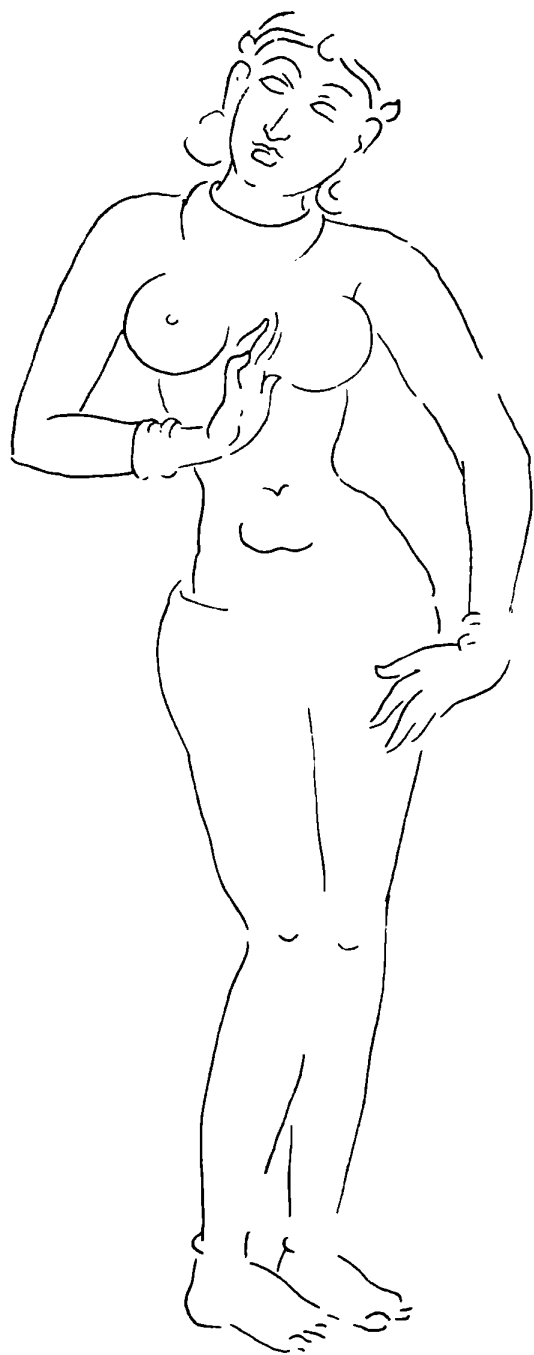
A form of Viṣṇu called also Viṭhoba, this is the central deity in the famous temple at Paṇḍharpur in Maharashtra, and the focal point of the widespread cult of devotion, the antiquity of which goes back to 1217 A.D. (the time of the devotee Daśavanta). The cult was popular in Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra. The deity is also called Pāṇḍuraṅga-Viṭṭhala from Paṇḍarige (a village in the Kannada country) where the cult originated. The Hoysala King Someśvara was probably responsible for the early shrine to this god in Pandharpur (as his village-grant of 1236 suggests). Puṇḍalika, who probably lived during the reign of Someśvara's successor Biṭṭi-deva (Viṣṇu-varadhana) was the devotee who firmly established the Viṭṭhala-cult. The celebrated Maharashtrian saint, Nāmadeva (born 1270), popularized the cult.

The iconographic details of the deity at Pandharpur are available only in the accounts of the priests of the temple. The image is three and a half feet tall, carved roughly in black stone, and standing on a squarish block of stone (said to be the brick provided by the devotee Puṇḍalika for the god to stand on, until the devotee finished giving bath to his



ABHANGA-VITTHALA  
(Stone, Pandharpur temple in Maharashtra)

aged parents). The image is two-armed, and the hands rest on the hips, the right one holding what appears to be a lotus stem, and the left a conch. The waist band and cloth are indicated. There is a tall and plain topee-like headgear (which is described by the priests as a śiva-liṅga), a single necklace (kaṇṭhī) with a pendant (which is recognized as kaustubha, the characteristic emblem of Viṣṇu), plain bangles on both wrists, and large ear-pieces which suggest 'makara-kunḍalas'.



ABHANGA



PRATIMA KOSHA

## ABHAYA-MUDRĀ

A hand-pose usually of the right hand indicating protection ("no-fear"). The entire palm with straightened fingers is held in front of the devotee, assuring him that he will be taken care of. There are artistic modulations of the fingers and also the position in which the palm is shown. This is generally seen in the benevolent forms of deities; and it is often associated with another hand-pose called 'Varada-mudrā' (indicating that a boon is being bestowed on the devotee), assumed by the other (usually left) hand. This is also called 'abhaya-hasta'.

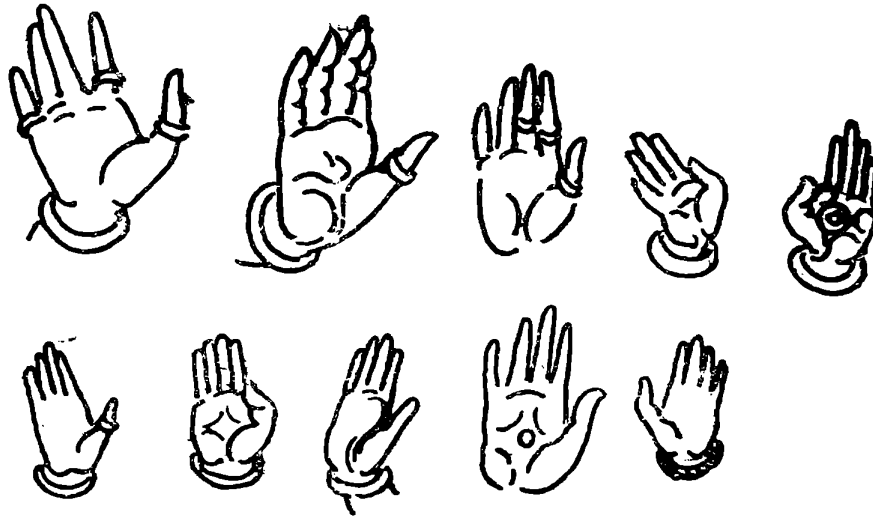
## ABHINAYA

Gesticulations (especially by the hands and fingers); expressions of feelings and emotions. There is an ancient and widely accepted classification of abhinaya, primarily in the field of dance and drama (nāṭya), into four varieties: 'āṅgika' (gestural, conveyed by bodily actions), 'vāchika' (vocal, conveyed by words of speech), 'āhārya' (extraneous, conveyed by dress, ornaments, decoration and weapons), and 'sāttvika' (internal, manifestation of thoughts and feelings, mainly by changes in the facial expressions, especially in the eyes) (cf. *Sāhitya darpaṇa*).

In iconography, the three varieties, excluding 'vāchika', are adapted. The disposition of the hands and fingers (like protection-giving, abhaya, boon-bestowing, varada, slap administering, chapeṭikā-dāna or warning, tarjanī-mudrā), the flexions and movement-suggestions illustrate the first variety. The peculiar ornaments (like lotus for benevolent deities, khaṭvāṅga for terrible forms, discus-in-action or prayoga-chakra, uplifted sword or utthita-khaḍga or trident or triśūla for indignant forms), illustrate the second variety. The 'sāttvika' variety, however, is not often in evidence. The facial expressions of Indian icons are highly stylized and do not admit of readily recognizable mental states. The standard expression is tranquil or 'śānta'. But we do find icons where smile (smīta), bemusement (vismaya) or anger (krodha) are shown, mainly in the eyes and in the lips.

## ABHISHEKA

Literally "sprinkling-over" or bath, it is the procedure of giving the ceremonial bath to a king during his coronation (mūrdhābhisheka), to a tāntrik devotee during the several stages of his initiation (śāktābhisheka, mahābhisheka), or to an icon (bimbābhisheka). The ritual bath is given to an icon on many occasions: when it is being got ready for installation (adhivāsa),



ABHAYA-MUDRA

when it is installed (pratishṭhā), when the eyes are delineated (netronmilana), when it is being formally worshipped (archanā), when it is purified after a defilement (pavitra), when the processional image is about to return to the temple after a sojourn round the town (yātrā), or when the festival undertaken for the icon is completed (avabhṛta).

The materials that are employed for giving the ceremonial bath to the icon vary according to the occasions. For instance, during installation of the icon, the waters from the river, rivulet, ocean, mountain-stream and rain are used along with the 'five sweet ingredients' together (pañchāmṛta, viz. milk, sugar, ghee, curds and honey), the mixture of 'five products of the cow' (pañchagavya, viz. milk, curds, ghee, urine and cowdung), kuśa grass, horse's hoof, elephant's tusk, mud from the anthill, sesamum oil, distilled water of five herbs, some fruits, some flowers, śamī leaves, tulasī leaves, hot water and so on. Water with these ingredients is collected in 108 (or 54 or 20) pots and poured over the icon to be installed and consecrated.

During special ceremonies (like Durgā-pūjā), the following are among the things used for giving a bath to the icon: pure water, water in conch, water from a sacred river, water in which sandal paste (gandha) is mixed, the 'five products of the cow' separately (in this order, urine, cow-dung, milk, curd, and ghee), water in which kuśa-grass is immersed, the 'five sweet ingredients' (pañchāmṛta), dew-water (śiśirodaka), honey, water from flowers (pushpodaka), sugar-cane juice (ikshu-rasa), cocoanut water (phalodaka), eight kinds of mud (aṣṭamṛttikā), hot water, and water from eight jars specially consecrated (kalaśa) (cf. *Bṛhan-nandikeśvara-purāṇa*). There are also regional and sectarian differences in the ingredients used for ritual bath given to an icon.

There is a custom in many shrines to use a large plate with a thousand holes which is held over the icon's head and water poured into it so that the water falls on the icon in a thousand streams (sahasra-dhārā). It is common to use a large conch for administering a bath in the Vaiṣṇava temples. Water is made to trickle down continuously upon the Śiva-liṅga, through a vessel held on top of the

liṅga. Water is also poured over the liṅga through a long horn (śṛṅga).

Sometimes, ingredients like camphor (karpūra), sandal paste (chandana), agallochum (agaru), saffron (kuṁkuma) and go-rochana are also mixed with the water. Grains, five plants, silver, gold and gems are also put into the water. For cleaning the icon, before a bath in pure water (śuddhodaka-snāna) is given, turmeric powder (haridrā), sugar (śarkarā), flour dough (piṣṭa), or myrobalan (āmalaka) is used.

## ABHYARCHANĀ

Ceremonial worship offered to an icon. This is of three varieties: 'superior' (uttama), 'midling' (madhyama) and 'inferior' (adhama). The first variety involves sixteen items (called upachāras) in the worship ritual: offering seat (āsana), invocation (āvāhana), offering water of welcome and honour (arghya), offering water for the feet (pādya), offering water to sip (āchamanīya), giving a bath (snāna), presentation of garments (vasana), offering of ornaments (ābharaṇa), applying sandal paste (gandha), decorating with flowers (pushpa), burning incense (dhūpa), waving lights (dīpa), offering of consecrated food (charu-nivedana or naivedya), performance of a brief fire-ritual (agni-kārya), prostrations with circumambulations (namaskāra), and worship in thought (japa). The second variety has only ten items (upachāras): offering water of welcome and honour (arghya), water for the feet (pādya), water for sipping (āchāma), bath (snāna), applying sandal paste (gandha), decorating with flowers (pushpa), burning incense (dhūpa), waving light (dīpa), presenting food (naivedya) and prostrations (namaskāra). The last variety has only five items: offering sandal paste (gandha), flowers (pushpa), incense (dhūpa), light (dīpa) and food (naivedya) (cf. *Īśāna-śiva-guru-deva-paddhati*, 8, 5-9).

## AMITĀBHA

Meaning "immeasurable light" he is one of the most prominent divinities of the Mahāyāna Buddhist pantheon, popular in Japan (as Amida), in China and in Tibet. The ideology

of five 'dhyāni-buddhas' all originating from the primordial Buddha (Ādi-buddha), represents five families (kulas) of gods and goddesses and the five aggregates of primordial elements (skandhas), one of whom is Amitābha (others being Ratnasambhava, Amogha-siddhi, Vairochana and Akshobhya). According to *Sādhana-mālā*, Amitābha is red in colour (originating from the red syllable 'hrīh') and symbolizes deep contemplation (dhyāna). He is (as the other dhyāni-Buddhas are) seated on a full blown lotus in a contemplative attitude, legs crossed with soles of the feet turned upward. The hands rest on the lap in the samādhi-mudrā (gesture of meditation). He presides over the "lotus" (padma) family, and among the five skandhas, he represents 'saṃjñā' (identification of objects by verbal labels). His material appearance is indicative of attachment (rāga). His śakti is Vajra-dhātviśvari. His bodhisattva is Padma-pāṇi-Avalokiteśvara (see AVALOKITESVARA). He is said to reside in the land of pure bliss (sukhāvatī). In Nepal, he has a shrine in Svayambhū-chaitya; he is regarded here as the Ādi-buddha himself. In China, he receives special adoration by the adherents of the Pure Land sect. In Japan, he is also celebrated as "immeasurable life" (amitāyus). He is extensively worshipped in Tibet.

There are two texts in Sanskrit which deal with Amitābha: *Sukhāvatī-vyūha-sūtra* (Translated into Chinese in the 2nd cent. A.D.) and *Amitāyur-dhyāna-sūtra*. His iconic description is to be found in *Advaya-vajrasaṅgraha*, where he is located on the western petal of the solar orb ('pāśchima-dale ravi-maṇḍalopari'). When he is represented on stūpas, he is made to face the western direction.

There are two gods and three goddesses who are said to be emanations from Amitābha. The two gods are Mahābala (four-armed, fierce in aspect, clad in tiger-skin, decorated with snakes and standing in the pratyālīḍha posture) and Saptā-śatika-Hayagrīva (also terrible-looking, red in complexion, angry in aspect, wearing a garland of skulls, two-headed one of the heads being that of a horse, blue in colour, neighing without a break). The three goddesses are Kurukullā (see KURUKULLA), Bhṛkūṭī (yellow in complexion, four-armed,



AMITAYUS (Copper gilt, Tibet)

carrying the triple-staff or tridaṇḍī, the water-vessel or kamaṇḍalu, rosary or akṣamālā and the gesture of boon-bestowal or varada) and Mahāsītāvatī (red in complexion, four-armed, carrying rosary, the gesture of boon-bestowal or varada-mudrā, the goad-thunderbolt or vajrāṅkuśa and the scripture or pustaka held near the heart-region, seated in the ardha-paryāṅka attitude).

## AMITĀYUS

"Immeasurable life", is another name for Amitābha (see AMITABHA).

## AMBĀ

Literally "mother", it is the general name for the mother-goddesses. In northern parts of India, the expression becomes 'Mā' and in the southern parts 'amma'. It usually occurs as a suffix in the names of folk-goodesses (like Santoshī-Mā, Māriamma and Mutyā-lamma).

The form of Āmbā is prescribed to be of the complexion of a water-lily, and four-armed, carrying lasso (pāśa), red lotus (padma), vessel (pātra) and gesture of protection (abhaya).

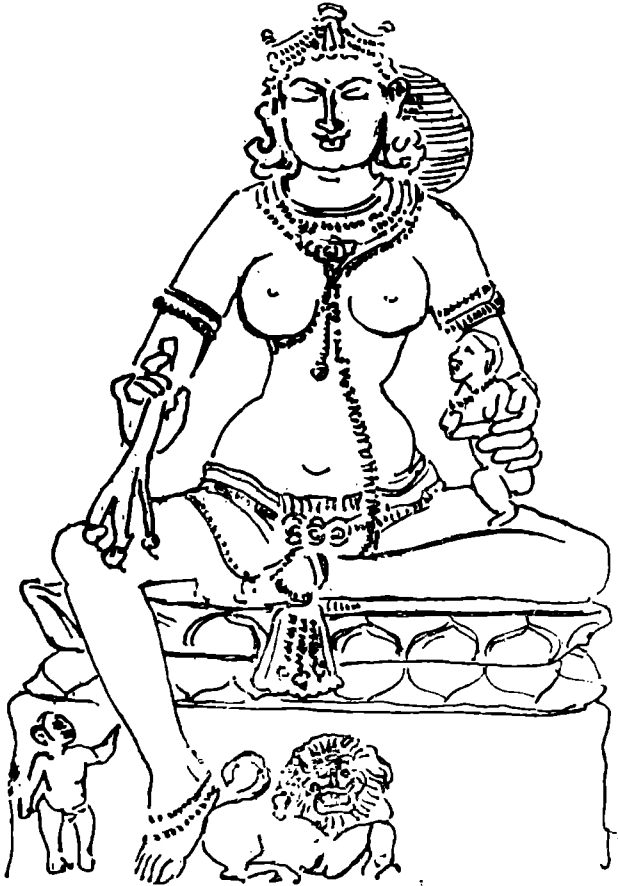
According to a text ascribed to Viśvakarma (*Viśvakarma-śāstra*), she is four-armed (carrying sword, shield, mirror and gesture of boon-bestowal), and three-eyed, and rides a lion. Some other texts describe her as red-complexioned, smiling and six-armed (carrying lasso, goad, bow, arrow, water-bowl and fruit). In some texts, she is shown with a baby in arms.

## AMBIKĀ

Meaning "the mother", the expression has been in use for the mother-goddesses since great antiquity. In *Vājasaneyi-Saṃhitā* (3,57) and *Taittirīya-brāhmaṇa* (16,10,5-5), Āmbikā has been described as the sister (svasr) of Rudra (viz. Śiva), but in *Taittirīya-āranyaka* (10, 18) she figures as the wife of

Rudra. She receives worship both as a form of Pārvatī (the consort of Śiva) as well as an independent Śakti. She is identified in the Tāntrik texts variously with Bhuvaneśvarī, Mahālakshmi, Viśālākshī, Vajra-prastarī, Sāvitrī (the deity of sandhyā), Durgā, and Kaumārī (the spirit of Kārttikeya).

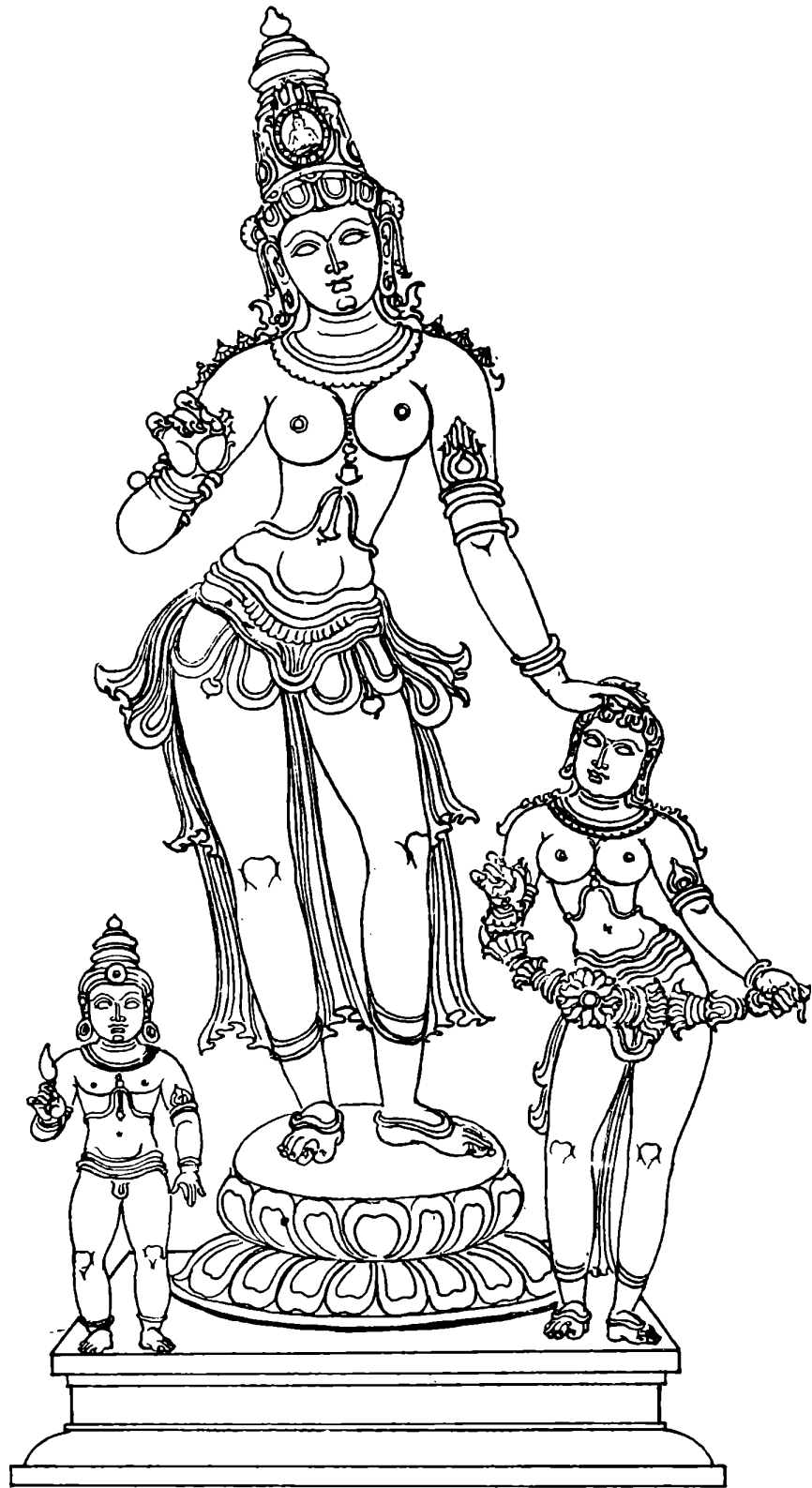
In the 'Āmbika-dhyāna' section of *Tantra-sāra*, she is pictured as either two-armed or four-armed, either seated in 'lalitāsana' or standing with her left foot on a jar of gems. Her vehicle is lion (siṃha-vāhinī), as she is a form of Durgā. She has three-eyes, and wears the moon on the crown. She has a smile on her face, and her breasts are well-developed. She carries in her hands a drinking bowl (pāna-pātra) and a red lotus. According to *Devīmāhātmya* (8,14-21), she has the form of Kaumārī, when she carries a magic spear (śakti) in her hand, and rides on a peacock (mayūra-vāhana). She sets out in this aspect to fight against the demons ('yoddhum daityān āmbikā guha-rūpiṇī'). *Brahma-vaivata-purāṇa*



AMBIKA

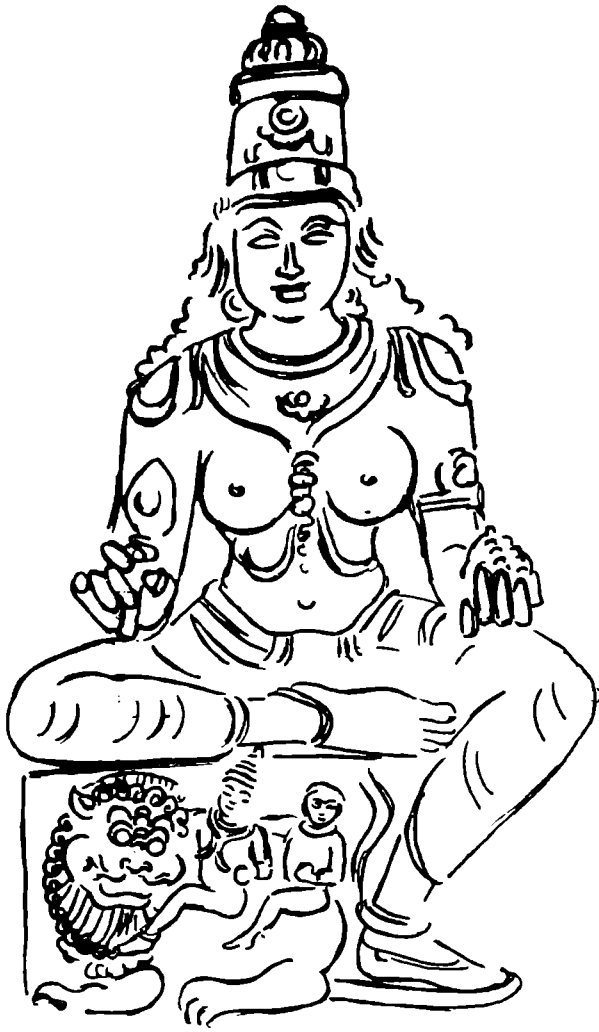


AMBIKA (Stone, Chaundarayā basadi, Sravanabelgola)



AMBIKA (Bronze, Egmore Museum, Tamil Nadu)





AMBIKA (Stone, Kambadahalli Basadi)

mentions that Ambikā is the benign form of Durgā.

Her iconic representation is also to be found as a 'vimāna-devatā' (a goddess represented on the vimāna on top of the sanctum in a temple). Her location in the vimāna is in the north-eastern direction (which is the quarter of Durgā). *Nāradya-saṁhitā* (14,110) prescribes that she should be represented as standing on the head of the buffalo-demon ('māhishe śirasi sthitām').

She is also worshipped as Kūshmāṇḍini by the Jainas as a yakshiṇī attending on the twenty-second tīrthaṅkara Nemi-nātha (see ARISHTA-NEMI), and also as an independent domestic divinity (*gṛha-devatā*). In the latter aspect, she is shown with a baby, suckling her or playing around her. She is associated with lion as vehicle or emblem.

## AMṚTA-MṚTYUÑJAYA

A rare form of Śiva in which he is represented as seated in a lotus-posture, with two of his hands brought together in a yogic gesture (dhyāna-mudra), and the other two hands together carrying a golden jar of ambrosia (amṛta-pūrṇa-kanaka-kalaśa). He wears on his head the crescent moon, from which trickles down divine nectar (sraṇad-divyāmṛta-chandra-kalā). His body too shines like the moon. His three eyes symbolize the sun, the moon and the fire. The matted-hair tied on his head is tawny (*pīṅga*) in colour. The sacred thread on his body is made of the serpent; and serpents are also his ornaments. He is clad with a tiger-skin, and his body is smeared with ash. We find this description in *Kāraṇāgama*.

In *Prapañcha-sāra-saṁgraha*, (26th paṭala), he is described as seated on a full-blown water-lily ('sphuṭita-nalina-saṁstham'), the whole body wet with the nectar oozing out of the moon tied to the locks of hair on his head, carrying in two of his hands lasso (pāśa), and rosary (akṣhamālā). The mantra specific to this divinity is given as 'om vam jūm sah'. Kahoḷaka is said to be the sage who visualized this form.

## ARA

The eighteenth of the twenty-four 'tīrthaṅkaras' in the Jain pantheon (see TIRTHANKARA). Also called Ara-nātha, he was born in Rājapura as the son of King Sudarśana and his wife Sumitrā. He is recognized by the fish emblem. Kumbha was the leader of the community (gaṇadhara) during his dispensation. Attending on him are the yaksha called Mahendra and the yakshiṇī called Vijayā.

## ARAPACHANA

A popular divinity in Tibet and China, he is a form of Mañjuśrī (see MANJUSRI), also called Sadyonubhava-Mañjuśrī. The expression A-Ra-Pa-Cha-Na is explained as the group of divinities emanating from the five syllables in the Sanskrit alphabet. Along with Mañjuśrī the chief of the group (originating

from the first syllable), who is seated in the centre, the group consists Sūryaprabhā (or Jālinī-kumara, from the second syllable), seated in front of Mañjuśrī; Chandra-prabhā (from the third syllable), seated behind Mañjuśrī; Keśinī (from the fourth syllable) seated to the right; and Upakeśinī (from the last syllable) to the left of Mañjuśrī. All of them are white in complexion and similar in appearance.

Because Mañjuśrī is the chief of the group, the five divinities are together called Arapachana-Mañjuśrī. He is seated in the adamantine double lotus posture called 'vajraparyāṅkāśana'; his face, shining like the full moon, has a smile on it. He carries in his hands a sword (*khaḍga*) or a bell (*ghaṇṭā*) and a scriptural text (*pustaka*, viz. the *Prajñā-pāramitā-sūtra*). The sword is held aloft with his right hand, and the book is held close to the heart with his left.

### ARAVATTU-MŪVAR

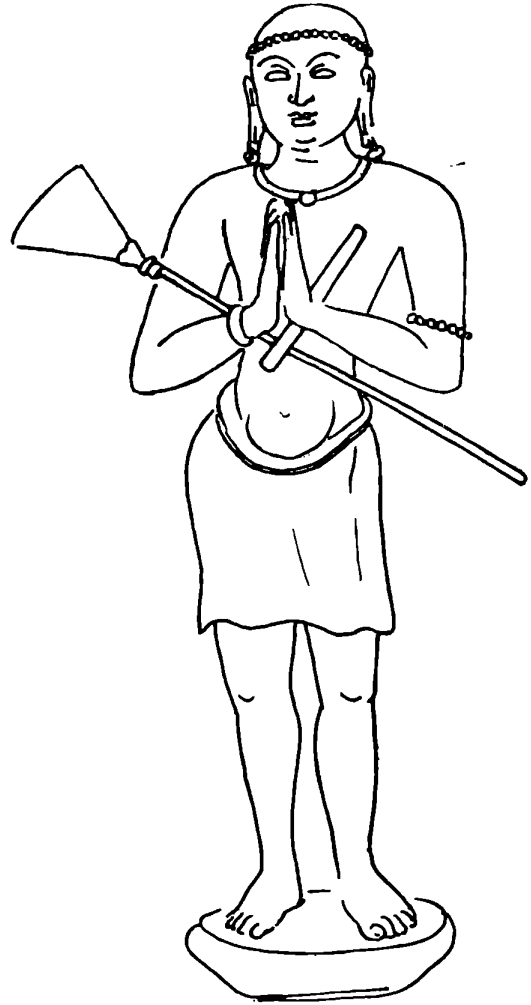
In Tamil 'Arupatti-mūvar', this Kannada expression refers to the "group of sixty-three" Śaiva saints of South India, whose icons are adored in many of the Śiva temples. While almost all Śiva temples in Tamil Nadu contain the stone images of these saints, fine bronze images (processional) are to be found in a few temples like those in Avanāśi (Coimbatore district), Kājahasti (Chittūr district) and Mylapore (in Madras city). In the Dārāsuram temple (near Kumbhakonam, Tanjore district), there are full bas-reliefs of the lives of these saints over the outer wall of the sanctum in the central shrine.

An account of these sixty-three saints (called Nāyanmārs or "great devotees") is to be found in Sekkīrār's classic in Tamil, *Periarpurāṇam*, composed in the great temple at Chidaṁbaram. The group includes devotees from all castes, and also two women saints (Pāṇḍya-mahā-devī and Īśai-nāniyar). They belong to a period prior to the tenth century A.D. They composed soul-stirring hymns in Tamil, and they have been collected in twelve books, called 'Panniru-tirumorai'.

The compositions of three celebrated saints among them (viz. Appar, Sambandar, and Sundarar) are popular as 'Tevāram' songs.

Usually, the icons of these saints receive worship in the temples on the days which are remembered as the days on which they passed away. More famous among them are Tirunilakaṇṭar, Appar (also called Tirunāvakkarasu or Vāgīśa), Kaṇṇappa (the hunter), Sundarar (called in Karnataka Nambiyaṇṇa), Saṁbandar (Tirujñāna-saṁbandha) and Tirumūlar. In Vīraśaiva shrines of Karnataka, the sixty-three saints are symbolized in so many pillars, or in so many niches. They are worshipped together in a ritual known as 'maṇṭapa-pūjā'.

Chañḍeśa, who was one of the 'sixty-three' is said to have received special grace from Śiva, and to have been crowned by Śiva as the head of all the devotees. This event is



APPAR



MANIKKA-VACHAKAR



APPAR, SAMBANDAR AND SUNDARAR

## ARISHṬA-NEMI

Also called Nemi-nātha, he is the twenty-second of the twenty-four tīrthaṅkars in the Jaina pantheon. He is a historical figure, inasmuch as references to him and his teachings are available in several texts, besides the Jaina. His name is mentioned in a Vedic hymn and he was a contemporary and cousin of Kṛṣṇa. He was born in Harivamśa (the lineage to which Kṛṣṇa also belonged) in Dvārakā as the son of Samudra-vijaya (who was the ruler of Dvārakā or Śauri-pura and who was the elder brother of Vasudeva, the father of Kṛṣṇa) and his wife Śivā-devī. Before he was born, his mother dreamt a wheel studded with jewels of dark hue; hence, he was named Arishṭa-Nemi. He is of dark colour, and is identified by conch, which is his emblem. He is said to have taught the original *Gītā* to Kṛṣṇa. He is attended by the yaksha Sarvāhna (or Gomēdha) and the yakshiṇī Kushmāṇḍī (or Ambikā). Ugra-sena, the father of Kaiśa (the maternal uncle of Kṛṣṇa) is represented as standing by his side, fanning him. Varadatta was the leader of the community (gaṇadhara) during his dispensation.

## ARUṆA

The mythical charioteer of the Sun-god (Sūrya), represented as devoid of the lower part of the body (anūru, "without thighs"), seated at the feet of the Sun-god, and driving seven horses. He is also seen sometimes with two male attendants of the sun-god, viz. Daṇḍi and Piṅgala, or with two female attendants Ushā and Pratyūshā (See SURYA)

The legendary background of Aruṇa is that he was the son of Kaśyapa and Vinatā, and the elder brother of Guruḍa (who is the vehicle of Viṣṇu) both of whom were laid as eggs. When the first egg was still premature, the mother impelled by curiosity hatched it, and out came Aruṇa in a half-developed form. This explains how he became bereft of the lower limbs. The Sun was blazing fiercely at that time and the gods were unable to bear it. Brahmā sent Aruṇa to stand in front of the Sun so that the intensity of the solar heat might be partially obstructed. Thus began the



KANNAPPAN (Bronze from Tiruvengada, Tamil Nadu)

commemorated in an iconic representation of Śiva, Chaṇḍeśānugraha-mūrti (see CHANDESA and SIVA), an excellent specimen of which is to be found in the temple at Gangaikōṇḍa-choḷa-puram (in Tiruchirapally district).



ARUNA from Bengal

association of Aruṇa with the Sun-god (*Mahā-bhārata*, Ādi, 24, 15–20). Aruṇa married Śyenī ("the she-hawk"), and begot Saṃpāti and Jaṭāyu (who figures in Rāmāyaṇa as the benefactor of Rāma).

There is also an Aruṇa, who is one of the attendant divinities and lords of elements (bhūta-pati). He is represented as two-armed, round-eyed (*vr̥tta-chakshu*), with fangs (*sa-dam̐shṛa*), fierce-looking (*bhayaṅkara*), gigantic in proportions (*bṛhat-kāya*) and carrying a staff (*daṇḍa-hasta*). He should be represented along with others of the same class, Kumuda, Puṇḍarīka, Śaṅku-karṇa and Sumukha (cf. *Nāradya-Saṃhitā*, 13, 335).



ARUNA, the Charioteer of Surya

## ARUNĀCHALEŚVARA

The name of the aniconic liṅgam in the famous temple at Tiruvaṇṇāmalai (Tamil Nadu). But there is an iconic form which goes by this name, where Śiva is represented as a Yogi, with his two front hands joined in a contemplative gesture, and his other hands carrying the usual emblems of Śiva, viz., battle-axe and antelope (See illustration, next page).

## ARKA-GAṆAPATI

A form of Gaṇapati, specially in use in Tāntrik rites. Arka is the name for the Indian plant *Calotropis gigantea*, which has numerous medicinal and magical properties. It grows extensively in burning grounds and wilderness. The roots of the white variety of the plant (*śvetārka*), when very old, is said to develop into the form of Gaṇapati. A fine and large specimen of this can be seen in the temple of Mūkāmbikā in Kollūr (Karnataka). While this is obviously a rare occurrence, the texts (like *Mantra-mahodadhi*, 2, 40–41)



ARUNACHALESVARA (Kadabavanesvara temple, Erumbur)

prescribe that an icon of Gaṇapati (the Uchishṭa Gaṇapati form, See UCCHISHTA-GANAPATI) may be fashioned out of the main root of the white arka plant, and that the image so made should be of the size of the worshipper's thumb. This icon is said to be effective in the six-fold magical rites (śānti, vaśya, ākarshaṇa, vidvesha, ucchāṭana and māraṇa), many of which answer to the description of witchcraft and sorcery.

However, there is a form of Gaṇapati, known as Arka-Gaṇapati without any reference to the plant arka, although its employment is still magical (for purposes of securing the attention and adoration of all people, 'vaśya'). The textual prescriptions of the iconic details of this form are general: he is four-armed,

carrying in his hands tusk (vishāṇa), lasso (pāśa), lotus (kamala) and sweet cake (modaka); adorned with numerous ornaments made of gems and pearls; with a serpent as his sacred thread, seated on the 'bhadraśana' or riding an elephant (*Prapañcha-sārasaṃ-graha*). However, the mantra specific to this form involves an appeal for magical attraction: "Om gam gaṇapate arkagaṇapate vara varada sarva-janam me vaśam ānaya, svāhā". Arka-Gaṇapati is one of the fifty-two forms of Gaṇapati to be found in Vārāṇasī (Banaras) and enumerated in *Skānda-purāṇa* ('Kāśi-Khaṇḍa', ch. 57)

## ARCHANĀ

Also known as 'pūjā', 'saparyā', 'sevā' or 'ārāadhanā', the expression means worship of an icon (more specifically 'pratimārchanā' or 'bimba-pūjā'). It is of two major varieties: worship done at home (gṛhārchanā), and worship done in a temple (ālayārchanā). The scriptural prescriptions for the two differ considerably, the former being described as 'worship for ones own benefit or for the benefit of ones own immediate family' (ātmārchanā) while the latter is 'worship for the sake of others' (parārchanā). The latter is naturally more institutionalized than the former, and the procedure in the latter case is more or less standardized.

The most evident difference between the two varieties of worship is in the size of the icons worshipped at home and in the temples. There is a prohibition for the worship at home of icons which are bigger than ten (or fifteen) aṅgulas (see ANGULA, what is meant here is the 'mātrāṅgula'), according to *Kāpila-pāñcharātra* and *Hayagriva-pāñcharātra* ('mātrāṅgula-pramāṇena daśa-pañchadaśāṅgulaṃ; gṛhe tu pratimā pūjyā nādhikā tu praśasyate'). This restriction is of course not applicable to icons in the temple. Worship at home is also simpler and shorter than worship in a temple; it has far fewer details, and does not require periodic festive observances (naimittika-utsavas) or the daily procession in connection with food-offering (bali-yātrā).

Worship in a temple (devāyatana), which is public in character, is again distinguished from worship in a monastic establishment

(*gurvāyatana*), which is both public and private. The latter is an extension of the household worship, but it is meant for a larger audience. The temple, being a public institution, is open to all classes of people, regardless of sect, creed or caste. But in a monastic institution, admittance is restricted to people who owe allegiance to a particular sect or caste.

Worship in a temple involves an elaborate ritual, and it is repeated several times during the course of the day. It is usual for most temples for arranging worship three times a day (called '*trikāla-pūjā*') : morning (*prātaḥ*), noon (*mādhyaṇḍina*) and eventide (*sāyam*). There are temples where the worship is conducted six times a day ('*ṣaṭkāla-pūjā*'), viz. in addition to the above, early dawn (*pratyūṣham*, about 5 a.m.), pre-noon (*upa-sandhi*, about 9 a.m.), and late in the night (*ardha-yāma*, about 10 p.m.).

The texts of the Pāñcharātra school prescribe worship as many as twelve times.

The worship sequence involves numerous details (called *upachāras*). Some texts (like *Tantra-sāra*, *Siddha-yāmala*) give as many as sixty-four of them ; some others content themselves with eighteen or sixteen. The sixteen-detailed worship (*ṣoḍaśopachāra*) is more frequently resorted to : water for the feet (*pādya*), water of offering (*arghya*), water for sipping (*āchamana*), bath (*snāna*), offering of garments and ornaments (*vasana-bhūṣaṇa*), presenting fragrant unguents (*gandha*), offering flowers (*pushpa*), burning incense (*dhūpa*), waving light in front of the icon (*dīpa*), presenting food (*naivedya*), water for cleaning the mouth and sipping (*punar-āchamana*), presenting post-prandial delicacy (*tāmbūla*), worship by invoking names (*archanā*), singing hymns and laudatory verses (*stotra*), oblations (*tarpaṇa*) and prostrations (*namaskriyā*). *Tantra-sāra* insists that worship must involve at least five details (*pañchopachāra*); unguents (*gandha*), flowers (*pushpa*), incense (*dhūpa*), light (*dīpa*) and food-offering (*naivedya*).

In household worship, the sequence of five details would take the form of inviting the deity (*āvāhana*), seating (*sthāpanā*), materializing the presence (*sannidhi-karaṇa*), worship (with the above five details) and dismissal of the deity after worship (*visarjana*).

The deity as the icon in a temple is permanently 'alive' and 'present', and therefore the details of inviting, seating, materialising the presence and dismissal become irrelevant and unnecessary.

Among the details of worship, offering water for honouring is intended to delight the god (*deva*), unguents like sandal-paste to delight the creator (*brahmā*), flowers to secure growth (*vrddhi-prada*), burning incense to delight the cosmic fire (*vaiśvānara*), placing light in front of the deity to delight the divinity presiding over ritualistic action (*karma*), waving light (*ārati*) to secure victory (*jaya*), offering food to secure abundance (*saṃṛddhi*), and presentation of *tāmbūla* to secure prosperity (*śrī*).

Daily worship rituals are collectively known as 'karma', as distinguished from processions (*utsava*), food-offering (*bali*), or ceremonial bath in a tank (*tīrtha*). It is a custom in many temples to use different icons for different purposes. The icon employed in daily worship is the permanent and immovable one (*mūla-kautuka*) and the smaller replica of it in metal is known as '*karmārchā*'.

## ARCHĀ-MŪRTI

The icon meant to be worshipped, also called '*archā*', '*bera*', '*bimba*' or '*pratimā*', is distinguished from images and figures of gods and goddesses, which are only of decorative significance, or which constitute only the retinue (*parivāra*) of the icon to be worshipped.

The custom of making icons in metal for purposes of worship appears to be very ancient in India. Even *Rgvedic* hymns contain references to images of Rudra (2,33,9), Indra (4,24,10), Varuṇa (1,25,13), Agni (1,21,2 ; 4, 58,3) and to temples (7,56,14) in which icons were housed.

We find references to this practice even in Pāṇini (5,3,96 and 5,3,99 '*jīvikārthe chāpaṇye*') dating 5th cent. B.C. Patañjali, who commented on Pāṇini uses the expression '*archā*' in the sense of icon, or object of worship, and informs us that such objects were fashioned by the 'mauryas' who made money by exhibiting them before the pious folk ('*mauryair hiraṇyārthibhir archā prakal-*

pitā', on 5,3,99) ; and such images could not be bought and sold ('apaṇya').

The Besnagar inscription (2nd cent B.C.) suggests the image of Viṣṇu on a pillar (garuḍa-dhvaja) ; the Mora Well inscription (about the same time) mentions the icons (pratimā) of the five heroes of the Vṛshṇi clan; the Ghosundi inscription (1st cent. B.C.) refers to the icons of Saṅkarshaṇa and Vāsudeva in a temple ; the inscription on the Pawaya sculpture (Gwalior) (about the same time) mentions the icon of the spirit named Maṇi-bhadra. Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra* (about the 8th cent. A.D.) also mentions cells for placing the images of divinities like Aparājitā, Apratihata, Jayanta, Vaijayanta, Śiva, Vaiśraṇa and the Aśvins.

Manu's *Smṛti* (4,39) (about the 2nd cent. A.D.) prescribes circumambulation of icons (pratimā). Early icons were small and portable (chala-bera); they were usually made in metal. They were meant for worship in households ; temples were a later institution. Each time worship was conducted, it was preceded by a ceremonial invitation accorded for the divinity (āvāhana) and a ritual to bestow animation to the icon (prāṇa-pratishṭhā) ; without these two preliminaries, worship was regarded as useless. In a temple, however, the icon is permanently installed (achala-bera) in an elaborate ritual and duly consecrated (pratishṭhā). The divine presence in a temple-icon is said to disappear in rare and unusual circumstances, such as mutilation of the icon, defilement of the sanctum, discontinuance of daily worship over a period, earthquake, and so on. The temple-icons were more usually in stone or in wood, and were of relatively large size, as they were meant for worship in public.

The custom of having metal replicas of these icons in the sanctum for purposes of occasional processions and other ceremonial details (like bathing) was a later one, and was necessitated when the temple-worship became a complicated ritual. The metal images were smaller in size and were portable in character, and hence were called 'chala-beras,' in contradistinction to the permanently fixed stone icon in the sanctum, which was called

'achala-bera' or 'dhruva-bera'. Most of the temples following Pāñcha-rātra school have a group of five icons (pañcha-bera), viz. the immobile or main icon and four secondary and movable ones, each of them being employed in a worship detail (like procession or utsava, bathing, or snapana, food-offering or bali and assembly or koluvu). The four latter icons derive their power and authority only from the immovable icon in the sanctum.

Texts do not fix a limit to the number of icons that a temple may employ (bahu-bera) in addition to the main one in the cella or sanctum (called mūla-kautuka). *Śrī-praśna* (14, 2) suggests five icons : one to receive routine daily worship (karmārchā), the second to be carried round in processions (utsavārchā), the third to be taken out during food-offering (balyarchā), the fourth to receive the ceremonial bath (tirtha-snāna) and the fifth to be put to bed in the night (śayanārchā). *Īśvara-saṁhitā* (17, 238-248) calls them 'aṅga-bimbās'.

In the temples to Śiva, the sanctum invariably houses an aniconic liṅga, and worship is offered only to this. But there will be a metallic icon, representing Śiva in human form, for purposes of procession and so on. There are instances of temples to Viṣṇu or Śakti, where the main image (mūla-mūrti) in the sanctum is aniconic, somewhat in the form of a liṅga, but the processional image (utsava-bera) will be in human form.

The icon for worship in a temple may be fashioned by a sculptor and installed by priests in comparatively recent times (in which case it is called 'mānusha' or human). It may, alternatively, have been set up in very early times by a sage (in which case it is called 'ārsha' or related to a sage). Or it may be related in a legend to have been set up by the gods to honour the overlord of all of them (in which case it is called 'daiva' or divine). Finally, the icon may have appeared on its own (svayambhū).

The last variety is of course the most potent and sacred, and the divine presence in it is never lost. The icons set up by human beings is the least potent ; and to be effective



they require not only proper installation, but regular worship by a competent priest. There are also prescriptions and prohibitions in the conduct of priests and devotees. The icon may lose the divine presence with the omission of a ritual or the commission of a prohibited act. The temples containing this variety of icons also need periodical purifications (śuddhi), and renewal of consecrations.

The power in an icon (especially the one belonging to the 'human' variety) is said to be derived from the austere devotion of the priest ('archakasya tapo-balāt'), from the performance of correct worship rituals ('pūjanasyāti-śāyitvāt'), and from the clarity and beauty of the icon ('ābhirūpyāc cha bimbanām', 'bimbasya' saushṭhavāt'). The sculptor who fashions it is required to contemplate on the appropriate 'dhyāna-śloka' to visualize the form of the deity, before he sets out to carve or sculpt. 'Dhyāna-śloka' are verses in Sanskrit (contained in the āgama texts), which describe the iconographic details relevant to the 'avatāras' of Viṣṇu, 'līlā-mūrtis' of Śiva, forms of Śakti, Gaṇeśa and other major deities in worship. The icon made by a sculptor who is ignorant of these verses is regarded as unfit for worship.

Icons for worship are of five varieties, according to *Sanat Kumāra-saṃhitā* (7, 1-2): carved in stone (śailī or śilā-mayī), cast in metal (loha-mayī), fashioned in precious stone (ratna-mayī), carved in wood (kāśṭha-mayī or dārvi), and made in clay (mṛṇmayī). *Bhārgava-tantra* (4, 7) adds a sixth variety viz. drawn or painted on cloth or wall (chitra-ja or rekhā). *Hayaśirsha-tantra* (15, 1-2) adds the icons made from sandal-paste (gandha-ja) or from flowers (kaśumī); but these are strictly temporary in character (for tat-kāla-pūjā). *Viśvāmitra-Saṃhitā* (22, 1-2), however, says that the icons carved in stone (śaila), fashioned in precious stone (mañija) or cast in metal (lohaja) are the best.

The texts contain detailed accounts of wood or stone that is suitable for icon-making and also procedures for their collection (dravya-saṃgraha). Wood that has become dry of its own, is torn, has lost its bark, struck with an instrument, or has many crevices must

be avoided. Trees that grow on cemeteries or where four roads meet, or in a temple are also unsuitable to collect wood for carving icons. Likewise, trees on which birds have built nests or in the shade of which animals rest, or which grow on the roadside giving shelter to travellers or on tank-beds or near a well must not be cut down for wood. Trees which support creepers and climbers must likewise not be cut down. Trees which are struck by lightning or have caught fire are also unsuitable.

The trees, the wood of which is suitable for icon-making are in order of preference, khadira (catechu Acacia), Devadāru (Cedrus deodara), Badarī (zyphus jujuba), the two varieties of Chandana (sanatalum), Śirīśipa (Dalbergia sissoo, Rose-wood tree), Bilva (Aegle maxmelos), Madhūka (Bassia latifolia) Syandanalohita, Chāmpaka (Michelia champaka), Śālmali (Bombax Malabaricum, red silk cotton tree), Sāla (shorea robusta), Bakula (Mimusopa elengi), Śirīsha (Mimosa sirissa) and Āmalaka (Emblic myrobalan) (cf. *Viśhvaksena-saṃhitā*, 3, 7-12).

The wood has to be cut and brought to the site of consecration in an elaborate ritual, and there are procedures for the sculptor to prepare the wood prior to carving (for details see *Purushottama-tantra*, 6; *Kapinjala-tantra*, 11, 18-19; *Sakalādhikāra*, 22).

Likewise, stone for making icons is also to be carefully selected, treated and consecrated before the sculptor sets to work. Stones to be avoided are those which contain cavities (garbha), which are on the banks of a river, or in the centre of a village, or in cemeteries, or in a place devoid of water and grass, or full of thorny thickets; stones which are in a desert, near a temple, or where four roads meet are also unsuitable. Stones from mountains are the best, and only if they are not available, stones from level ground have to be selected, but satisfying the above conditions. Stones which are at the bottom of a tank are also suitable.

Stones are classified into three types: (1) masculine (pum-śilā), suitable for making liṅga and images of male divinities, (2) feminine (strī-śilā), suitable for making images of

female divinities, or the pedestal (pīṭhikā) above the ground for the images of the first variety ; (3) and neutral (napuṃsaka-śilā), suitable for making the base (pāda-pīṭha) or foundation-stone below the ground-level ('ratnanyāsād adhah'). It is only the immoveable images (achla-bera) that are carved in stone, and have fixed abodes inside the sanctum (cf. *Vāśiṣṭha-tantra*, 4, 30 ; *Puruṣottama-saṃhitā*, 5, 63).

Mobile images (chala-bera) are cast in metal or carved in precious stones. Of the metals, gold (suvarṇa), especially the 'jātarūpa' variety, is best for making images. Next in order is silver (rajata); and next to it is copper (tāmra). But more commonly found are images made in brass (paittala) or bronze (kāṃśya). These five are regarded as auspicious metals (cf. *Īśāna-śiva-guru-deva-paddhati*, 36). Images made of iron (āyasa), lead (saisaka) and tin (trapusha) are used only in magical rites and witchcraft, and they have an evil influence.

For temporary purposes, images for worship may be made in sand (saikata), cow-dung (gomaya), rice-flour (paishṭa), butter (navanīta), sandal-paste (gandha) and so on. But no pedestal (piṇḍikā) is to be made for such images, nor any standard measurements to be adopted. Worship must be conducted soon after the images are made, and must immediately thereafter be abandoned.

There is another classification of icons for worship into four kinds, given in Gopāla's *Haribhakti-vilāsa* : line-drawings, or colour paintings (chitrāja) done on a wall (bhitti), canvas (paṭa) or earthen pot (pātra) ; clay frescoes (lepaja) ; cast in molten metal (pākaja) ; and carved by sharp implements (śastrotkīrṇa) (cf. also *Vishṇu-dharmottara-purāṇa*, 3, 2, 27 etc.). Bhoja's *Samarāṅgaṇa-sūtra-dhāra* (GOS, II, 1.1) enumerates icons made in gold (suvarṇa), silver (rūpya), copper (tāmra), stone (aśma), wood (dāru), clay (lepya), and drawings (chitra).

Stone icons for worship are either sculpted in the round (called 'chitra') or in bas or middle relief ('ardha-chitra' or 'chitrārdha'). The former can be seen alround ('chitram sarvāṅga-dṛṣṭam'), but the back portion of the latter is left plain and not to be seen ('ardham ardhāṅga-darśanam'). The third

variety of icons is painting ('chitrābhāsa') on cloth or wall. The sculpture in the round is considered best, and the painting the least meritorious in worship (cf. *Sakalādhikāra*, 1, 4-5).

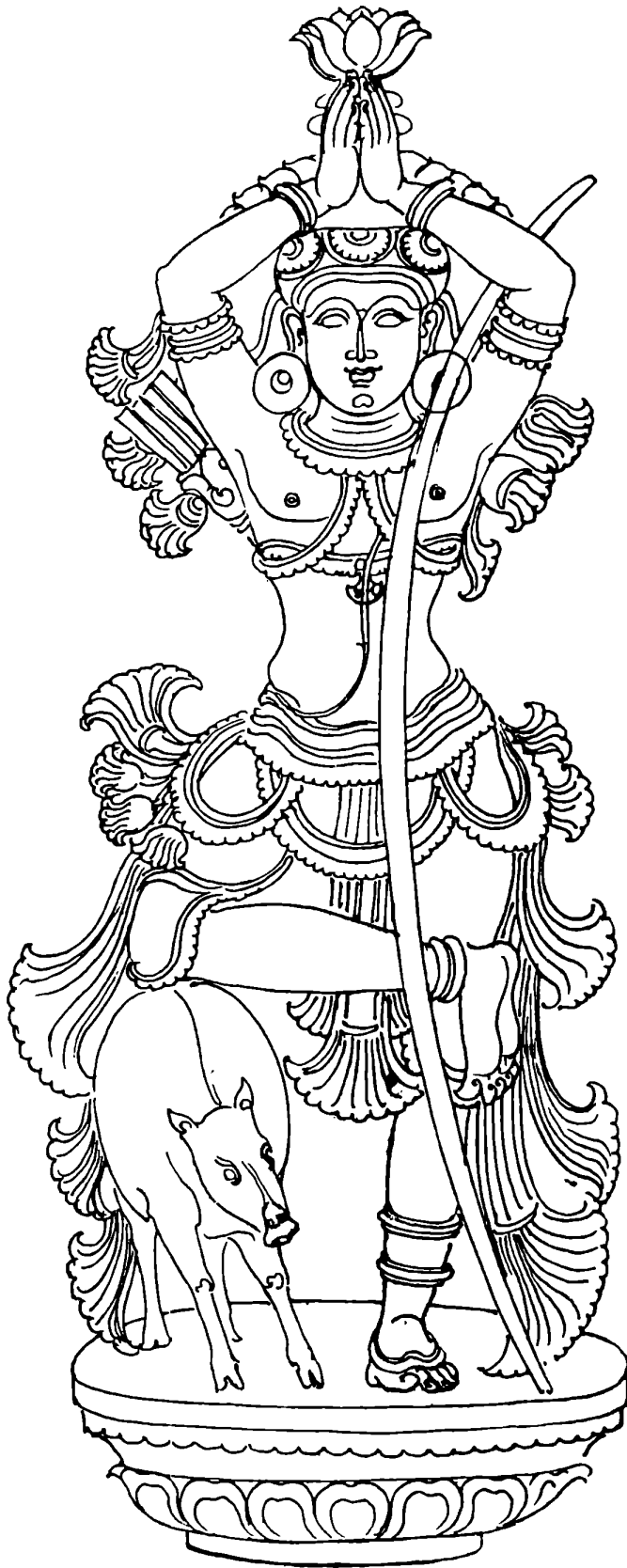
For making icons meant for worship, knowledge of iconographic prescriptions is indispensable (*Vishṇudharmottara-purāṇa*, 3, 2, 1-9). The sculptor must be well-versed in the art of sculpture in the round, bas-relief, and drawing, must be skilled in delineating the gestures (mudrā), postures (bhaṅgi), ornaments (ābharaṇa), weapons (āyudha) and other details appropriate to different deities.

## ARJUNA

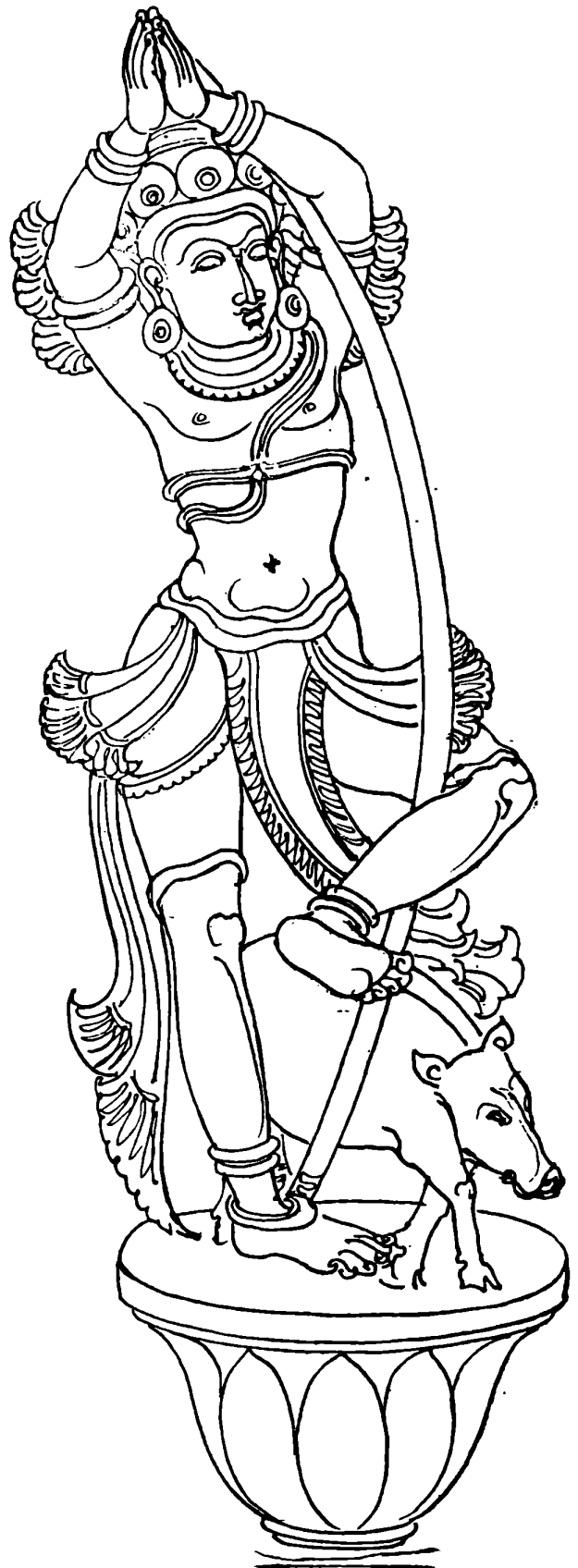
A hero of *Mahābhārata* and one of the Pāṇḍava brothers (the third son of Kuntī, born as a result of her invoking Indra), he was a friend of Kṛṣṇa. In iconography, Arjuna is depicted in two situations : one associated with Viṣṇu and the other associated with Śiva. Kṛṣṇa offered to be a charioteer of Arjuna in the battle, and is hence known as Pārtha-sārathi. Viṣṇu is represented in this role as carrying the usual discus (chakra) and conch (śaṃkha), but also a whip in hand. In some images of this type, he is seen with a moustache. Arjuna, however, may not always be shown with him. One of Śiva's forms is described as 'bestowal of boon to Arjuna' (Arjuna-vara-pradāna) (see ANUGRAHA-MURTI). The reference is to the performance of penance by Arjuna in the Himalayan foothills and the consequent gifting of a weapon (called 'pāśupatāstra') by Śiva. There are sculptural narrative representations of this event, especially the sequence of Śiva in the guise of a hunter testing the sincerity of Arjuna's penance. The event, which forms the subject-matter of several literary works in Sanskrit, is known as 'kirātārjunīya'.

## ARDHA-CHANDRA

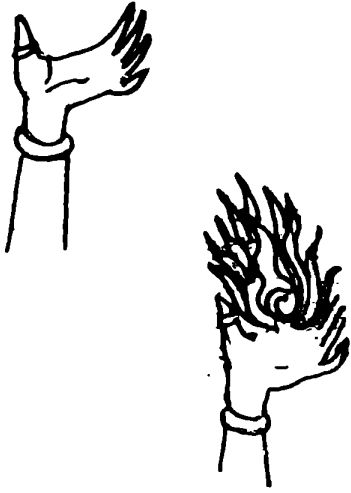
Half-moon or crescent moon as an iconographic detail is worn by Śiva on his matted locks of hair (jaṭā). In the form of Naṭarāja, Śiva carries fire in one of his hands, and while



ARJUNA (Stone, Thali temple)



ARJUNA (Wood, Thiruvannoor temple, Calicut)



ARDHA-CHANDRA

doing so the palm assumes the form of half-moon (ardha-chandra-mudrā). Some forms of Devī (like Durgā, Parameśvarī, Bhuvaneśvarī, Rājārājeśvarī, Rāja-mātāṅgī, Dhumāvatī, and Vārāhī) also have crescent-moon on their crowns.

### ARDHA-CHITRA

Also called 'chitrārdha', it is one of the three varieties of icons (the other two being 'chitra' and 'chitrābhāsa'), where the icon is sculpted in relief and hence the name 'half-sculpture' ('half of the icon being sculpted and made visible'). The rear portion is left plain and is not meant to be seen (śilā-gatāyā yasyās tu pṛsthā-bhāgo na dṛśyate', *Agastya-saṁhitā* ; 'ardham ardhāṅga-darśanam', *Sakalādhikāra*, 1,5). This is regarded as inferior to sculpture in the round (viz. 'chitra'), but superior to painting (viz. chitrābhāsa), from the point of view of worship. This is described as 'middle-relief', as distinguished from 'low relief' (which is 'chitrābhāsa'). There is a prescription that relief sculptures must be made in stucco ('chitrāroham', saudhājam', *Sakalādhikāra*, 1, 4).

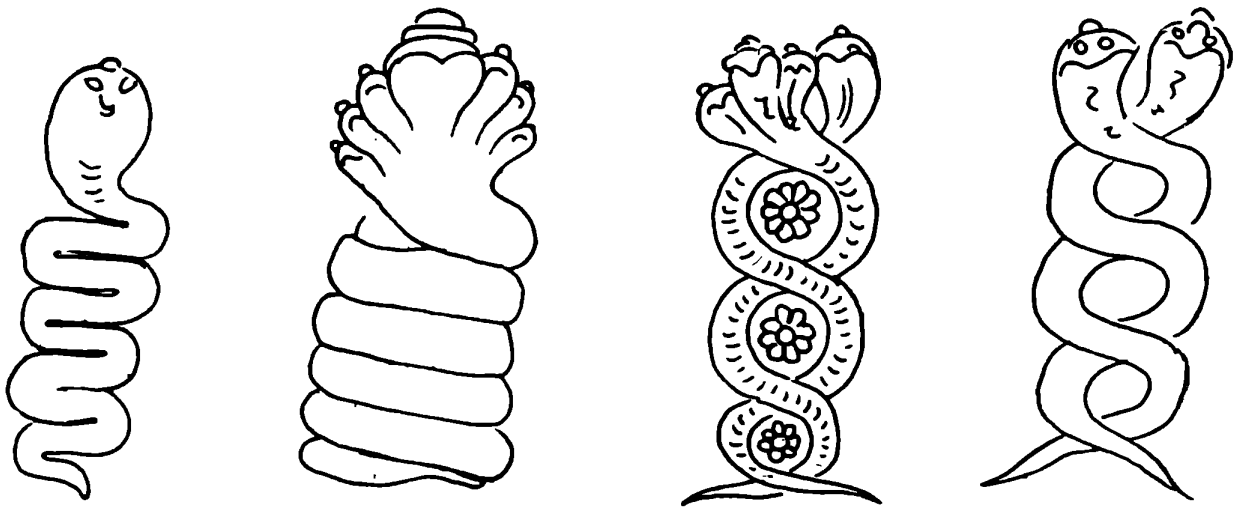
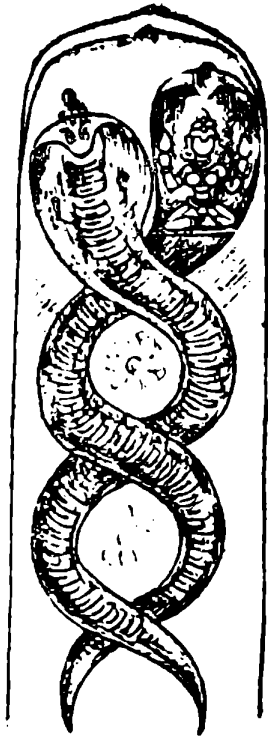
### ARDHA-DAIVA

Deities with semi-divine status, invoked occasionally for specific, and minor, benefits.

They are sometimes represented as attendants or in the entourage (parivāra) of major gods and goddesses. The class of such divinities include deified hermits (ṛshi), ancestral spirits (pitṛ), serpents (nāga), demons (asura), goblins (piśācha), vampires (vetāla) and folk heroes (vīra). The bhūtas, worshipped extensively in the coastal regions of South India answer to the description of 'ardha-daiva' (See BHUTA). An illustration of the 'ardha-daiva' receiving worship is the Mahishāsura in



ARDHA DAIVA-VYAGHRAPADA



ARDHA DAIVA-NAGA



GARUDA



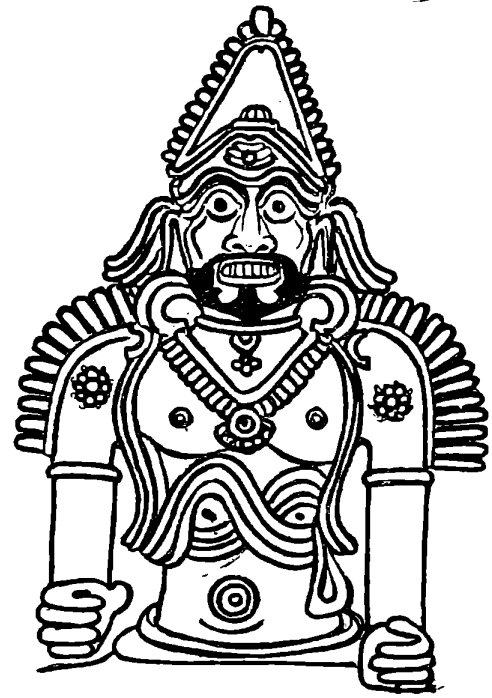
VETALA



RSHI



ARDHA DAIVA



MUNISVARA



GANDHARVA



KINNARA

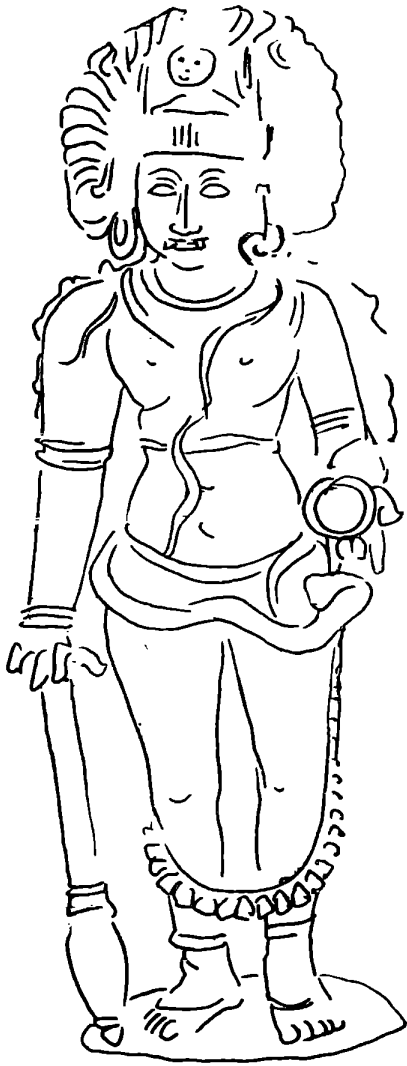


VETALA



ASURA

ARDHA DAIVA



KSHETRAPALA



SAINT APPAR

ARDHA DAIVA

the form of a buffalo combating with Durgā ; in the worship sequence, the 'asura' also receives the devotee's reverence, as also the lion on which Durgā rides. Another illustration is the Śesha (serpent) on which Viṣṇu is depicted as recumbent (Śesha-śayana), or the image of Garuḍa on the pedestal of Viṣṇu's icon.

The hermits or sages are represented as bearded and with their matted hair done in the form of a crown (jaṭā-mukuṭa). They are two-armed, carrying the mendicant's staff (daṇḍa) and water-pot (kalaśa or kamaṇḍalu) or rosary

(akṣa-sūtra) and book (pustaka). They wear the sacrificial cord (yajña-sūtra) and the upper cloth (uttariya) (See RSHI).

The ancestral spirits (pitṛs) are visualized as seated in comfort, yellow-complexioned (pīta-varṇa), two-armed, one hand resting on the lap and the other holding the sacrificial laddle (sruk), and wearing the sacred cord (upavīta). The balls of rice (piṇḍa) offered by their progeny are seen placed in front of them.

The serpents as worshipful spirits (nāga) are pictured with the human body above and



the coils of the snake below. Over the human head will be three, five or seven hoods (phaṇa), each showing the slit tongue lolling out. They are two-armed, and carry rosary (akṣhamālā) and small water-pot; (kuṇḍikā) alternately, the hands will be joined in the gesture of supplication (añjali-mudrā) (See NAGA).

The sylvan spirits of five types are usually represented in icons: the yakshas, kinnaras, gandharvas, vidyādhara and apsaras. The Yakshas are shown as short-statured and stout, with protruding belly (tundila), carrying a pot or bag of treasure (nidhi) (See YAKSHA). The kinnaras are celestial minstrels; they are shown as flying in the air and playing on the lute (vīṇā). Sometimes, their body is a composite one, half human and half beast or bird (See KINNARA). The gandharvas are youthful and handsome, and well-bedecked with ornaments, and they are shown as flying in the air, playing on the lute (vīṇā) (See GANDHARVA). The Vidyādhara are depicted like the gandharvas, but carrying in their hands a garland of flowers (mālā-dharā). The apsaras as celestial damsels, and thirty-two of them are named. They are shown as lovely girls in delightful postures; standing or more usually dancing, two-armed and carrying flowers, garlands, or gestures of endearment (See APSARAS).

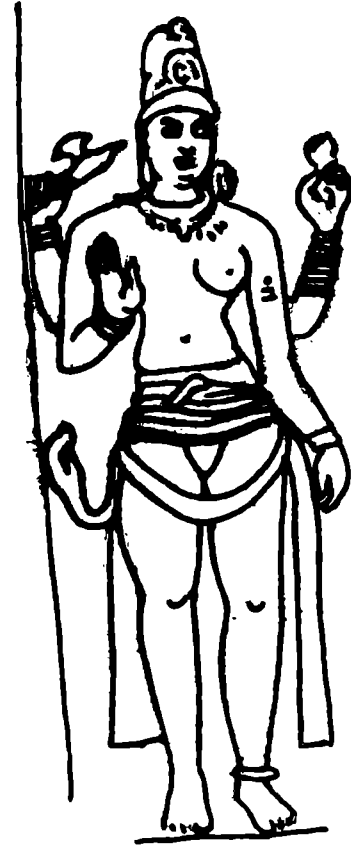
The wicked and hideous spirits like the asuras, dānavas, rākshasas, vetālas and bhūtas are also classed among the 'ardha-daivas'. The asuras are usually two-armed, with gigantic body (bhīma-kāyā) and frightening aspect (bhayaṅkarā), with terrible fangs (tikṣṇa-daṁṣṭrā). They carry numerous weapons of destruction (nānā-śastra-dharā), and wear on their heads crowns, and in their ears circular-ornaments (kirīṭa-kuṇḍālopetā) (See ASURA).

While the body of an asura is well-proportioned, the body of a dānava is huge (mahā-kāyā) but deformed (vikṛtākārā); the eyes are knit in a crooked manner (bhrukuṭi-kuṭila); the face expresses ferocity (karāla-vadanā). The rākshasas are dark in body-colour, and hideous and terrible in appearance (ghora-rūpā). They wear red garments (rakta-vastra-dharā), and hold in their hands destructive weapons; they have sharp and long nails on their fingers (dīrgha-nakhā).

The vetālas are hungry and cruel spirits, and are described as fond of devouring human flesh. They are pictured (as attendants of Śiva as Bhairava or of Śakti as Chāṇḍī) with elongated and emaciated body (dīrgha-dēhā, kṛśodarā), devoid of flesh (nirmāṁsā). They are terrible in aspect and deformed in body (raudra-vikṛta) (See VETALA) (See also BHUTA).

## ARDHA-NĀRĪŚVARA

The 'half-feminine form of Śiva' (ammai-appan in Tamil) is an illustration of the syncretic image, where two dissimilar but complementary aspects are represented in a unity. In the iconic representation of Śiva known as Ardha-nārīśvara or Ardhayuvatiśvara (in Assam), the right half represents the male principle (puruṣa) or Śiva while the left half represents the female principle (prakṛti or shakti) or Gaurī. The androgynous symbolism in iconography is characteristic of Śiva (later adapted to the representation of Viṣṇu as

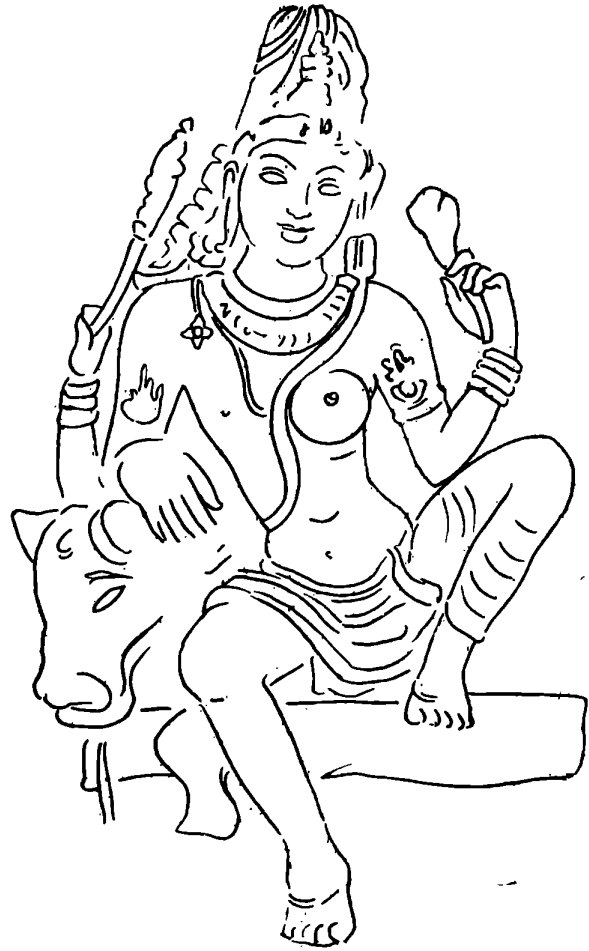


ARDHANARI at Mamallapuram, Dharmaraj ratha



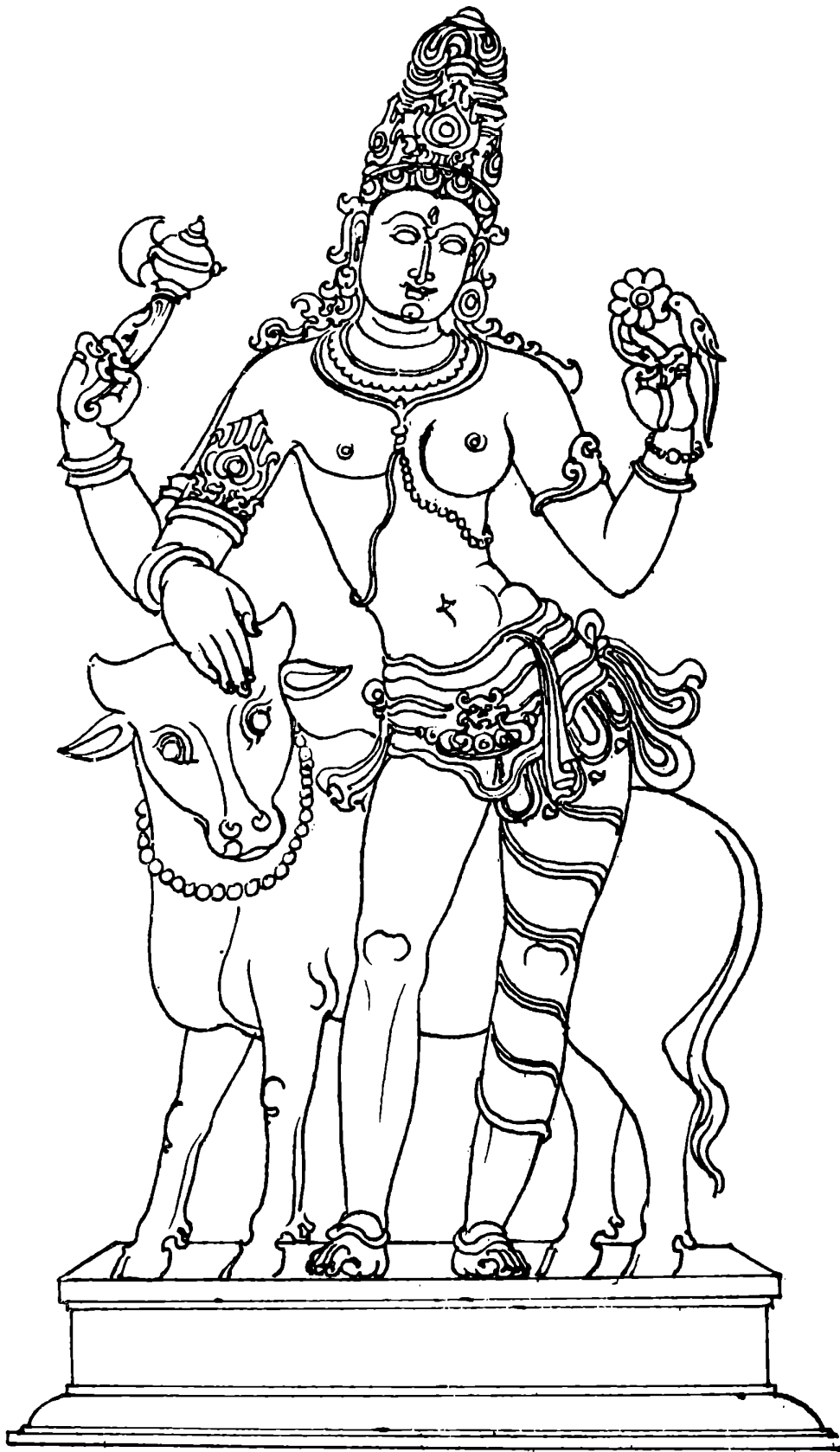
ARDHANARISVARA

'ardha-Lakshmi-Hari'), and is an artistic elaboration of the idea involved in the aniconic 'liṅga' form of Śiva (which also is a unity of liṅga or male aspect and yoni or female aspect). It is interesting that this form is enumerated among the forms of Śiva, and not among the forms of Devī. This is derived from the Vedic description of Śiva as having two forms: malevolent and benevolent ('dve tanū tasya devasya ghoram anyam śivam anyam'). The violent and destructive aspect (ugra) is represented by the male form, and the tender and creative aspect (saumya) by the female form. In the Khonamukhi grant (Assam) of Dharmapāla of Prāgjyotiṣa, dating back to the fifth century A.D., where this composite form is eulogized, we read that the form was assumed "as if to symbolize the creation where the amorous and fierce elements are coalesced".

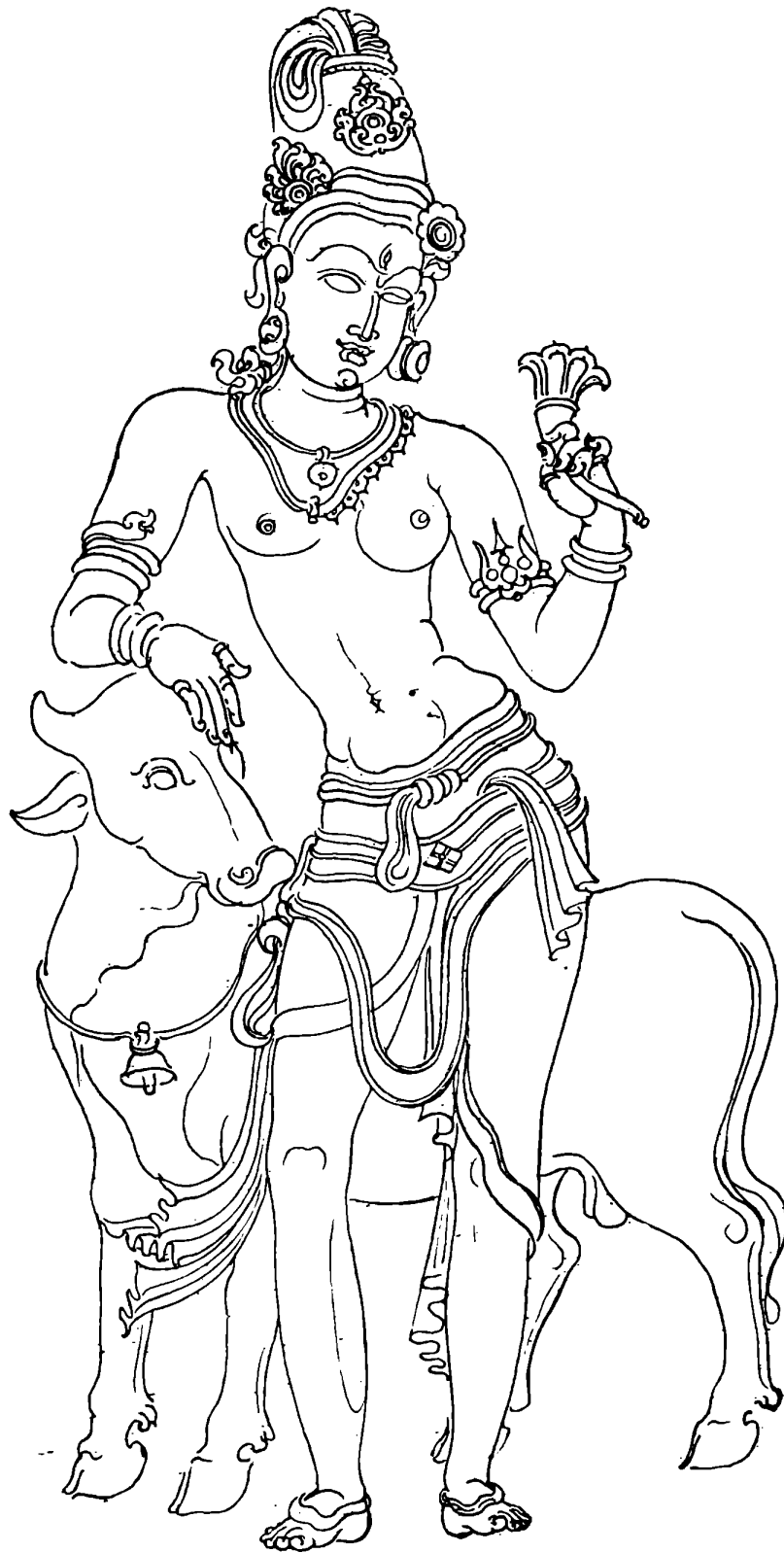


ARDHANARISVARA, Kandiṃur

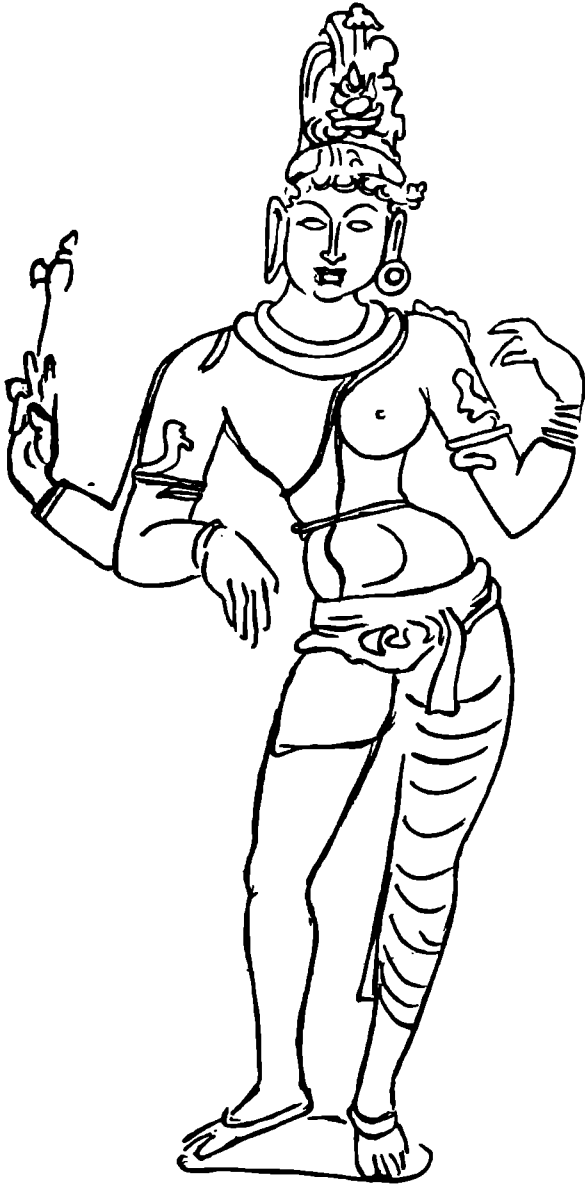
Classical iconographic texts like *Śilpa-ratna* and the Śaiva-āgama texts like *Kāraṇa*, *Kāmika*, *Aṃśumadbhedā* and *Suprabeda*, give details regarding the differential delineation of the two forms brought into a unity. Iconographic representations in stone are available in the northern parts of India as well as the southern since at least the sixth century A. D., Śiva in this form is represented with two arms (in several places), three arms (as in the Kailāsanātha Temple at Kāñchipuram or in the Bṛhadiśvara temple at Tanjore), four arms (as in the rock-cut temple at Badāmi), or eight arms (as in the temple at Dārāśuram). The last mentioned icon (at Dārāśuram in Tamil Nadu) has also three faces, while the others have only one. There is a dhyāna-sloka which describes Ardhanārīśvara with four faces and eight arms ('aṣṭabāhum chaturvaktram.....').



ARDHANARISVARA (Gangaikonda Cholapuram, Tanjore)



ARDHANARISVARA (Stone, Egmore Museum, Tamil Nadu)



ARDHANARISVARA

The accommodation of the attributes characteristic of the male and female principles in the two halves of the body (dehārdha-ghaṭanā) is variously done. But it is always the right half that represents the male, and the left half the female ('dakṣiṇārdhe Haram chaiva vāmārdhe Pārvatīm tathā'). If the icon is two-armed the right hand is shown holding the human skull (kapāla) or is seen in the gesture of protection (abhaya-mudrā), and the left hand hangs down gracefully or holds a flower or a mirror. The right hands will have trident and bow (pināka) according to *Bṛhat-samhitā*. If the icon is three-armed, the male

half has two hands and the female half has only one hand (holding a mirror or flower or parrot). If the icon is four-armed, the right hands are shown carrying Śiva's weapons like battle-axe (paraśu), trident (triśūla), mallet (ṭaṅka), or rosary (akṣhamālā), and the left hands carrying the attributes of a female divinity (like the blue-lily or dangling arm). According to *Vishṇudharmottara*, the hands must have rosary and trident on the right side, and mirror and blue-lotus on the left.

The iconographic differentiation of the two halves further involves the upward braid of matted hair (jaṭāmālā), crescent-moon (ardha-chandra), coiled ear-pieces (kuṇḍala), tiger-skin at the waist and above the knee (vyāghrājina), the serpent-girdle (sarpa-mekhalā), and ash-besmeared body (bhasma-bhasita) for the right half (viz. Śiva), and the crown known as karaṇḍa-makuṭa, the ear-piece known as Vālikā, coloured silk saree reaching the ankles, the triple-girdle (kaṭi-sūtra-traya), a breast and saffron-smeared body (kumkumalepa) for the left half. On the forehead, the right half wears half of third eye ('lalāṭam nayanārdhena samyuktam', characteristic of Śiva), while the left half wears the tilaka. The left eye is painted with collyrium (kajjala). The right eye has a fierce sight while the left eye is cool (viz. compassionate) ('dakṣiṇe rudra-dṛṣṭis syād vāma-pārśve tu śītaḥ'). The right arms are manly and strong, but the left arms are tender and graceful.

Some icons of Ardha-nārīśvara are represented as playing Vīṇā. And as the playing of vīṇā requires the use of two hands, both the halves of the body are represented as engaged in this common activity. In the early icon at the rock-cut temple at Badāmi, we find that the four-armed icon carries in the right hands the battle-axe (paraśu) and Vīṇā, and one of the left hands is shown as carrying a blue-lotus and the other playing on the Vīṇā. In some of the icons, Śiva's vāhana, the bull (Nandī) is also shown, to the right of the icon. In the Badāmi icon, described above, along with Nandī, Śiva's devotee Bhṛṅgi also is represented.

*Bṛhan-nāradya-purāṇa* prescribes that one half of the icon (female) must be black and the other (male) yellow; one half must be clothed with a silken garment while the other

be naked ; on one half must be shown a garland of lotus-flowers and on the other half a garland of skulls. The female half must be bedecked with gem-set armlets, wristlets and rings, while the male half must be left bare.

There are various accounts in the purāṇas concerning Śiva's assumption of this peculiar form. One of them is that the creator Brahmā brought forth the primordial father-figures known as Prajāpatis, and assigned to them the task of producing all things in the world. They, however, could not discharge this duty, because they were only male principles and as such lacked the productive power. Thereupon Brahmā performed penance and invoked Śiva for help. Śiva appeared before him in the form of Ardha-nārīśvara, half-feminine and half-masculine. Then all things in the universe could be created, and each thing contains within it the unity of masculine and feminine principles (*Śiva-purāṇa*).

Another story is that Pārvatī, the consort of Śiva, wished that she should reside with Śiva always, embracing him limb by limb. This wish was fulfilled by Śiva by assuming the form of Ardhanārīśvara (*Skānda-purāṇa*, 47, 54 ft). Still another is that while all the gods and sages reverentially went round both Śiva and Pārvatī seated on mount Kailās, the fanatical devotee of Śiva, Bhṛṅgi, resolved to go round Śiva only, much to the annoyance of Pārvatī. Pārvatī cursed Bhṛṅgi to be reduced to a mere skeleton covered by skin. In the condition, Bhṛṅgi could not support his body on his two legs, and Śiva taking pity on him, provided him with another leg. But to correct his devotee's error, Śiva assumed the form of Ardhanārīśvara to show that in truth Śiva and Pārvatī were one and inseparable.

*Vishṇudharmottara* (3, 55, 1-5), *Bṛhat-Saṃhitā* (58-43) and *Sakalādhikara* (13, 1-70) contain iconographic prescriptions concerning this form of Śiva. According to the last text, the figure (whether two-armed or four armed) must be made to plant its right leg firmly and vertically on the ground while the left must be shown as slightly bent (*kuñchita*). The right hands (if four-armed) must carry the battle-axe (*paraśu*) and the gesture of protection (*abhaya*) ; the upper left hand in the *kaṭaka-mudrā* will carry a flower, and the front hand on the same side will rest on the bull's head

(*'vṛshasya eva śirasi nyasta-kūrparam'*). If the figure has only two arms, the right hand will assume the gesture of boon-bestowal (*varada*), or in the alternative carry a trident, and the left hand will carry a flower (blue-lotus).

The *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* prescribes that the bull (which is the *vāhana* of Śiva) must be shown at the back of the Ardha-nārīśvara form. It is usual for the standing representations of this form to include a bull, on whose head one or the other hand of Śiva will rest. Some representations will portray bull on the right side and lion (which is the *vāhana* of Devī) on the left.

This form was in worship all over India during the first few centuries of the Christian era ; it was especially wide-spread in the northern regions of the country. The earliest stone images of this form may be traced to the Kushāṇa period (first and second centuries A.D.), and numerous stone and terra-cotta representations of this deity that have been discovered in the North belong to the sixth century. The northern representations are four-armed, while the early Southern representations are three armed (two of Śiva and one of Devī). The crown in both representations are half *jaṭā-mukuṭa* and half *karaṇḍa-mukuṭa* (See *MUKUTA*). The South Indian figures, especially the bronzes ones, are usually in the three-bend (*tribhaṅga*) stance.

There are variations in textual prescriptions, and the iconographic texts of South India are particularly elaborate in the delineation of this form. *Uttara-Kāṃikāgama*, for instance, prescribes that the left ear must be adorned with leaf-ear piece (*patra* or *kalikā*), must have the gaze settled on the mirror (*'darpaṇāskta-lochanā'*), must wear a fine garment of variegated design (*'chitra-vastra-paricchadā'*), must have the toes of the foot (which is firmly planted, *'susthita'*) adorned with rings (*'nūpureṇa alaṃkṛtam'*) ; it also specifies that the hair on the head on this side must have curls and ringlets (*'alakṣa samanvitam'*).

According to *Śilpa-ratna*, it is the right foot that must be firmly planted, and the left slightly bent (*kuñchita*), whereas *Amśumadbhedāgama* would have it the other way about, and a treatise attached to it, *Kāśyapa-śilpa*, provides a choice in this regard. *Vishṇudharmottara* prescribes that the Śiva's side must show

erect penis turned upright (ūrdhva-liṅga), that the right side must be daubed with ash (bhasmoddhūlita) while the left side must be smeared with red saffron (kumkuma-bhūshita).

*Amśumadbhedāgama* suggests that the garment on the right side (elephant's hide or tiger skin) must reach half-way down the thigh ('ūru-madhyastham') while the garment on the left (silken garment) should reach the ankle (gulpha). *Uttara-Kāmikāgama* enjoins that the entire form must closely resemble the Kevala-chandraśekhara-mūrti, except for the male-female differentiation. *Suprabhedāgama* prescribes that the right half must be red in colour (rakta-varṇa) while the left half must be dark (śyāma-varṇa). *Śilpa-ratna* would have the left hand carry a flower in the kaṭaka posture ('pushpadhṛkkaṭakam'), but *Suprabheda* would have a parrot ('prakoshṭhe śukasamīyuktam') instead of the flower. According to *Vishṇudharmottara*, the loin on the right side must have a serpent as girdle ('sarpamekhala-maṇḍita'), whereas on the left side there must be a girdle set with diamonds and lapis lazuli ('vajra-vaiḍurya-bhūshita-mekhalā').

The variations relate, in the main, to the number of hands and the weapons or objects carried in them. Texts (like *Kāśyapa-śilpa*, 69, 1) provide that the form of Ardhanārīśvara may be two-armed, four-armed or six-armed. The three-armed images are not frequently mentioned in the texts, although they are common in the South. The two-armed image shows the gesture of protection (abhaya) in the right hand and holds a flower in the left ('vāma-haste pushpa-dhṛk'); or skull (kapāla) in the right hand, the left arm being held in a swing (prasārita). The weapons of Śiva that are to be displayed in the other varieties include battle-axe (paraśu), fire (vahni), and spear (śūla). *Kāśyapa-śilpa* (op. cit. 6) mentions book (pustaka) in this context, which is rather unusual and unintelligible.

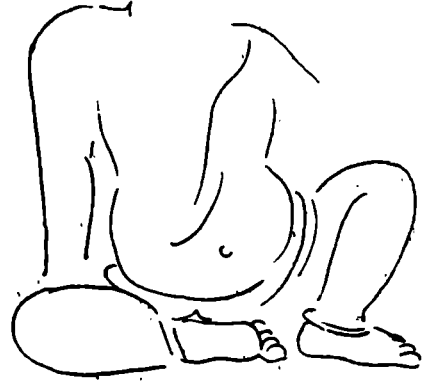
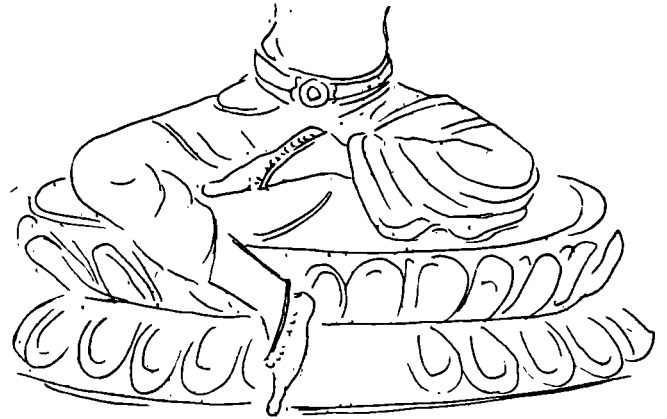
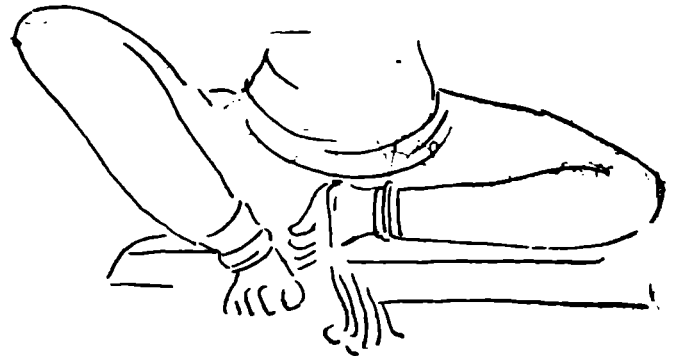
## ARDHA-PADMA

The āsana or seated stance, known as 'half-lotus posture', is assumed in meditation, or by deities invoked in meditation. The legs in this posture are crossed while squatting,

but one of the legs is seen above the other, and the sole of the foot that is on top is turned upward.

## ARDHA-PARYAṆKA

An āsana or seated stance, described as 'half seated on the hams' is assumed by the kings in a relaxed mood (hence also sometimes called 'mahārāja-lilā') or by ascetics while practising meditation. Many deities are represented in this stance, where both legs are



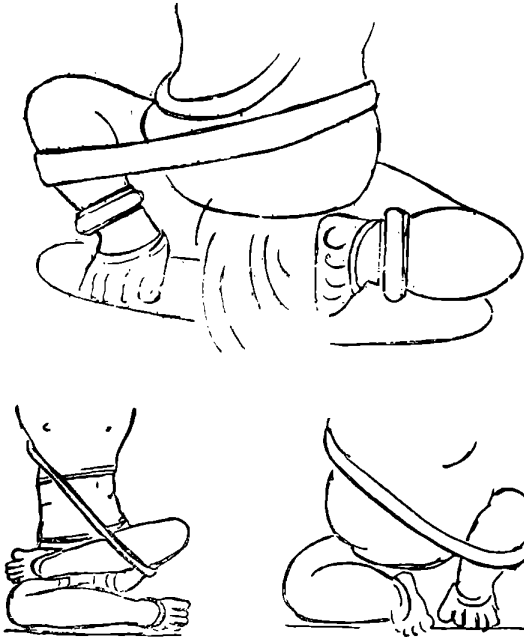
ARDHA PARYANKA

on the same pedestal but one of the knees is raised while the other rests on the ground. Sometimes, there is a band (paṭṭa or bandha) going round the loins, back and knees to secure firmness of the posture while meditating. The arm on the side where the knee is raised is made to rest on the knee.

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## ARDHA-YOGĀSANA

Variation of the posture of regal relaxation (mahārāja-līlā) where the right thigh is lifted up and the bent leg is secured by 'the chord of meditation' (yoga-paṭṭa) which goes round the loins. The other leg is sometimes let down in a dangling stance. The 'chord of meditation' is a device for facilitating stability of the body during meditative absorption (See YOGA-PATTA).



ARDHA YOGASANA

## ARDHALAKSHMĪHARI

A form of Viṣṇu which is modelled after Ardhanārīśvara (See ARDHANARISVARA). It is an androgynous representation of Viṣṇu and Lakshmī in unison, the right half being Viṣṇu and the left Lakshmī. However, it is a rare

representation of Viṣṇu, for even when Viṣṇu is a lone icon, his consort Lakshmī is assumed to reside in his chest.

*Tantra-sūtra* has this dhyāna-śloka for this form, which however, is of little iconographic significance :

udyat pradyotana-śata-ruchim  
taptā-hemāvadātā,  
pārśva-dvandve jaladhi-sutayā  
viśva-dhātṛyā cha juṣṭam ;  
nānā-ratnollasita-vividha-  
kalpamāpita-vastram  
Viṣṇum vande dara-kamala-  
kaumodakī chakra-pāṇim.

85

## ARDHENDU

See ARDHA-CHANDRA.

86

## ARHAT

Meaning the 'adorable', 'worship-worthy', the term refers chiefly to the enlightened saint, whether Buddhist or Jain. The Buddha is usually described as 'arhat' (arahā, in Pāli, rohan or Lohan in the Far East), for he has conquered the passions, freed himself from mundane fetters, attained to supreme and perfect enlightenment (samyak-sambodhi), and, therefore, honoured by gods and men alike.

The Jaina pantheon enumerates twenty-four 'ford-makers' (tīrthaṅkara), who are all arhats (arihanta), for they have got rid of the four kinds of deluding and obstructing (ghāti) karma, have obtained endless wisdom (ananta-jñāna), endless vision (-darśana), endless energy (-vīrya) and endless happiness (-sukha), have freed themselves from eighteen blemishes of life (like hunger and thirst), and have reached the stage of utter isolation from mundane involvement (kevala). They are the saints who are entitled to provide supreme instruction, and they are the ones who ferry the individual souls across the ocean of transmigration.

Counted first among the five worthy saints (parameshṭhi, the others being the perfected ones or the siddhas, the masters or āchāryas, the instructors or upādhyāyas, and all the saints in the world or sādhus), they receive



the highest honour in Jaina worship. Iconographically, they are represented as human beings with two arms, engaged in deep contemplation ; they are naked and devoid of ornaments. They are shown either as standing (kāyotsarga posture) or squatting (padmāsana posture). Their body colour is said to be light green (like the plantain-leaf). But philosophically, their body is pure, luminiscent and devoid of the seven constituents (dhātu, like blood, muscle, bone etc.) that characterize the normal body.

The twenty-four ford-makers of the Jaina pantheon in the present time are Vṛshabha, Ajita, Śāmbhava, Abhinandana, Sumati, Padma-prabhā, Supārśva, Chandra-prabhā, Pushpa-danta, Śitala, Śreyāmsa, Vasu-pūjya, Vimāla-nātha, Ananta-nātha, Dharma-nātha, Śānti-nātha, Kunthu-nātha, Ara-nātha, Malli, Muni-suvrata, Nami-nātha, Nemi-nātha, Pārśva-nātha and Vardhamāna (Mahāvīra). Of them, Vṛshabha, Pārśva, and Vardhamāna are popularly worshipped ; temples to them are numerous in the country, and iconic representations also frequent. Sometimes, all the twenty-four saints are represented together and worshipped.

The standard iconographic representation of all of them is the same ; but each of them is distinguished by an emblem (lāñchhana) peculiar to each arhat and carved on the pedestal (as bull for Vṛshabha, buffalo for Vasupūjya, deer for Śānti-nātha, pot for Malli, blue-lotus for Nami-nātha, conch for Nemi-nātha, serpent for Pārśva-nātha and lion for Vardhamāna).

## ALAKSMĪ

Also called Jyeshthā, Niṣṛti, Kalakarni and Kalivallabhā, she is the goddess of misery, misfortune and evil. Born out of the mythical milky ocean, when it was churned by gods and demons for the sake of nectar (amṛta-manthana), she appeared even before Lakshmi (the goddess of good fortune and happiness) appeared ; hence she is known as 'elder to Lakshmi' (jyeshthā). The legend in *Padma-purāṇa* (uttara-khaṇḍa) continues that she inquired of the gods, as soon as she was born, "What is to be done by me ? and where do I reside ?" The gods replied that she should



ALAKSHMI (Muvār Koil)

reside in homes where quarrel is rife, where the householders are wicked, where dirt abounds, and where no virtue is practised, and that she should bring about poverty, ill-will, jealousy, strife and disease in that household. She is therefore described as the spouse of the Spirit of Evil (kali-vallabhā)

She is worshipped in some parts of India on the new-moon day of the Āsvin month, when a rude image of hers is made out of cow-dung, and black flowers are offered with ones left hand. She is then begged to depart from the village and told never to come back ; she is beseeched to visit ones enemies and cause untold grief to them. The old winnow-baskets are beaten loudly when the image is taken out of the village and abandoned. Her dhyāna-śloka on the occasion gives some iconographic features of this strange goddess: she is two-armed, dark in body-colour, and wears black (or blood-red) garments ; she wears ornaments made of iron and lead ; she carries a broom (gṛha-sammārjini), with which the house is cleaned) in her hand, and rides an ass. She is fond of discord, quarrel and enmity. (See JYESHTHA)

## ALAMKĀRA

Meaning 'decoration' or 'ornament' (and also called bhūṣaṇa), it is one of the essential aspects of Indian iconography, and it extends

to sculpture and architecture. The merit of an icon is said to consist in the beauty of the image as well as in the proper decorations (proper to the variety of the image, to the occasion of worship, to the sequence of worship ritual, and to the season). There is an elaborate lore concerning the ornaments for the different organs of the body and the decorative details thereof. The ornaments commonly found in the icons include those of the head (mauli or mukuṭa), hair (keśa), ears (kaṇṇa), neck (kaṇṭha), chest (uras), arms (bāhu), hands (hasta) (wrist and fingers), loin (kaṭi), and legs (pāda).

Different kinds of head-gear are to be seen on the icons: long or short crowns conical in shape ending in an ornamental top or chūḍāmaṇi (kirīṭa-mukuta, usually for Viṣṇu icons), short crowns, basket-like in shape, and tiarred (karaṇḍa-mukuta, usually for Gaṇeśa and Devī icons), braids of hair made up to look like a crown (jaṭā-mukuta, usually for Śiva icons). In some forms of Śiva, the hair is braided in elaborate and heavy knots (jaṭā-bhāra) or in circular shape (jaṭā-valaya) (See MUKUTA). Devī icons are shown in different kinds of coiffure, kuntala, keśa-bandha, dhammilla, alaka-chūḍaka and so on. Ears are decorated with ornaments of five different kinds: ear-pieces (kuṇḍala) shaped like a leaf (patra), crocodile (nakra or makara), serpent (sarpa), or cut-sections of conch (śaṁkha). Or the ear-piece may be heavily bejewelled (ratna-kuṇḍala) (See KUNDALA).

The neck-ornaments include different types of clasping or hanging decorations: kaṇṭhī, graiveyaka (encircling the neck), nishka (necklace made up of gold coins), hāra (necklace of pearls, ratna-hāra), pralamba-hāra (hanging down) and several types of garlands. On the chest, the ornaments are, besides the above necklaces which hang down, upavīta (sacred thread), chhanna-vīra (a bejewelled flat disc), kucha-bandha (breast-band for Devī icons), Śrī-vatsa (peculiar to Viṣṇu) and, māṅgalya-sūtra (auspicious thread).

At the waist are ornamental bands (udara-bandha, kaṭi-bandha, mekhalā etc.), often bejewelled and with the head of the mythical lion (siṁha-mukha) in front.

The arms are decorated with armlets (aṅgada, keyūra), the wrists with bangles and bracelets (kaṅkaṇa, valaya etc.) and the

fingers with rings (aṅguliyaka). The feet also have anklets and chains flowing above the feet (pāda-saras), sometimes with small tinkling bells attached (kiṅkiṇī).

The ornaments mentioned above are elaborately and minutely worked, and many of them have floral decorations, prongs, tassels and festoons. They are prescribed to be fashioned out of precious metals: ruby (padmarāga), diamond (vajra), gem (gomedā), pearl (muktā), lapis lazuli (vaiḍūrya) and emerald (marakata), in order of preference. They must be set in gold. There are regional variations in the stylization of these ornaments, and the textual prescriptions are often vague. Classically, the ornaments are eight: head-gear (śirastra), crown (mukuṭa), necklace (hāra), ear-rings (kuṇḍala), armlets (aṅgada), bracelets (kaṅkaṇa), finger-rings (balaka), and waist-band (mekhalā).

Some deities have characteristic ornaments, iconographically delineated. Viṣṇu has śrīvasta on the chest and a hanging garland of flowers (vana-mālā). Śiva has his braids of hair tied up like a crown (jaṭā-mukuta) and wears a garland of severed heads (muṇḍa-mālā). Gaṇeśa has an upavīta made of a serpent. Devī in her ferocious form has for her breast-band snakes (nāga-kucha-bandha) and wears a garland of severed heads. Minor deities (yakshas, gandharvas etc.) have turban-like headgear (śirastra).

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## ALAPALLAVA

A posture of the hand (hasta-mudrā), when the five fingers are separated and bent forward, making a hollow of the palm, resembling a flower in bloom. It is a gesture indicating offering of flowers. It is illustrated in the disposition of Nandikeśvara when he is attending on the dancing Śiva (nṛtta-mūrti).

## AVATĀRA

Literally meaning 'descent', 'coming down', the expression refers to the divine appearances amidst mankind to extricate good folk from the misery caused by the wicked ones. The belief is that whenever virtue suffers



AVATARA

and vice flourishes, God will manifest himself in some form to set things right (*Bhagavad-gītā*, 4, 7-8). The idea of such manifestation involves (1) complete divine presence in the form (pūrṇāvatāra), (2) partial or fragmentary divine presence (amśāvatāra), or (3) divine possession of humans (āveśa). *Vishvakṣeṇa-saṁhitā* classifies avatāra into two main varieties: principal (mukhya), where Viṣṇu's nature remains unchanged in the appearances, even as the light that lights up other lights; and subsidiary (gauṣa), where Viṣṇu's transcendental nature (aprākṛta) chooses to be associated with a mundane physical frame (prākṛta) and appear for practical purposes ordinary and human in nature. The latter appearances may also be described as human beings divinely possessed (āviṣṭa). Instances given in the text are Brahmā, Śiva, Buddha, Veda-vyāsa, Arjuna, Paraśurāma and Kubera.

While the divine manifestation may be of any god or goddess, it is usual to associate the idea of 'avatāra' with Viṣṇu. It may be because the conception of avatāra got crystallized in the Vaiṣṇavite Bhāgavata religion, a text-book of which was *Bhāgavata-purāṇa*; *Bhagavad-gītā* too is a book belonging to this cultic ideology. The *Bhāgavata* (18, 7) asserts that the avatāras of Viṣṇu are really innumerable ('avatārā hyasaṅkhyeyāḥ Hareḥ'), but important among them are twenty-two, according to this text (1,3,6-22): Brahmā (Puruṣa), Varāha, Nārada, Nara and Nārāyaṇa, Kapila, Dattātreya, Yajña, Rṣhabha, Pṛthu, Matsya, Kūrma, Dhanvantari, Mohinī,

Nṛsiṁha, Vāmana, Paraśu-rāma, Veda-vyāsa, Rāma, Bala-rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Buddha and Kalki.

Among these, the more important and widely celebrated are ten: (1) Matsya (fish), for recovering the Veda, which the horse-headed demon had stolen and hid in the depths of the ocean (*Bhāgavata*, 8, 24); (2) Kūrma (tortoise or turtle), for supporting the Mandara mountain which was used as a churning-rod by the devas and asuras, who desired to get nectar out of the milky ocean (*Bhāgavata*, 8, 7); (3) Varāha (boar), for extricating Varuṇa, the god of the waters from the clutches of the wicked demon Hiraṇyāksha, who was tormenting all the gods (*Bhāgavata*, 2, 7 and 3, 18); (4) Narasiṁha (man-lion) for saving his devotee Prahlāda and the world from the terrors of his father Hiraṇyakaśipu, the demon-brother of Hiraṇyāksha (*Bhāgavata*, 7, 8); (5) Vāmana (dwarf), for subduing the daitya, Bali by name, who, although virtuous, was so powerful that he conquered the realm of the gods and drove them into wilderness (*Bhāgavata*, 8, 19); (6) Paraśu-Rāma (the hero wielding the axe), for punishing the Haihaya king Kārtavīrya, who had offended the sage Jamadagni (*Bhāgavata*, 9, 16); (7) Rāma (Rāma, the son of Daśaratha, the king of Ayodhyā), for saving the world from the troubles caused by the demon-king Rāvaṇa of Laṅkā (theme of the great epic Rāmāyaṇa); (8) Kṛṣṇa (the Yādava prince who aided the Pāṇḍavas in the *Mahābhārata* war) for ridding the world of wicked rulers like Kāṁsa and helping virtue to overcome vice (the theme of

the epic *Mahābhārata* and of *Bhāgavata* ; (9) Buddha (the prince of the śākya who became an ascetic mendicant), for clearing the world of evil practices in the name of religion and for re-establishing dharma (*Bhāgavata*, 1, 3) ; and Kalki (the warrior god of the dark age) for destroying the lawless (*Agni-purāṇa*, 16).

The incarnations of Rāma, Kṛṣṇa and Buddha are shown as historical human beings, and the time-periods when they appeared are given as Tretā, Dvāpara and Kali (the present yuga) respectively. We are now living in the dispensation of the Buddha incarnation of Viṣṇu. Kalki is expected to appear at the end of the present (*viz.* Kali) yuga. The purāṇic account of the Buddha incarnation, however, is at variance with the historical details concerning the founder of Buddhism.

Of the ten avatāras of Viṣṇu, the most widely celebrated and popularly worshipped all over the country are those of Rāma and Kṛṣṇa. There are temples to these forms, and ritualized worship in both cases are stylized. Next in importance and popular appeal is the avatāra of man-lion, known as Narasiṃha (or Nṛsiṃha), of which several forms are iconographically significant. Worship of the other avatāras, with the exception of Kalki, are not non-existent, but are rare. All the avatāras are frequent themes for temple structure in the country, especially of the Vaiṣṇavite pursuasion.

In the temples of Viṣṇu, it is customary to observe with special worship and festivity the 'days of appearance' of the ten avatāras ('avatāra-jayanti-tithi') : the third day of the bright half of chaitra (in the afternoon) for Matsya, the full-moon day of Vaiśākha (in the evening) for Kūrma, the third day of the bright half of Bhādrapada (in the afternoon) for Varāha, the thirteenth day of the bright half of Vaiśākha (in the evening) for Narasiṃha, the twelfth day of the bright half of Bhādrapada (at noon) for Vāmana, the third day of the bright half of Vaiśākha (at noon) for Paraśu-Rāma, the ninth day of the bright half of Chaitra (in the afternoon) for Rāma, the eighth day of the dark half of Śrāvaṇa (at midnight), for Kṛṣṇa, the tenth day of the bright half Āśvin (in the evening) for Buddha, and the

sixth day of the bright half Śrāvaṇa (in the evening) for Kalki.

That *Bhāgavata-purāṇa* enumerates twenty-two avatāras has already been mentioned. The same text in another context (2, 7, 1 f) enumerates twenty-three avatāras, and at still another place (11, 4, 3 f) only sixteen. All the three lists, it is interesting to note, include Rṣhabha (the first tīrthaṅkara of the Jaina pantheon) and Buddha (the founder of Buddhism). *Matsya-purāṇa* (47, 5, 46) holds that Viṣṇu had to appear seven times amongst human beings, in order to expiate the sin of killing Bhṛgu's wife ; and he appeared as Dattātreyā, Māndhātā, Paraśu-rāma (Rāma of the axe, son of the sage Jamadagni, hence Jāmadagnya), Rāma (son of Daśaratha), Veda-vyāsa, Buddha and Kalki.

*Vāyu-purāṇa* (98, 71 f) speaks of ten avatāras, three of which are 'celestial' (Yajña, Narasiṃha and Vāmana), and others tērestrial. Among the latter are enumerated Dattātreyā, Pañchama, Jāmadagnya (Paraśu-Rāma or Rāma the son of Jamadagni), Rāma (son of Daśaratha), Veda-vyāsa, Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa and Kalki. It is interesting that from this list are omitted Matsya, Kūrma and Varāha, which indeed must have constituted the original nucleus of the avatāra-ideology.

The ancient texts *Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa* and *Tattiriya-saṁhitā* describe these three avatāras as the forms assumed by Prajāpati on different occasions. If the early texts mention only these three avatāras, *Mahābhārata* in one place (Nārāyaṇīya section, 12, 349, 37) also lists only three avatāras, but they are Varāha, Vāmana and Nṛsiṃha. In another context (389, 77-90), the epic mentions three human avatāras : Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa, Bhārgava-Rāma (Paraśu-rāma or Rāma of the Bhṛgu clan) and Rāma (the son of Daśaratha). In still another place, the epic makes a mention of ten avatāras : Haṁsa, Kūrma, Matsya, Varāha, Nṛsiṃha, Vāmana, Bhārgava-Rāma (Paraśu-Rāma), Rāma (son of Daśaratha), Sāttvata (the scion of the Sāttvata clan, probably referring to Kṛṣṇa), and Kalki. It may be noted that in the epic list as well as in the *Vāyu-purāṇa* list, Buddha is omitted. His place is taken by Haṁsa in the former list, and by Dattātreyā in the latter.

The avatāra ideology figures prominently in the Pāñcharātra school of Viṣṇu-worship. This school holds that Viṣṇu, the great god, has five distinct aspects : parā (the transcendental, abiding in his own original glory, and not oriented towards the world or the devotees), vyūha (emanatory forms, four in number, Vāsudeva, Saṁkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha, (See CHATUR-MURTI), later expanded into twenty-four forms (See CHATURVIMSATI-MURTI), Vibhava (appearances in specific circumstances, viz. avatāra, incarnations), antaryāmi (inner-controller in all living beings) and arcchā (iconic representations, as Veṅkaṭeśvara in Tirumala, Raṅganātha in Śrī-raṅga, Varada-rāja in Kāñchīpuram and so on). While the Parā and the Antaryāmin are beyond human approach, the vyūha, vibhava (avatāra) and arcchā aspects are amenable to be involved in the worship-context. The early Vaiṣṇava iconography concerned itself with making representations of Vāsudeva and Saṁkarṣaṇa as numerous inscriptions reveal, but the focus was subsequently shifted to the sculptural and pictorial representations of the avatāra aspects of Viṣṇu (See VIṢṆU).

## AVALOKITEŚVARA

'The lord who looks down (viz. with compassion) upon the suffering folk', is the most popular and celebrated bodhisattva (See BODHISATTVA) in the Mahāyāna pantheon. He is reputed to have deferred the nirvāṇa (that he was eligible to enter) until all the living beings were ferried across the ocean of transmigration. His rôle is, therefore, to be ever watchful and to enlighten mankind. He is said to have evolved from the dhyāni-buddha, Amitābha (See AMITABHA), and his consort (śakti) Pāṇḍarā ; and he is the bodhisattva of the present period of time known as Bhadra-kalpa. His dispensation began when Gautama the Buddha (Śākyamuni) passed away, and will endure until the appearance of the future Buddha, Maitreya.

According to *Sarva-tathāgatādhiṣṭhānavyūha* (Gilgit MSS, Vol. I, Śrīnagar, 1939), he resides in mount Potalaka in the Āndhra country. The Dalai Lama of Tibet is believed to be an incarnation of this bodhisattva, and

it may be noted that the official residence of the Dalai Lama in Lhasa, is known as Potala. The most prevalent mantra in Tibet 'om maṇi padme hūm' is specific to Avalokiteśvara.

Avalokiteśvara is the lord of the universe, and has infallible mystic powers to save human beings from all forms of misery. And in this rôle as savior, he assumes the forms of all the gods in all the religions and also the forms of all the benefactors, including human fathers and mothers ; the rivers that flow from his fingers are capable of cooling the fires of the hells. He is, therefore, regarded as the 'jewel of the Saṅgha or the assembly of Buddhist masters' (Saṅgha-ratna). An account of his benefactory rôle is to be found in a work called *Kāraṇḍa-vyūha*. The first mention of this bodhisattva, however, occurs in *Sukhāvattivyūha*, a Mahāyāna work composed around the first century A.D. ; it was translated into Chinese between 148 and 170 A.D.



AVALOKITA, Bronze gilt, Nepal



PADMAPANI, AVALOKITA, Govt. Museum, Lucknow



AVALOKITA, Bronze gilt, Tibet

It is said that the Mahāsāṅghika sect of Mahāyāna Buddhism was responsible for the crystallization of the concept of this bodhisattva ; and the period of the crystallization is given as the days of Aśoka (around the third century B.C.). The 'avadāna' text of this sect, *Mahāvastu*, describes him as the *bhagavān* who takes the form of a bodhisattva, looking around and eagerly looking forward for an opportunity to guide the people along the road of welfare and happiness. In the Mahāyāna ideology, the complementary principles of enlightenment are wisdom (*prajñā*) and compassion (*karuṇā*). If Mañjuśrī represents the principle of wisdom, Avalokiteśvara represents compassion.

In accordance with the account in *Kāraṇḍa-vyūha*, Avalokiteśvara has as many as 108 iconic forms, which are painted on the walls of Macchendar-Vahal at Kāthmaṇḍu (in Nepal). About fifteen forms are more popularly worshipped in Nepal, Tibet and China. (cf. Benoytosh Bhattacharyya, *The Indian Buddhist Iconography*, 1968, pp. 124-144).

As Padma-pāṇi (holding lotus in hand), he figures in the Ajaṇṭa paintings. His images in



AVALOKITA, Nagapattam, Tanjore

bronze appear to have begun to be made prior to the second century A.D., and they were popular about the fourth century. The cult of Avalokiteśvara was prevalent in India till about the eighth century. His images (especially in the forms of Āryāvalokiteśvara, Lokanātha and Sīmha-nāda Avalokita) bear distinct resemblance to those of Śiva : coiled up braids of hair (*jaṭā-makuṭa*), white complexion of the body, five faces (*pañcha-mukha*), three eyes (*trinetra*), naked body (*nagna*), weapons like trident with entwined snake (*phaṇi-veshṭita-triśūla*), kettle-drum (*ḍamaru*) and skull-cup (*kapāla*).

He is identified by the presence of the dhyāni-buddha, Amitābha, in miniature on the head, indicating the source from which the bodhisattva emanates. Usually he is pictured as seated, or standing, alone. But he is sometimes accompanied by his consort (*śakti*), Śveta-Tārā (Kwan-liā or Kwannon in the Far East). In the Lokanātha form, he is accompanied not only by Tārā but also by Hayagrīva, carrying a staff and bowing to the bodhisattva. In the Khasarpaṇa form, he is surrounded by four divinities, Tārā, Hayagrīva, Sudhana-

Kumāra and Bhṛkuṭī. In the Sukhāvati-Avalokita form he is surrounded by Vajra-Tārā, Viśva-Tārā and Padma-Tārā. It is usual for his face to be benign and compassionate (mahā-saumya), but in some forms (as Āryāvalokiteśvara) he is fierce-looking, with terrible fangs ('daṁṣhṭrā-vadana') and wears bone-ornaments.

He is usually shown as having one face, but sometimes he has three (Sukhāvati-Avalokita) or five faces (Āryāvalokita). He may have two arms (Sīmhanāda and Khasarpaṇa), four arms (Shaḍaksharī-lokeśvara), six arms (Sukhāvati-Avalokita), or twelve arms (Āryāvalokita). He may be seated in easy and relaxed posture on a lotus (lalitāsana) (as in the Sīmhanāda and Sukhāvati-lokeśvara forms), in the 'bound lotus' posture (baddha-padmasana) (as in the Maṇipadma-lokeśvara form); or he may be standing (as in Vajroshṇisha-lokeśvara, Mahāvajranātha-lokeśvara or Harihara-lokeśvara forms); or in a dancing stance with the right leg slightly bent and left leg stretched out (pratyālīḍha) (as in the Āryāvalokiteśvara form).

The most popular form of Avalokiteśvara is Shaḍakshari-lokeśvara (symbolizing the six-lettered mahāvidyā, 'oṃ maṇi padme hūṃ' inscribed on the petals of lotus to his left). He has one head and four arms. He carries in his left upper hand lotus and in his upper right hand a rosary; the two other hands are joined in the 'saṃpuṭāñjali' gesture on the heart. He is white in complexion and is accompanied by his attendant Maṇidhara, who is seated, or standing, on a lotus to the right of the bodhisattva.

Another popular form (especially in Tibet and China) is Sīmha-nāda-lokeśvara, who is seated in a relaxed posture (mahārājā-līlā) on a lion. He has no ornament on his body, and is clad in tīḡer-skin. To his right is a white trident entwined by a snake, and to his left is a lotus-bowl (padma-bhājana) containing sweet-smelling flowers. From his left hand rises a lotus, on which a flaming sword (jvalat-khaḍga) is placed.

Still another form popular in India is Lokanātha, who is lustrous like moon and who

springs from the mystic syllable 'hriḥ'. He is invoked for getting rid of all ailments, physical and mental ('aśeṣha-roga-nāśanam'). His right hand assumes the gesture of boon-bestowal (varada), while his left hand carries a lotus. An iconographically interesting form is that of Āryāvalokiteśvara, who has five faces (two faces to the right being white and red, and two to the left, being yellow and green). He is dark in body-colour and is regarded as abiding in the lunar orb (chandrāsana). He carries in his twelve hands kettle-drum (ḍamaru), khaṭvāṅga (weapon made of bone with a skull surmounted), elephant-goat (aṅkuśa), lasso (pāśa), vajra, arrow (śara) (to the right) and raised forefinger (tarjanī), skull-cup (kapāla), red lotus (rakta-kamala), magic jewel (maṇi), discus (chakra) and bow (chāpa) (to the left).

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## AVYAKTA

'Non-manifest' form of divinity, as distinguished from 'vyakta' ('manifest', or having an iconographic form) and 'vyaktāvyakta' ('partly manifest and partly not so', or having an aniconic form). The illustration of 'vyakta' form of the divinity is the humanized iconic shape assumed by Viṣṇu in his descents or avatāra-aspects or by Śiva in his sportive forms (līlā-mūrti), and fashioned by a sculptor, often in accordance with a dhyāna-śloka (See DHYANA-SLOKA). The vyaktāvyakta form, on the other hand, is exemplified by the līṅga (made by man or self-manifest) representing Śiva, or by the śālagrāma stone, representing Viṣṇu (never fashioned by human hand, but occurring naturally in the Himalayan river Gaṇḍakī). Sometimes, the yantras and maṇḍalas are described as illustrations of vyaktāvyakta form of divinity. But the texts speak of them as representing the avyakta form of divinity.

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## ASOKĀ

A yakshiṇī, also known as Mānavī, associated with the tenth tīrthaṅkara Śītala-nātha of the Jaina pantheon, symbolizes dawn. The



Śvetāmbara sect of the Jainas identifies her as the consort of Brahmā, the yaksha of the same tirthaṅkara. In this capacity, she is pictured as the goddess of learning (vidyā-devī), seated on a blue lotus, carrying in her four hands lasso (pāśa), elephant-goad (aṅkuśa), fruit (phala), and gesture of boon-bestowal (varada). In the texts of the Digāmbara pursuit, she is visualized as Mānavī, riding a chariot drawn by dark-hued hogs.

## AŚOKA-KĀNTĀ

A form of the Mahāyāna Buddhist goddess Marichī, (See MARICHI), probably associated with the early rays of the morning Sun. When this goddess holds in her left hand a branch of the Aśoka tree, she is called Aśoka-kāntā. She is described in the *Sādhana-mālā* texts, as riding on a golden-hued pig ('hemābha-sūkarārūḍhā'), and as residing in the moon over a lotus ('chandra-bimbāmbhoruha-saṁsthitā'). She carries on her crown the image of the dhyāni-buddha Vairocana, whose emanation she is. And she is invoked for safety and well-being (abhaya).

## AŚVAKLĀNTĀ

A form of the mother-goddess popular in Assam.

## AŚVA-GRĪVA

The horse-headed form of Viṣṇu, who rescued the Veda from the demons, Madhu and Kaiṭabha (See HAYAGRIVA).

## AŚVATTHA

The celebrated 'pippal' tree, which is held in great reverence all over the country. It is sacred, for it is regarded as the abode of all the gods, and it is said to contain within itself all the pilgrim-centres (tīrthas) in the country, and the three sacred streams (Gaṅgā, Yamunā and Sarasvatī). In particular, it is regarded as a form of Viṣṇu ('aśvattha-rūpī Janārdanaḥ').

*Padma-purāṇa* (uttara-khaṇḍa, chapter 160) narrates the story of how Pārvatī cursed the three gods, Viṣṇu, Rudra and Brahma, to become trees, and how Viṣṇu took the form of 'aśvattha', Rudra that of 'vaṭa' (banyan) and Brahmā that of 'palāśa' (flame of forest).

The tree is also celebrated as symbolic of the world of transmigration (saṁsāra-vṛksha) and of the eternal Brahman (''eshośvatthah sanātanaḥ'). It is reputed as the 'king of trees' (vṛksha-rāja), and the very sight of it is said to eliminate all sins, and going round it with piety secure longevity.

The tree is celebrated among the Buddhists as the 'bodhi tree' for it was under this tree in Gayā that he obtained perfect enlightenment (saṁbodhi). The Jainas also hold this tree in high regard, as the emblem of the tenth tirthaṅkara Śītalānātha and as associated with the fourteenth, Ananta-nātha, of their pantheon.

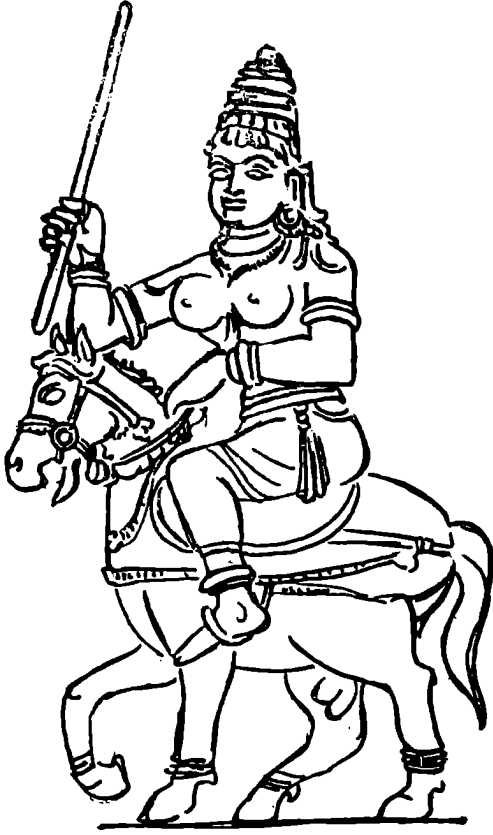
The tree is represented sculpturally and pictorially in the context of Buddha's life, and as a form of Viṣṇu. There are traditional paintings in which this tree is treated as an icon, as Aśvattha-nārāyaṇa or as a composite icon of several gods.

## AŚVATTHA-NĀRĀYAṆA

(See ASVATTHA)

## AŚVĀRŪDHĀ

A minor divinity riding on a horse (and hence the name), regarded as a form of, or as an attendant of, Durgā. She is iconographically represented as two-armed, holding a golden staff ('kanaka-mayī vetra-yasṭi') in the right hand and the horse's bridle (khalīna) in the left; her braids of hair are adorned with moon, and she has three eyes. Her body-colour is red (Śrī-tattva-nidhi, 'Śakti-nidhi', 95).



ASVARUDHA

## AŚVINS

The twin gods (also called Aśvinī-devas and Aśvinī-kumāras) who are reputed to be proficient physicians and surgeons for the gods and humans ('devānām bhishajau, chikitsā-vidhāyinau'). The name of one of them was Nāsatya and that of the other, Dasra. They are the twin sons of the Sun-god (Sūrya), who had assumed the form of a horse and begot them by Samjñā who was in the form of a mare. Revanta was another son born of Samjñā (See REVANTA). (cf. *Mahābhārata*, Anuśāsana-parvan, 150, 17 and 18, Aranya-parvan, 123, 12; *Vishṇu purāṇa*, 2, 3). The exploits of Aśvins are lauded in several places. Iconographically, they are seldom represented.

However, texts like *Śilpa-ratna*, *Aṁśumadbhedāgama*, *Vishṇu-dharmottara* and *Pūrva-kāraṇa* provide several details for the sculptor. The two gods must be represented as reddish hue in body-complexion ('dāḍimipushpa-saṁkāśau, 'shining like a pomegranate flower')



ASVINS. (Stone, Chidambaram temple, Tamil Nadu)

wearing garlands of yellow-flowers and white-coloured garments ('pīta-srag-śukla-vastra'), with braids of hair done like a crown ('jaṭā-makuṭa-dhāriṇau'), and seated or standing on the same pedestal ('ekāsanāsinau'). They must be handsome to look at ('surūpau'), with eyes especially beautiful ('viśeṣhāc-cchāru-lochanau'); and must be bedecked with all ornaments ('sarvābharāṇa-sampannau'). They must be two-armed, and must carry in their hands the gesture of protection (abhaya) and a book (pustaka, in the left hand). If this is the detail in *Aṁśumadbhedāgama*, *Vishṇudharmottara* would have herbs (oshadhayah) in the right hand instead of the gesture of protection. *Suprabheda* suggests a turban on the head

(ushnisha) and an upper cloth (uttariya) over the shoulders; they must also wear sacred-threads ('sopavitinau'); when they are seated, the right leg must be dangling down (lambita) and the left tucked up for sitting on the hams (utkuṭikāsana).

*Vishṇudharmottara* prescribes a pretty damsel to the right of one of the gods and another to the left of the other god ('nārī-yugam chāru-darśanam'). Their names are given as Rūpa-saṃpat and Ākṛtī. They are to be shown as wearing moon-white garments (chandra-śuklāmbara) and as carrying jewel-pots (ratna-bhāṇḍa). *Amśumadbhedā* adds that to the left of the gods, the physician-deity Dhanvantari and the physician-sage Atreya must be represented. They are said to have yellow and red body-complexions, wear black-garments ('pita-rakta-nibhau, kṛshṇa-vāsasau'), and carry in their hands sword (khaḍga) and shield (kheṭa). The Aśvini-devas are sometimes represented as horses (aśva-rūpīṇau).

### ASHṬA-GRAHA

Eight planetary divinities : Sūrya (Sun), Chandra (Moon), Maṅgala (or Kuja, Mars), Budha (Mercury), Guru (or Bṛhaspati, Jupiter), Śukra (Venus), Śani (Saturn), and Rāhu. The last is a composite divinity (actually a dragon with a human head). But it is more usual to regard it as two distinct forms (Rāhu's human head and Ketu's dragon-body), thus counting the grahas as nine (See NAVAGRAHA).

The eight grahas are also regarded as 'dik-patis' or regents of the eight directions : Sun in East, Śukra in South-East, Kuja (Maṅgala) in South, Rāhu in South-West, Śani in West, Chandra in North-West, Budha in North, and Guru (Bṛhaspati) in North-East (cf. *Jyotiṣ-tattva*).

### ASHṬA-TĀLA

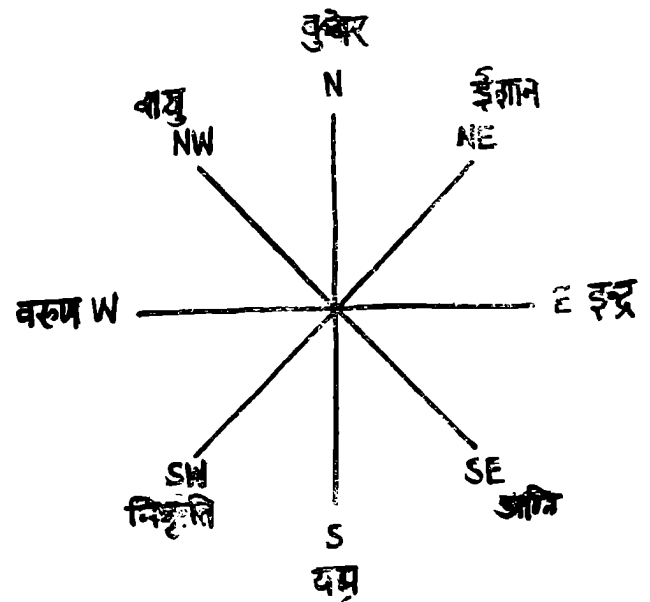
The textually permissible measure to be adopted for making human beings (sages and others) of the 'haṁsa' type, whose height is calculated to be 96 aṅgulas (cf. *Bṛhatsamhitā*, 68, 7) (See ANGULA). Some goddesses are also fashioned in the same measure. It is one

of the two principal measures (the other being navatāla, See NAVATALA) employed for making images, the gods being in navatāla and the goddesses in aṣṭatāla (See TALAMANA).

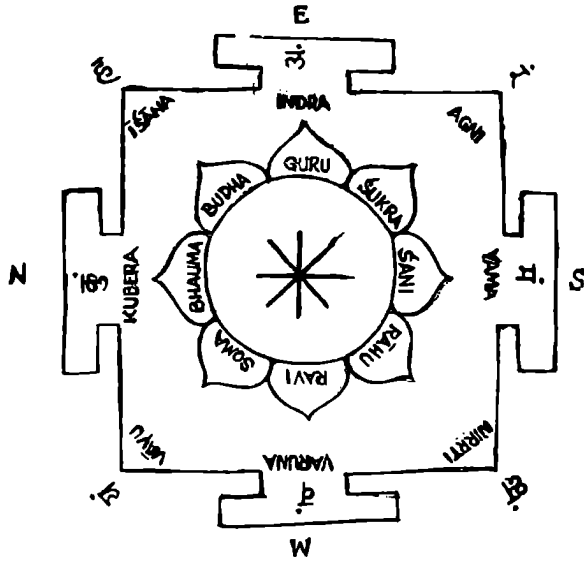
### ASHṬA-DIKPĀLAKA

The concept of 'guardians of cardinal directions' (dik-pāla or loka-pāla) is an ancient one, as old as the Vedic texts. The directions were originally counted as four and associated with the ruling chieftains. *Rāmāyaṇa*, for instance, holds that the ruler of the realm will receive greatness from Indra who guards the Eastern direction, restraint from Yama who guards the Southern direction, comeliness from Varuṇa who guards the Western direction, and wealth from Kubera, who rules over the Northern direction. Early Buddhist texts also enumerate four divinities in the four directions: Dhṛtarāshṭra, the gandharva chieftain in the East; Virūḍhaka, the kumbhāṇḍa chieftain in the South; Virūpāksha, the nāga-king in the West; and Vaiśravaṇa (Kubera), the yaksha king, in the North.

Later, with the addition of two directions, one above and the other below, the directions became six. We find in *Atharva-veda* and *Kṛshṇa-Yajurveda*, the concept of over-lords or guardians (adhipati or rakshitā) of six directions : Agni in the East, Indra in the South,



ASHṬA-DIK



ASHTA-DIKPALAKAS

Varuṇa in the West, Soma in the North, Viṣṇu (*Kṛṣṇa-Yajurveda* has Yama instead of Viṣṇu) below (called 'fixed' direction), and Bṛhaspati above ('upward quarters'). There were also six wardens associated with these directions: Asita, Tiraśchī-rāja, Praḍāku, Svaja, Kalmāsha-grīva and Svitra respectively.

It became more usual to count eight directions, four major directions (dik) and four inter-directions (vidik), and to visualize guardians of these directions as sovereigns ruling over their realms.

| Direction            | Guardian | Capital     |
|----------------------|----------|-------------|
| East (pūrva)         | Indra    | Amarāvati   |
| South-East (āgneya)  | Agni     | Tejovati    |
| South (dakṣiṇa)      | Yama     | Saṁyamani   |
| South-West (Naiṛtya) | Niṛti    | Kṛṣṇāñjanā  |
| West (Paśchima)      | Varuṇa   | Śraddhāvati |
| North-West (Vāyavya) | Vāyu     | Gandhavati  |
| North (Uttara)       | Kubera   | Mahodayā    |
| North-East (īśānya)  | Īśāna    | Yaśovati    |

It can be seen from the above table that the nāmes of the four intermediate directions (vidik) are derived from the names of the respective guardians (āgneya from Agni, naiṛtya from Niṛti, vāyavya from Vāyu and īśānya from Īśāna), and therefore suggest a later ideology. To these eight, the upward direction (ūrdhva) and the downward direction (adha) were added to make 'ten directions'

(daśa-dik) in all. There were also two divinities named as guardians of these directions: Brahmā (the creator) and Ananta (or Nāga the thousand-hooded dragon).

(1) Indra (or Śakra), the guardian of the eastern region is a celebrated Vedic god, and is regarded as the chief of all the gods, residing in the heavenly region. Iconographically he is represented as four-armed, wielding a thunderbolt (vajra) in one of them, with a



INDRA

third eye on the forehead, mounted on a white elephant (called Airāvata, and which has four tusks) (*Bṛhatsamhita*, 57, 42). According to *Amśumadbhedāgama*, he has only two hands, carrying the thunderbolt (vajra) (or alternately a weapon called Śakti), and blue-lotus (nilot-pala) (or alternately elephant-goad, aṅkuśa). When he is four-armed, the two upper hands are made to carry thunderbolt and elephant-goad, and the two normal hands are shown in the gestures of protection (abhaya) and boon-bestowal (varada). *Viṣṇu-dharmottara-purāṇa* (2, 50, 1-13) prescribes that he be shown along with his consort, Śachi, who is also four-armed. If he is standing, the consort is shown to his left, being embraced by him; if

he is seated, she is seated on his left lap (See INDRA).

(2) Agni, the guardian of the south-eastern region, is also a Vedic god of great repute. His images visualize him as a bearded figure, having four fangs protruding from his mouth and with a third eye on his forehead; he is four-armed, carrying flames (archi), trident (triśūla) and rosary (akshamālā). (*Vishṇu-dharmottara-purāṇa*, 3, 56, 10). He is also shown along with his wife, Svāhā.



AGNI

As the god of the sacrificial fire, he is pictured as having seven red-tongues or flames (sapta-jihvā or saptārchi); sometimes he is shown as having seven arms; or he rides on a chariot drawn by seven red-coloured horses (*Mahābhārata*). The chariot he rides on is drawn by four parrots and driven by wind (vāyu), according to *Vishṇu-dharmottara*. *Mahābhārata* describes that the chariot has wind as wheels. Alternately he rides a ram (chhāga), on which he sits in paryāṅkāśana (See ĀSANA). He is normally bearded, and has an angry state. He has three eyes, four arms and four fangs. He carries in his upper hands a flaming spear (śakti) and a sacrificial ladle

(śruk); his normal hands are in the gestures of boon-bestowal (varada) and protection (abhaya). Alternately, he carries trident (triśūla), rosary (akshamālā), or water-pot (kalaśa). He is shown as pot-bellied (pīnāṅgajaṭhara) (See AGNI).

(3) Yama rules over the southern region. Iconographically, he is four-armed; he rides a buffalo and carries stick (daṇḍa), sword (khaḍga), flaming spear (śakti) and rosary (akshamālā). Sometimes, he is made to carry a lasso (pāśa) instead of rosary. He is also pictured as two-armed, carrying a club and lasso. He is accompanied by his consort, called Dhūmrora, seated on his lap, and his attendant, Chitragupta. He is invariably identified by his vehicle (vāhana), viz. he-buffalo (mahisha) (See YAMA).



YAMA

(4) Nīrti, who rules over the south-western region, is rarely represented in iconography. Nevertheless, *Vishṇudharmottara* (3, 57) describes him as terrific in aspect (virūpāksha), and as the chieftain of the hordes of evil spirits (rakshodhipa). He is identified with the all-devouring time (kāla) and death (mṛtyu). He is shown as riding on the

shoulders of a man (nara-vāhana) ; and he carries in his two hands a stick (daṇḍa), or sword (khaḍga), and shield (charma).



NIRRITI

(5) Varuṇa, who rules over the western region, is the Vedic god of waters. But in later literature, he is identified with Pradyumna (Kāmadeva), and he carries the serpent-lasso (nāga-pāśa), which is his characteristic emblem, and the gesture of boon-bestowal (varada). According to *Vishṇudharmottara* (3, 52, 1-21), he is four-armed, carrying lotus (padma), lasso (pāśa), conch (śaṅkha) and pot of jewels (ratna-kumbha). He must be shown with slightly protruding belly (kiñchit-pralamba-jāṭhara), and in a chariot drawn by seven swans (representing the seven seas). Alternately, he is described as riding a royal swan (rājahamsārūḍha). But in sculpture, he is usually shown as standing on a crocodile (makara). Texts prescribe that he must be accompanied by his consort Gaurī, and with the two river divinities Gaṅgā and Yamunā to his right and left (See VARUNA).



VARUNA

(6) Vāyu, who rules over the north-western region, is also a Vedic god, represent-



VAYU

ing wind. Iconographically, he is usually represented as having two hands carrying banner (dhvaja) and stick (daṇḍa) or alternately elephant-goad (aṅkuśa). His characteristic emblem is stag (hariṇa), on which he is shown riding, or by whose side he is shown standing. Some texts, however, prescribe for him four arms, carrying banner, water-pot and gesture of boon-bestowal (e.g. *Rūpa-maṇḍana*). According to *Vishṇudharmottara* (58, 1-6), he holds in his two hands the ends of a long strip of cloth; his mouth is wide open, and his hair and garments are disturbed by breeze (See VAYU).

(7) Kubera, who rules over the northern region, is celebrated as the chieftain of the Yakshas (a class of sprites inhabiting mountains and jungles) and the lord of riches. He is also called Vaiśravaṇa. His usual iconographic form is that of a pot-bellied demon ('tundila bhūta') with a mouth from which fangs protrude, and two hands, holding club or mace in one hand and the gesture of protection or boon-bestowal in the other. According to *Rūpa-maṇḍana*, however, he has four hands, and he carries in them club, treasure-trove (nidhi), a fruit, and water-pot (kalaśa). His consort,



KUBERA

Ṛddhi is seated on his left lap (according to *Vishṇudharmottara*). Two personified treasures (nidhi), Śaṁkha and Padma, are also to be seen with him (*Amśumadbhedāgama*). He rides an elephant or ram (according to some texts) or a man (according to others) (See KUBERA).

(8) Īśāna, who rules over the north-eastern region, is identified generally with Śiva, or is regarded as an aspect of his. And his form is modelled after the human representation of Śiva, e.g. three-eyed, with coils of hair done up as a crown, holding in his hands trident and skull, wearing tiger-skin and characteristically mounted on, or accompanied by a bull (vṛshabha). (See ĪSANA and ŚIVA)



ISANA

The eight guardian-divinities are frequently represented together in a maṇḍala, positioned in their respective directions. This can be seen in many temples of South India. They are often symbolized by their characteristic weapons, Vajra for Indra, Śakti for Agni, staff (daṇḍa) for Yama, sword (khaḍga) for Nīrti, lasso (pāśa) for Varuṇa, goad (aṅkuśa) for Vāyu, mace (gadā) for Soma (when he substitutes for Kubera, who has no distinct weapon of his own) and spear (śūla) for Īśāna. The

guardian-deities, their vehicles, their weapons or their seed-syllables are invoked in the worship of the enclosure of divinities (āvaraṇa-pūjā) attending on the major god.

### ASHṬA-DIGGAJA

The mystical mastadons who are said to stand in the mid-region and support the world from eight directions: (1) Airāvata in the East, (2) Puṇḍarika in the South-East, (3) Vāmana in the South, (4) Kumuda in the South-West, (5) Añjana in the West, (6) Pushpadanta in the North-West, (7) Sārva-bhauma in the north and (8) Supratika in the North-East (cf. *Amarakosha*). They are also said to accompany their consorts (dik-kariṇīs): Abhrā, Kapilā, Piṅgalā, Anupamā, Tāmra-karṇī, Śubhra-dantī, Aṅganā and Añjanāvatī, respectively. *Rāmāyaṇa* (1.40) mentions additional four elephants which stand below the nether-world and hold the world on their heads: Virūpāksha in the East, Mahā-padma-sama in the South, Saumanasa in the West and Bhadra in the North. The world-supporting elephants are frequently represented in temple sculpture.

### ASHṬA-NĀGA

Eight dragons (serpents): (1) Vāsuki, (2) Takshaka, (3) Kārkoṭaka, (4) Śaṁkha, (5) Guḷika, (6) Padma, (7) Mahā-padma and (8) Ananta. They are the chief among the thousand children of Kadrū (daughter of Daksha, a Prajāpati, and wife of Kaśyapa), all serpents. Vāsuki is the lord of the realm of the nāgas (Nāga-loka or Pātāla), and Ananta (Ādiśeṣha) provides the couch for Viṣṇu. The others are guardians of treasures buried under the earth.

The iconographic representation of Garuḍa in Vaishṇava shrines (See GARUDA) involves these eight serpents as his ornaments: Vāsuki as his upavīta, Takshaka as his girdle, Ananta as his armlet, Kārkoṭaka as his necklace, Padma and Mahāpadma as his ear-pieces, Guḷika as his stomach-band and Śaṁkha as his crest-jewel.

### ASHṬA-PADA

Eight-legged mythical animal, also called Śarabha (See ŚARABHA).

### ASHṬA-PARIVĀRA-DEVATĀ

Eight attendant divinities of Śiva, housed in separate shrines built in the enclosure-wall (madil in Tamil) inside the Prākāra of the Śiva temples of the Chōla period. Each of them generally is an eka-tala structure, with an assembly-hall (ardha-maṇḍapa) in front. The textual prescription of the deities to be housed in these shrines are Vṛsha-deva (Nandī), Agni, Durgā, the seven Mātṛkas together, Vīrabhadra, Vināyaka (Gaṇeśa), Shaṇmukha (Subrahmaṇya), Jyeshthā-devī, Viṣṇu (or in the alternative Kātyāyāni, a form of Durgā), and Sūrya (according to *Kāśyapa-silpa*, 46); or, Vṛshabha (Nandī), Gaṇapati, Brahmā, the seven Mātṛkas, Guha (Subrahmaṇya), Ārya, (a form of the Sun-god), Achyuta (Viṣṇu) and Chaṇḍeśa. However, in actual practice, the early Chōla temples do not include either Viṣṇu or Brahmā among the attendant-divinities. An early temple at Tirukkattalai (in Tamil Nadu) has eight subsidiary shrines housing Sūrya, the seven Mātṛkas, Gaṇapati, Subrahmaṇya, Jyeshthā-devī, Chandra, Chaṇḍeśvara and Nandī (See PARIVARA-DEVATA).

A Śiva temple in Tiruverumbūr (Tamil-Nādu) was specially built in 935 A.D. as 'ashṭa-parivāra' temple. Most of the Śiva temples built subsequently house the eight attendant divinities of Śiva who, according to *Rauravāgama* are, : Vṛshabha in the East, the seven Mātṛkas in the South, Subrahmaṇya (Kumāra) in the West, Viṣṇu (or Durgā as Kauśikī) in the North, Sūrya (or Chaṇḍeśa according to *Yogajāgama*) in North-East, Jyeshthā in North-West, Gaṇeśa in South-West, and Brahmā (or Durgā according to *Diptāgama* and *Yogajāgama*, or Agastya according to *Kāraṇāgama*) in the South-East.

### ASHṬA-BANDHA

An adhesive paste or glue specially prepared with eight ingredients, employed to fix a stone icon to a spot. This is the procedure adopted to make the image made by a sculptor worship-worthy (arcchā) in a formal ceremony known as 'installation' (pratishṭhā) within the sanctum. Unless this is done, the icon will not acquire the character of immovabi-





ASHTA-NAGA, on GARUDA, (Srirangam)



ASHTA-PADA—SHARABHA MURTHY (Stone, Airavatesvara temple, Dharasuram, Tamil Nadu)

lity (achala-bera), and hence cannot be worshipped in a temple. The icon will have a stump (called śūla) beneath the pedestal, which will be inserted into the seat or platform, and fixed with this plaster.

The adhesive ingredients are (1) a sweet smelling resin called Gumcopal (Śrī-veshṭaka), (2) another fragrant gummy resin called liquid amber (kunduru), (3) the resin known as bedellium (guggulu), (4) sugar-cane jaggery paste (guḍa), (5) fragrant resinous exudation of a tree called Sāla (sarjarasa), (6) red ochre (gairika), all compounded in clarified butter from cow's milk (ghṛta) and (8) gingelly oil (taila) (cf. *Sakalādhikāra*, 24, 1-2, Tanjore Saraswati Mahal Library, 1973). An alternative list of ingredients has conch-shell powder (śaṁkha), powdered yellow myrobalan (haritakī), powdered emblic (āmalakī), some resinous exudation, powdered rock known in the South as Kolipparal, sand from river-bed, lac (lākshā) and cotton-fibre. These are mixed and ground for forty-one days before the plaster is ready for use.

### ASHṬA-BHUJA

The eight-armed form of Viṣṇu, worshipped in a temple at Kāñchīpuram (Tamil-Nadu) (See VIṢṆU). Several forms of Viṣṇu (like Trivikrama, Narasimha and Rāja-gopāla) have eight arms; especially so are variant delineations of Kṛṣṇa as a flute-player and cowherd (Veṇu-gopāla). The eight-armed Viṣṇu (standing) in the Deva-rājasvāmi shrine in Kāñchīpuram carries in six of his hands arrow (bāṇa), sword (khaḍga), discus (chakra), conch (śaṁkha), shield (charma) and bow (chāpa); the two front hands are in the protection (abhaya) and boon-bestowal (varada) gestures. Another image (seated), in the Archaeological Museum at Hyderabad, shows mace (gadā), an object that looks like arrow, lotus (padma), elephant-goat (aṅkuśa), lasso

(pāśa), conch (śaṁkha), an object that looks like bow (or a part of it) and discus (chakra). When Veṇu-gopāla (a form of Kṛṣṇa) is represented with eight arms, he carries the usual attributes of Viṣṇu (v/z. discus, conch, mace and lotus) in his four hands, and two hands are engaged in playing flute, the other two being held together in a dhyāna-posture.



ASHṬA-BHUJA-SVAMI (Stone, Kanchipuram temple)



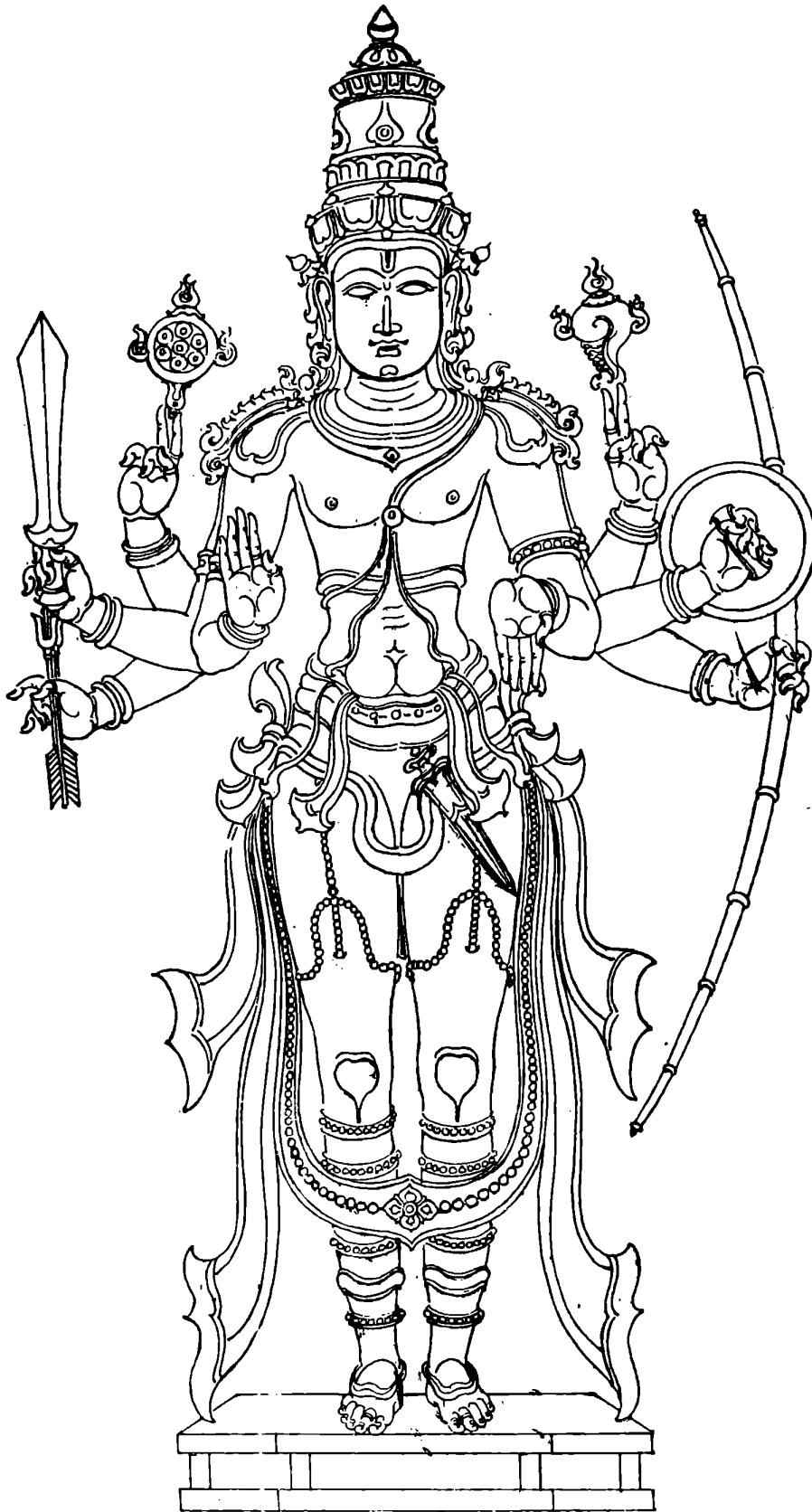
ASHTA-BHUJA (Archaeology Museum, Hyderabad)



ASHTA-BHUJA VENUGOPALA (Wood, Suchindram temple Car, Tamil Nadu)



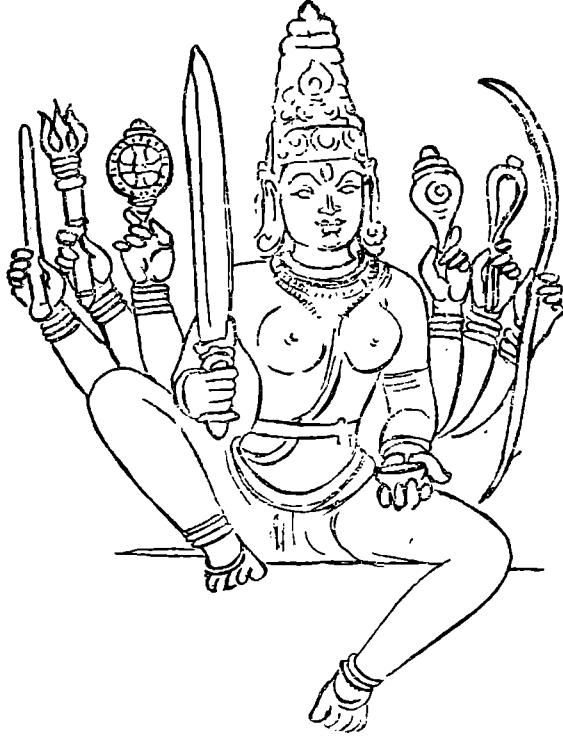
ASHTA-BHUJA VISHNU (Stone, Archaeology Museum, Hyderabad)



ASHTA-BHUJA VISHNU (Stone, Devarajaswamy temple, Kanchipuram)

## ASHṬA-BHUJĀ

The goddess with eight arms. There are forms of Kālī, Lakshmi, Kurukullā and Vajra-Tārā with eight arms. For details, see under these topics.



ASHṬA-BHUJĀ

## ASHṬABHUJĀ-KĀLĪ

*Kāraṇāgama* describes this deity as of gigantic body (mahā-kāyā), 'like unto a dark cloud', with eight arms, carrying in her hands conch-shell (śaṃkha), discus (chakra), mace (gadā), pestle (musala), elephant-goad (aṅkuśa), lasso (pāśa), weapon called vajra (thunderbolt) and water-pot (kuṃbha) (See KALĪ)

## ASHṬA-BHUJĀ-VĪRALAKSHMĪ

The Pāñcharātra-āgama speaks of valiant and golden coloured form of Lakshmi with eight arms, carrying in her hands lasso (pāśa), elephant-goad (aṅkuśa), rosary (aksha-sūtra), mace (gadā), lotus-flower (padma), bowl of



VIRALAKSHMI

liquor (pātra), and the gestures of protection (abhaya) and boon-bestowal (varada). There is a variant form of Viralakshmi with only two arms, showing in her hands the gestures of protection (abhaya) and boon-bestowal (varada) (See LAKSHMI).

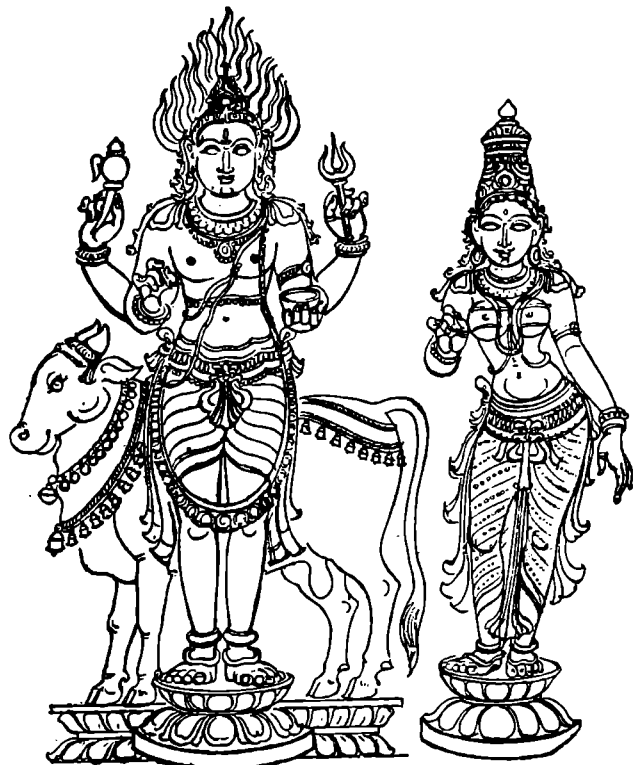
## ASHṬA-BHAIRAVA

Eight attendants of Śiva, each of whom is terrible of aspect and is associated with a specific consort (bhairavī or yoginī): (1) Asitāṅga-bhairava with Brāhmī; (2) Ruru-bhairava with Māheśvarī; (3) Chaṇḍa-bhairava with Kaumārī; (4) Krodha-bhairava with Vaishṇavī; (5) Unmatta-bhairava with Vārāhī; (6) Kapāla-bhairava with Indrāṇī; (7) Bhīṣaṇa-bhairava with Chāmuṇḍā; and (8) Saṃhāra-bhairava with Mahālakshmi. The first seven consorts are celebrated as 'mātrkāś' or mothers. (See MATRKA) (See BHAIRAVA)

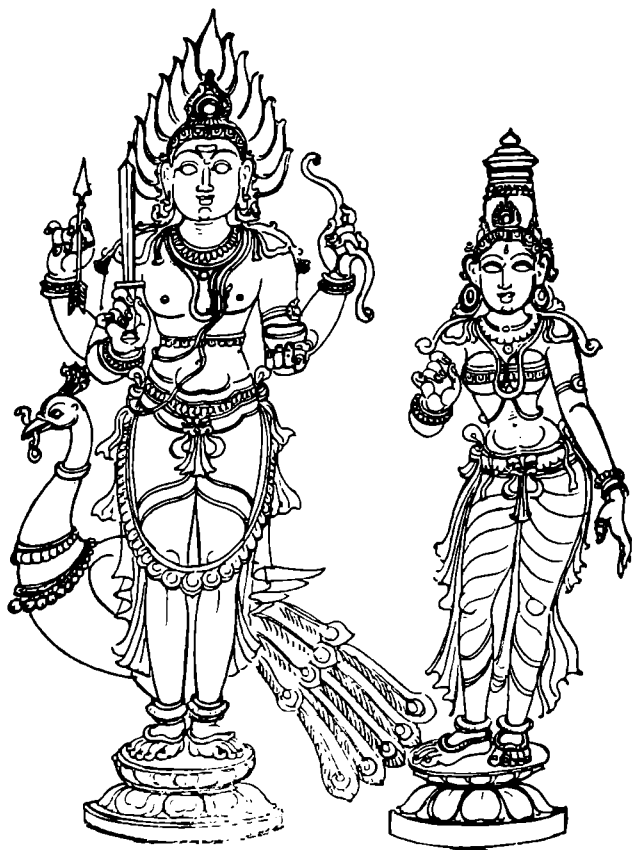




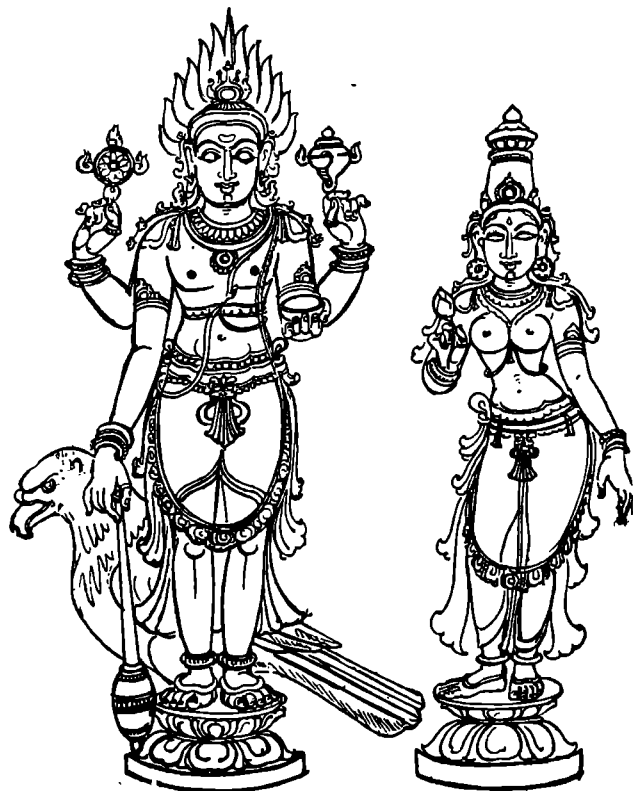
ASITANGA BHAIRAVA



RURU BHAIRAVA



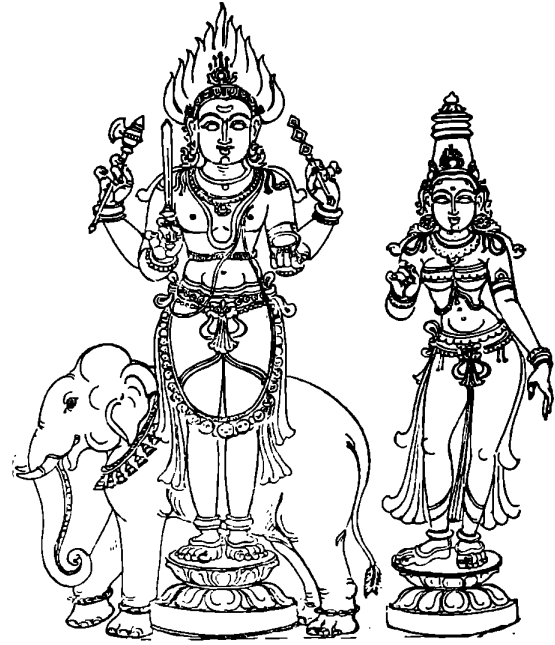
CHANDA BHAIRAVA



KRODHA BHAIRAVA



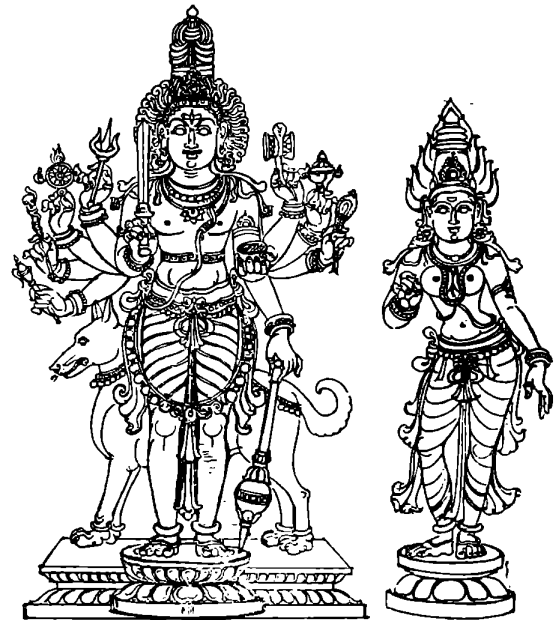
UNMATT A BH AIRAV A



KAPALA BH AIRAV A



BHISHANA BH AIRAV A



SAMHARA BH AIRAV A

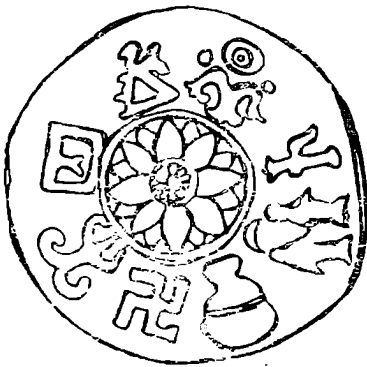
## ASHṬA-MANḠALA

Eight articles which are regarded as auspicious, as heralding good fortune : (1) mirror(*darpaṇa*), (2) lamp (*dīpa*), (3) water-pot (*kalaśa*), (4) garment (*vastra*), (5) sacred grains of rice (*akshata*), (6) gold (*svarṇa*), (7) flower(*kurava*, *amaranthus*), and (8) woman (*aṅganā*).

There are variant lists of eight auspicious details (animals, human beings and inanimate things). The list in *Bṛhan-nandikeśvara-purāṇa* has lion (*mṛga-rāja*), bull (*vṛsha*), elephant (*nāga*), water-pot (*kalaśa*), fan (*vyajana*), flower-garland (*vaijayanti*), drum (*bheri*, or alternately trumpet or *turya*), and lamp (*dīpa*). The list in *Śuddhi-tattva* enumerates a Brahmin (*brāhmaṇa*), cow (*gauh*), fire (*hutāśana*), gold (*hiraṇya*), clarified butter (*sarpi*), sun (*āditya*) water (*apa*) and king (*rājā*).

These are represented in sculptured panels in temples in a variety of contexts. The Buddhists (especially in Tibet) also have a group of eight auspicious objects regarded as the "blessings of the Buddha", which are worshipped either as pictorial representations or as sculptured articles: the protective parasol (*chhatra*), the eye of knowledge (*jñāna-chakshu*), the flower of mercy (*dayā-pushpa*), the conch-shell of dharma (*dharma-śaṅkha*), the vase of immortality (*amṛta-kalaśa*), the knot of eternity (*amṛta-granthi*), the wheel of truth (*dharma-chakra*) and the banner of victory (*jayapatāka*).

The Jaina religion also has a group of eight auspicious things called 'asṭa-māṅga-lika': the svastika diagram, śrīvatsa sign on



JAINA ASHTA-MANGALA (from a clay tablet)

the chest, nandyāvarta motif, vardhamānaka, royal seat (*rājāsana*), mirror (*darpaṇa*), fish (*mīna*) and water-pot (*kalaśa*). These are associated with tirthaṅkaras and other divinities.

## ASHṬA-MĀTRKĀ-PŪJĀ

Although the mother-goddesses are usually counted as seven (See SAPTA-MATRKA), during the preliminary worship ritual of any deity (*āvaraṇa-pūjā*), actually eight mother-goddesses receive adoration. The eighth one is Mahālakshmī, and the textual prescription is that her iconic form in this context is four-armed ; carrying in her hands rosary (*aksha-mālā*), skull-cup (*kapāla*), pomegranate (*bija-pūra*) and lotus-flower (For the iconographic details of the other seven goddesses ; See SAPTA-MATRKA).

The number eight with regard to the mother-goddesses (the primordial progenitors) refers to the ideology of eight-fold prakṛti ('prakṛtir asṭadhā' or *puryasṭaka*) : the five tanmātrās (elements, earth, water, fire, air and *ākāśa*), *ahamkāra* (the 'I-maker'), *mahat* (in its two aspects, *buddhi* or fundamental consciousness and *prāṇa* or vitality) and *avyakta* (or *mūla-prakṛti*, the unmanifest, primordial prakṛti). In fact, this is the background idea of the eight-syllabled (*asṭākshara*) mantra.

## ASHṬA-MUKHA-GAṆḌABHERUNḌA NṚSIMHA

A rare form of Narasimha (See AVATARA, NRSIMHA and VIṢṆU), who is seen in the act of vanquishing Śarabha (See SARABHA). This form has eight heads, the heads of the mythical two-headed *gaṇḍa-bheruṇḍa* (See GANḌABHERUNḌA), lion (*siṃha*), tiger (*vyāghra*), horse (*haya*), boar (*kroḍa viz. varāha*), monkey (*vānara, viz. Hanumān*), the chief of birds (*garuḍa*) and bear (*bhallūka*). There are thirty-two arms, carrying conch-shell, discus etc. The dhyāna-śloka, however, does not give details of the weapons the form carries. The major head is that of lion (*mahā-siṃha*), and the entire form is described as lustrous like a crore of suns ('*koṭi-sūrya-sama-prabham*'),



TIBETAN ASHTA-MANGALA

and terrific like the world-devouring fire ('kālānala-sama-prabham'). The iconic representation also includes Lakshmī sitting on his lap.

The mantra of this deity has Saṁkarshaṇa as the seer (ṛshi) trisṭup as the metre (cchandas), and proficiency in all branches of learning (samasta-vidyā-pāraṅgata-siddhi) as the purpose (viniyoga). The mantra is also employed in the magical rites meant to overcome the enemies.

## ASHṬA-MŪRTI

The eight forms of Śiva, comprehending the entire universe : (1) Śarva (representing earth element), (2) Bhava (water), (3) Rudra (fire), (4) Ugra (air), (5) Bhīma (ākāśa), (6) Paśupati (the individual soul, jīvātmā), (7) Īśāna (sun) and (8) Mahādeva (moon). The background idea is that Śiva himself has assumed these forms, and in him all things endure as beads in the thread ('tasmin vyāpya sthitam viśvam sūtre maṇigaṇā iva'). The individual soul is the devotee (yajamāna) ; the sun and the moon are visible divinities (pratyaksha-daivata) ; the others are elements which constitute the basic structure of the universe.

Each of these forms is assigned a spouse (śakti) and offspring : (1) Ushā and Śukra respectively for Bhava ; (2) Sukeśī and Aṅgāraka for Śarva ; (3) Śivā and Hanumān for Īśāna ; (4) Svāhā and Skanda for Paśupati ; (5) Dik and Svarga for Bhīma ; (6) Dikshā and Santāna for Ugra ; (7) Rohiṇī and Budha for Mahādeva ; and (8) Suvarchalā and Śani for Rudra. It can be seen that among the offsprings, four are planets (Śukra, Aṅgāraka, Budha and Śani), and two are well-known gods in their own right (Hanumān and Skanda). The spouses are so many forms of Ādi-Śakti.

In India, the eight forms are said to be represented and celebrated in distinct shrines, Sūrya is the visible god. Chandra is celebrated in Somnāth (Saurāshṭra) and Chandranāth (Bengal). The individual soul (Yajamāna) in Paśupatināth (Nepal), where Śiva is represented not in the liṅga form but iconic human form above the loins ; Śarva (kṣhiti-liṅga) in Ekāṁranāthā (Śiva-Kāñchi) ; Bhava (ap-liṅga)

in Jambukeśvara (Tiruchirapally) ; Rudra (tejo-liṅga) in Aruṇāchala (Tiruvannāmalai) ; Ugra (vāyu-liṅga) in Chidambaram (Tamil Nadu). They are all in the aniconic liṅga form.

Also called 'mūrtiyasṭaka', iconographical details are given in texts like *Vishṇu-dharmottara*, *Pūrva-kāraṇāgama* and *Amśumadbhedā*. All the eight forms must alike bear the characteristic features of Śiva, like three eyes (triṇetra), braids of hair done up like a crown (jaṭā-mukuṭa), the crescent moon on the head (chandra-śekhara), draped in silken garments (kshauma-vastra) and having four hands. They carry the gesture of protection (abhaya) and the gesture of boon-bestowal (varada) in the two front hands. The two hands at the back normally carry the terrible weapon called Khaṭvāṅga (bone of the fore-arm capped with a skull), and trident (triśūla). But the form Śarva is made to carry sword (khaḍga) and shield (kheṭa) in the hands at the back, and Bhīma spear (śūla) and lasso (pāśa). Paśupati, Mahādeva and Śarva look alike ; Bhava appears to be the pacific (śānta) counterpart of Bhīma who is fierce (ugra). Bhīma has an angry look, deep red complexion, and his mouth bares terrible fangs (*Amśumadbhedā*).

The account given in *Pūrva-kāraṇāgama* distinguishes the eight forms by their body-colours : white, black, red, dark blue, pale pink, dark brown (the colour of musk or kastūri), coral red and deep blue respectively. However, these eight forms of Śiva are seldom represented in sculpture or painting.

## ASHṬA-YOGINĪ

The eight attendants of Durgā, described as Yoginīs or hermit-maidens : (1) Mārjātī, (2) Karpūra-tilakā, (3) Malaya-gandhinī, (4) Kaumudikā, (5) Bheruṇḍā, (6) Mātali, (7) Nāyakī, and (8) Jayā (Śubhāchārā). They are all in fact so many minor forms of Durgā, assumed to complete the divine act of destruction. Hence they are iconographically represented as angry in their looks, and inducing terror in the onlookers. They are shown as dancing in a state of intoxication ('drunk', madyapa) in the battle-field or in crematorium; they hold in their hands severed human heads. There is a legend that Śiva ordered them to

drain the blood out of the body of the demon Jālāndhara (who had held Viṣṇu captive) and eat up his flesh (*Padma-purāṇa*, chap. 3 to 5). Another legend associates them with Śakti's encounter with the demon Rakta-bija (the father of Mahishāsura); the yoginīs were created by Śakti to drink the blood of Rakta-bija (*Devi-Bhāgavata*, 5th chapt.)

## ASṬA-RĀKSHASA

Eight chief 'nocturnal wanderers' (rākshasas) who inhabit the trees in the wilderness: (1) Mṛga; (2) Aditi; (3) Uditā; (4) Vitathā; (5) Antarikṣha; (6) Bhṛṣa; (7) Pūshan, and (8) Mukhya. They are worshipped at night in the tree that is selected for icon-making, along with dragons (suras), demons (asuras), hordes of spirits (gaṇas), chieftains of spirits (vināyakas) and tree-spirits (vanaspatīs) (cf. *Bṛhatsamhitā*, 58, 10-11 and *Bhaviṣya-purāṇa*, 'pratimā-vidhi', 1, 131).

## ASṬA-LAKSHMĪ

The eight forms of Lakṣmī, representing her various powers and aspects: (1) Dhairya-Lakṣmī (valour); (2) Kīrti-Lakṣmī (celebrity); (3) Vijaya-Lakṣmī (victory); (4) Sthairya-Lakṣmī (steadfastness); (5) Dhana-Lakṣmī (wealth); (6) Dhānya-Lakṣmī (grains, abundance); (7) Santāna-Lakṣmī (progeny) and (8) Bhāgya-Lakṣmī (prosperity). They are represented together in shrines called 'Aṣṭa-Lakṣmī-ālayas'. There are iconographic distinctions introduced, but there is no textual basis for them. (See LAKSHMĪ)



ADI-LAKSHMI



SANTANA-LAKSHMI



KIRTI-LAKSHMI



DHANA-LAKSHMI



DHANYA-LAKSHMI



VIJAYA-LAKSHMI



VIRA-LAKSHMI



MAHA-LAKSHMI (Stone, Ashta-Lakshmi Mandapam,  
Minakshi temple, Madurai)





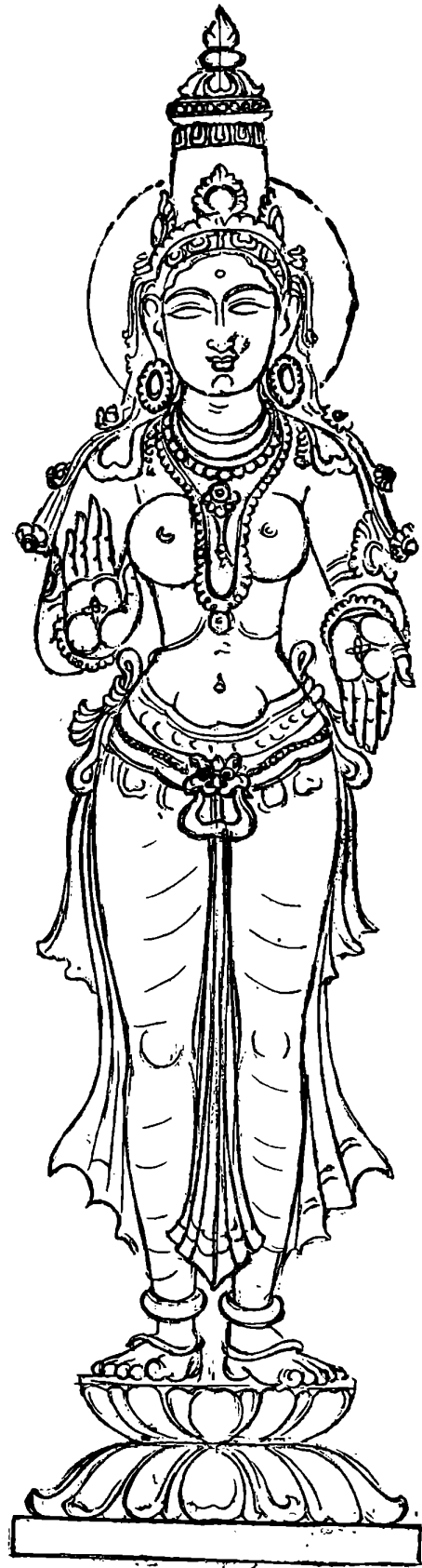
BHAGYA-LAKSHMI

### ASHṬA-VAKRĀ

One of the sixty-four yoginīs (See YOGINĪ) mentioned in *Skānda-and-Kālikā-purāṇa*. She has eight heads and is said to symbolize the group of eight-mothers (See ASHTA-MATṚKA)

### ASHṬA-VIDHA-PRATIMĀ

Eight kinds of icons meant for worship, according to the material out of which they are fashioned. *Śukra-ntti-sāra* (4, 4, 72) enumerates: (1) the images made out of sand (saikatī), (2) images made out of flour and dough (rice-powder) (paishṭī); (3) drawings made on wall or paper (lekhā); (4) images in relief made of plaster (lepyā); (5) images made in clay (mṛṇmayī); (6) images carved in wood (vārkshī); (7) images in stone (pāshāṇa); and (8) images cast in metal (dhātu). Each of these is regarded as more permanent than the preceding one. Another text (*Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*, 18) classifies the images according to are method of making: (1) drawing (on canvas, wall or jar) (chitra); (2) clay or stucco



LAKSHMI

(lepaja) ; (3) molten metal (pākaja) ; carved by metal instruments (śastrotkīrṇa), including (4) wooden images (dāru-ghaṭita), (5) images carved in precious stones (ratnaja) ; (6) stone images (śailaja) ; and images for temporary purposes, including (7) images made in sandal paste (gandhaja) and (8) images made by flowers (kausumī). (See ARCHA)

## ASHṬA-VĪRASTHĀNAS

Eight places in Tamiḻ Nāḍu which commemorate the valour of Śiva, according to Śaiva purāṇas. These are places where Śiva conferred protection upon gods and humans from the evil designs of the arrogant and the wicked-minded. The arrogant include Brahma (whose fifth head was cut off by Śiva at Tirukkaṇḍiyūr), Kāma (or Cupid, who was vanquished at Tirukkurukkai), Yama (or the god of Death, who was worsted in a fight at Tirukkaḍavūr), and Dakṣa-Prajāpati (whose head was cut off at Tiruppariyālūr) ; the wicked-minded asuras who were killed by Śiva include Andhaka (at Virattāneśvaram), Tripura (at Tiruvaḍigai), Gajāśura (at Vaḷuvūr), and Jālandhara (Tiruvīrkūḍi).

## ASHṬA-ŚAKTI

The renowned Minākṣhi temple in Madurai (Tamil Nadu) has a porch called 'Asṭa-Śakti-maṇḍapam', which contains iconic representations of eight forms (all four-armed) of the mother-goddess. The forms are : (1) Manon-maṇi (with matted hair done up as a crown, and carrying lotuses in the upper hands, and rosary in the lower right hand, and a bunch of flowers in the lower left ; the hand holding the rosary is in the gesture of spiritual unity, and the hand that holds the bunch of flowers also supports a parrot) ; (2) Maheśvarī (with a tall crown, and carrying goad, lasso, gesture of boon-bestowal in her hands) ; (3) Śyāmalā (with a tall crown, and carrying red lotus, blue lotus, gesture of protection and gesture of boon-bestowal in her hands) ; (4) Yajñā-rūpiṇī (with matted hair done up as a crown, and carrying sacrificial ladle and gestures of protection and boon-bestowal in her hands) ;

(5) Kaumārī (with a crown and carrying the weapons Śakti and Vajra and the gestures of protection and boon-bestowal in her hands) ; (6) Raudrī (with a terrible aspect, matted hair done up as a crown, and carrying small kettle-drum, lance, serpent and human skull-cup) ; (7) Vajṣṇavī (with a crown, and carrying conch, discus and gestures of protection and boon-bestowal) ; and (8) Mahālakṣmī (with a crown, and carrying lotuses and the gestures of protection and boon-bestowal).

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## ASHṬĀDAŚABHUJĀ-BHADRAKĀLĪ

The Śakta āgama texts mention a form of Bhadra-kālī (See KALĪ), with eighteen arms. They prescribe that the posture of this deity must be ālīḍha (right leg outstretched and the left slightly bent) and that the deity should be shown as riding in a chariot drawn by four lions. She must carry in her hands rosary (akṣa-mālā), trident (triśūla), sword (khaḍga), shield (charma), bow (chāpa), arrow (bāṇa), conch-shell (śaṁkha), Lotus-flower (padma), two sacrificial ladles (sruk and sruva), a water-pot (kamaṇḍalu), staff (daṇḍa), spear known as śakti, hide of the spotted deer rolled (kṛṣṇājina), fire (hutāśana), jewelled bowl (ratna-pātra), and gestures of protection (abhaya) and boon-bestowal (varada). Although a terrific form of Kālī, her visage must be austere and peaceful.

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## ASHṬĀSHṬA-BHAIRAVA

A scheme of accommodating the eight forms of Bhairava (See ASHTA-BHAIRAVA) in each of another eight groups, to make up sixty-four Bhairavas as male consorts of sixty-four yoginīs. (See YOGINĪ). Each of the eight major forms of Bhairava heads the list of the eight Bhairavas in each group.

The first group consists of Bhairavas, handsome and impressive in aspect, golden-hued and carrying trident, kettle-drum, noose (pāśa) and sword in their hands. In the second group the eight Bhairavas are bedecked with jewelled ornaments, and carry in their hands rosary, elephant-goad, lute (vīṇā) and scripture (pustaka). The third group is distinguished by

the weapons fire-flame (jvālā), spear called Śakti, mace, and lance (kunta) and by the blue body-colour. The fourth group has Bhairavas who carry in their hands sword, shield, battle-axe and spear called paṭṭiśa, and whose body-colour is ash-grey. In the fifth group are Bhairavas who are beautiful in aspect, fair-complexioned and marked with the weapons lance (kunta), shield, iron-tipped stick (parigha) and javelin (bhindipāla). The other groups carry the same weapons as the fifth, but are distinguished by the yellow, red and lightning-bright (taṭit-prabhām) body-colours respectively.

The eight groups are headed by Asitāṅga, Ruru, Chaṇḍa, Krodha, Unmatta, Kapāla, Bhīṣhaṇa and Samhāra, according to *Śrī-tattva-nidhi*, which text also provides a complete list of names of the sixty-four Bhairavas :

| Group I             | Group V         |
|---------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Asitāṅga         | 1. Unmatta      |
| 2. Viśālāksha       | 2. Vaṣu-nāyaka  |
| 3. Mārtāṇḍa         | 3. Śaṁkara      |
| 4. Modaka-priya     | 4. Bhūta        |
| 5. Svacchanda       | 5. Vetāla       |
| 6. Vighna-santushṭa | 6. Triṇetra     |
| 7. Khechara         | 7. Tripurāntaka |
| 8. Sacharāchara     | 8. Varada       |

| Group II          | Group VI                   |
|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Ruru           | 1. Kapāla                  |
| 2. Kroḍa-daṁshṭra | 2. Śaśi-bhūṣhaṇa           |
| 3. Jaṭādhara      | 3. Hasti-charmāmbara-dhara |
| 4. Viśva-rūpa     | 4. Yogīśa                  |
| 5. Virūpāksha     | 5. Brahma-rākshasa         |
| 6. Para (?)       | 6. Sarvajña                |
| 7. Vajrahasta     | 7. Sarva-deveśa            |
| 8. Mahākāya       | 8. Sarva-bhūta-hṛdi-sthita |

| Group III       | Group VII       |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1. Chaṇḍa       | 1. Bhīṣhaṇa     |
| 2. Pralayāntaka | 2. Bhaya-hara   |
| 3. Bhūmi-kampa  | 3. Parvatā-vāsa |
| 4. Nīlakaṇṭha   | 4. Kālāgni      |
| 5. Viṣṇu        | 5. Mahāraudra   |
| 6. Kula-pāla    | 6. Dakṣiṇa      |
| 7. Muṇḍa-pāla   | 7. Mukhara      |
| 8. Kāma-pāla    | 8. Asthira      |

#### Group IV

1. Krodha
2. Piṅgalekshaṇa
3. Abhra-rūpa
4. Dharā-pāla
5. Kuṭila
6. Mantra-nāyaka
7. Rudra
8. Pitāmaha

#### Group VIII

1. Samhāra
2. Ati-riktāṅga
3. Kālāgni (?)
4. Priyaṅkara
5. Ghora-nāda
6. Viśālāksha
7. Yogīśa (?)
8. Daksha-samsthita

### ASITĀṅGA-BHAIRAVA

One of the sixty-four Bhairavas (See BHAIRAVA), each of whom is associated with a Yoginī (See YOGINĪ), enumerated as the foremost among the eight major bhairavas (See ASHTA-BHAIRAVA). He is iconographically represented as young (kumāra), three-eyed (triṇetra), well-bedecked with ornaments (subhūṣhaṇa), dark-blue in body-colour (nīla-varṇa), and naked (digambara). He is made to have four hands, carrying in them bowl of liquor (pāna-pātra), sword (khaḍga), a water-pot (kamaṇḍalu) and rosary (aksha-mālā). The dhyāna-śloka prescribes that despite his terrible nature, he must be visualized as peaceful (śānta) and as a bestower of boons (varada). He must be accompanied by his consort, Brāhmī (See BRAHMĪ).

### ASURA

A general term for the evil spirits, demons, enemies of gods (sura). But in the early Vedic context, the term (cognate with the Avestan 'Ahura') meant bright and benevolent ; it was applied to such gods as Indra, Agni and Varuṇa in *Ṛgveda*. Legends relate that the asuras were originally good, peaceful, law-abiding and compassionate ; for they were then deferential to Śrī, the goddess of prosperity. But in due course they became arrogant, vain and ready to fight ; they became jealous of the gods and began to torment them. That was when Śrī, the goddess of prosperity, left them.

The clan of asuras is said to have been brought into being by Kaśyapa, through two of his wives, Diti (whose children were 'daityas') and Danu (whose children were 'dānavas'). The clan of asuras includes numerous sub-groups, the chief among which are (according to *Mahābhārata*): daitya (genii),



ASURA (Padmanabha temple, Trivandram)

dānava (giants), nāga (dragons), dasyu (barbarians), khali (threshers), piśācha (devourers of raw flesh) and rākshasa (nocturnal wanderers). They were all anti-gods, and the major gods like Viṣṇu, Śiva and Śakti had encounters with them and killed them. There were also asuras who were devotees of these major gods (e.g. Prahlāda), but some of them had to be vanquished for the sake of the welfare of mankind and the host of divinities (e.g. Bali, Bāṇa and Bhasmāsura).

Important among the asuras are Prahlāda, Samhlāda, Śibi, Bāṣkala, Keśi, Durjaya, Śumbha, Niśumbha, Mahishāsura, Rāvaṇa, Hiraṇyāksha, Aśva, Āśva-śiras, Hiraṇyakaśipu, Śaṅku, Mahābala, Ekapād, Virūpāksha, Vṛṣha-parva, Ajaka, Śalabha, Mura, Madhu and Kaiṭabha. Many asuras chose to assume beastly forms to torment the world; as Mahishāsura the form of a buffalo, Gajāsura the form of an elephant, and Aśva the form of a horse.

Iconographically, the asuras are represented only as being vanquished by the major gods and goddesses, as for instance Mahisha being killed by Durgā, Gajāsura by Śiva, Madhu and Kaiṭabha by Viṣṇu, and Hiraṇyakaśipu by Nṛsiṃha (an avatāra of Viṣṇu). The

texts prescribe that the measure (tāla-māna) to be adopted for representing 'asuras' should be nava-tāla (viz. 108 aṅgulas), whereas 'daityas' and 'nāgas' (as distinguished from asuras) should be in uttama-nava-tāla (viz. 112 aṅgulas) (See TALAMANA). In contrast, the major gods should be in uttama-daśa-tāla (124 aṅgulas), and human beings in aṣṭa-tāla (96 aṅgulas). Some texts prescribe aṣṭa-tāla for the human sages ekādaśa-tāla for the gods and dvādaśa-tāla for the asuras.

According to *Śilparatna*, the asuras must be shown as gigantic figures (mahā-kāya), wearing crowns and ear-rings, with a face terrible with sharp fangs (daṁṣṭrā-karāla-vadana), with twisted and knit eye-brows, and wielding a variety of weapons (nānā-śastra-dhara).

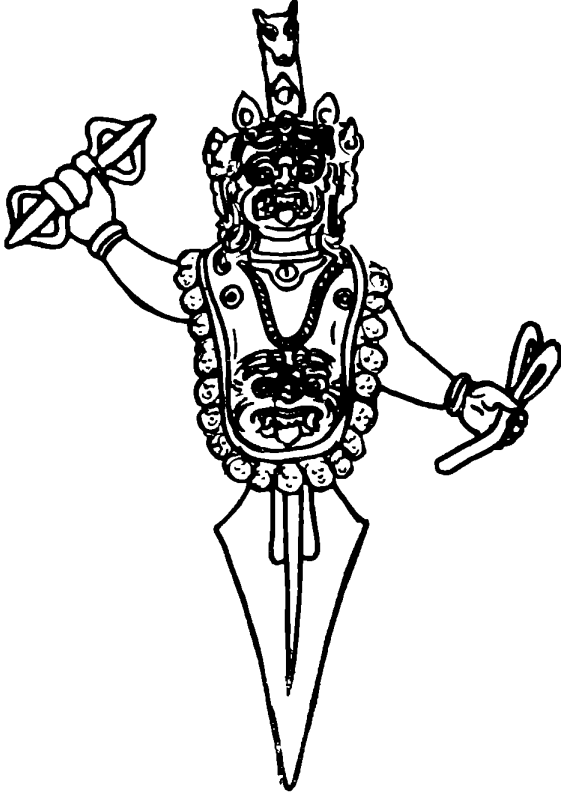
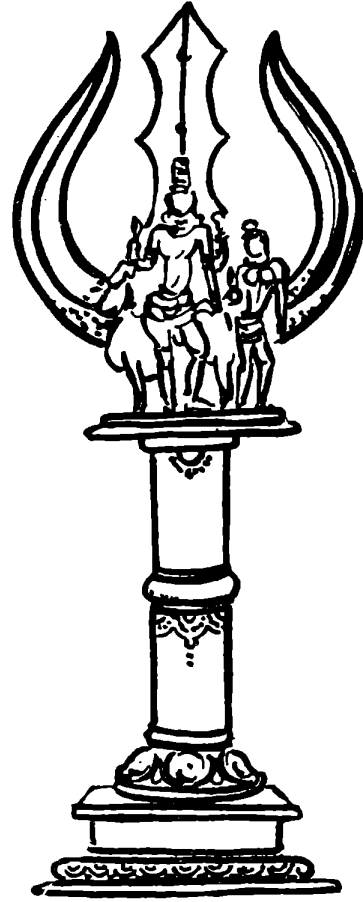
## ASTRA

The expression means weapon in general, but more specifically the missiles, or weapons which are thrown from a distance (from 'asyate kshipyate'). There are two varieties of astras (according to *Yukti-kalpa-taru*): those which are ordinary (nirmāya, or non-magical), and those which are magical (māyika). Examples of the former are the arrows or the spears hurled in the normal course of fight. The latter refer to the weapons (usually darts) endowed with some magical power as a result of which they can burn the spot they touch (dahana), or shower live coal, or pour hot oil.

*Rāmāyaṇa* refers to numerous magical astras like āgneyāstra (which burns up), vāruṇāstra (which floods), Varshaṇāstra (which rains down) and so on. The purāṇas mention the gods, when propitiated, bestowing these empowered astras to their devotees. In iconography, Śiva handing over the dart called 'Pāśupatāstra' to Arjuna is celebrated.

## ASTRA-DEVATĀ

In temples dedicated to Śiva in South India, the trident (triśūla), which is a weapon in one of the hands of the iconic forms of Śiva, is employed as an independent deity (called astra-devatā), officiating in some ritual sequences (like food-offering to subsidiary



ASTRA DEVATA

deities, bali). In this form the trident has a pedestal (pīṭha) ; the top of the shaft has a platform on which the trident rests, and in front on the trident on the platform will be seen a standing, four-armed figure of Śiva along with Gaurī, and the bull (vṛsha) at the back. In the Vaishṇava temples, Viṣṇu's weapon chakra (discus) is likewise represented as an astra-devatā (See SUDARSANA, AYUDHA-PURUSA).

### ASTRA-PRADĀNA-MŪRTI

The form of Śiva, representing the episode in which Arjuna propitiates him and receives from him the divine arrow known as 'pāsu-patāstra'. Pāśupata is the name of the missile, dazzling in its brilliance and fatal in its effect. Śiva used that missile on his celebrated bow 'pināka' (which has seven terrible heads, each of which exudes deadly poison without a

break) to vanquish Tripura. The missile spares none, not even the major gods, Brahmā or Viṣṇu. This was presented to Arjuna, and it made him invincible (cf. *Mahābhārata*, vana-parvan, ch. 37-41). This episode, also known as 'Kirātārjuniya' (because Śiva tested the devotion of Arjuna by coming in the disguise of a wild hunter or kirāta), is frequently represented among the 'līla-mūrtis' of Śiva. There is a beautiful example of this form of Śiva in the Pushpagiri temple (See ANUGRAHA-MURTI).

Another form of Śiva is 'chakra-pradāna-murti' in the act of bestowing the weapon discus (chakra) to Viṣṇu (See ANUGRAHA-MURTI).

### ASTRA-MANTRA

The mantras relating to the ten guardians of directions (See DIKPALA), recited during the preliminary worship (āvāṇa-pūjā or worship

offered to the deities of the enclosures, usually the third or the fifth). The guardians are symbolized by the weapons (astra) they characteristically hold in their hands. Sometimes the mantras for each of them contain the names, vehicles, weapons and jurisdiction: (1) Indra, elephant, vajra, gods; (2) Agni, ram, spear known as Śakti, light; (3) Yama, buffalo, staff or daṇḍa, the departed spirits or pretas; (4) Nīrti, disembodied spirit or preta, sword, the rākshasa group of spirits; (5) Varuṇa, crocodile, lasso, the waters; (6) Vāyu, antelope, goad, the vital currents; (7) Soma, rabbit, mace, the stars; (8) Īśāna, bull, trident, the vidyās; (9) Ananta, tortoise, discus, the nāgas; and (10) Brahmā, swan, lotus the lokas.

But more frequently they are worshipped through their weapons:

(1) vaṁ vajrāya namah; (2) śaṁ śaktyai namah; (3) daṁ daṇḍāya namah; (4) khaṁ khaḍgāya namah; (5) paṁ pāśāya namah; (6) aṁ aṅkuśāya namah; (7) gaṁ gadāyai namah; (8) triṁ triśūlāya namah; (9) chaṁ chakrāya namah; and (10) naṁ nalināya namah.

The expression 'astra-mantra' is more usually employed for the ejaculation of 'Huṁ phaṭ', which signifies the magical extirpation of all obstacles and inimical forces. This ejaculation is accompanied by the snapping sound made by the middle finger and the thumb of the right hand. Each sect has its own appropriate 'astra-mantra', like Sudarśana (Om Sahasrāra huṁ phaṭ), Pāśupata-Śiva (Om ślim paśu huṁ phaṭ), and Brahmā (Om tapas-satyātmane astrāya phaṭ), for Vaiṣṇavas, Śaivas and other sects respectively.

## ASTRA-MŪRTI

The characteristic weapons of the gods and goddesses are sometimes iconographically represented as two-armed divinities carrying their characteristic weapons and this is more readily seen in the images of Viṣṇu of the Eastern Indian regions.

In *Pūrva-kāraṇāgama* (14th paṭala) ten weapons are enumerated for iconic representation: vajra, śakti, daṇḍa (stick), khaḍga (sword), pāśa (noose), aṅkuśa (elephant-goad), gadā (goad), triśūla (trident), chakra (discus)

and padma (lotus). All these are required to be made in human form having two arms and two eyes, and bedecked with all ornaments. They must be shown in a posture of supplication (kṛtāñjali-puṭopetāh), and wearing the variety of headgear known as karaṇḍa-makuṭa. The particular weapons, of the size of the head, must be borne by them. Their body-colours are variegated (nānā-varṇa-samā yukta), deep blue (nīla), cloud-hue (jīmūta-varṇaka), indigo (nīlaka), ruby-red (padma-rāga), snow-white (tushāra), sapphire-colour (Indra-nīla), lotus-white (śaradabhra), and blood-red (rakta) respectively; only nine colours, however, are mentioned in the text.

Of the ten weapons, śakti and gadā are regarded as feminine (jāye), pāśa and padma as neuter, and others as masculine.

(See AYUDHA-PURUṢA).

## ASTHIRA-MŪRTI

Icons meant only for short-time worship rituals are fashioned in cow-dung, sandal-paste, dough or flowers; and they are discharged immediately after the worship is over. These are known as 'non-permanent icons' (asthira-mūrtis), or 'kṣaṇika-mūrtis', in contradistinction to wooden, stone or metallic images which endure for years. The 'non-permanent' images must be fashioned afresh for each worship-ritual; and once the worship is over, they lose their spiritual character. *Īśāna-śiva-guru-deva-paddhati* (uttarārdha, 36, 1-26) mentions that temporary images made of sand (saikata) may be worshipped by those who desire salvation, images in cow-dung (gomaya) for health, images in dough (paishṭa) for wealth, images invoked in a berry (like myrobalan, āmalaka) or in a fruit (phala) for nourishment, and images made of butter (navanīta) for magical prowess. These images should not have a pedestal (piṇḍaka), and do not follow any standard measure (tāla-māna); nor do they require ritualistic preparations which are indispensable for permanent icons.

## AHIRBUDHNYA

Meaning 'the dragon of the deep waters', this word refers to a form of Rudra. The

expression is as old as the *Rgvedic* hymns (e.g. I, 186, 5 ; 6, 49, 14 ; 7, 34, 16 ; 7, 35, 13 and 10, 93, 5), where the 'lord of the waters' is associated with Aja-Ekapād, another form of Rudra. He is reputed to have appeared as one of the five sons of Viśvakarma and his wife Surabhī (the others being Aja-Ekapāt, Tvashṭā, Rudra and Barhishman). He is represented as a serpent and explained as the benevolent aspect of the Vedic Ahi-Vṛtra, the Dragon of draught. There is also a suggestion that he may be "an atmosphere deity dwelling in the atmospheric ocean" (Hillebrandt, A., *Vedic Mythology*, Vol. I, 82 and Vol. II, 192 f.)

In iconological texts, he is regarded as one of the eleven Rudras (See EKADASA-RUDRA). It is prescribed that he must be represented with sixteen arms, carrying mace (gadā), discus (chakra), sword (asi), kettle-drum (ḍamaru), mallet (mudgara), spear (śūla), goad (aṅkuśa), rosary (aksha-mālā) (on the right side), javeline (tomara), three-pronged spear (paṭṭiśa), shield (charmā), skull (kapāla), gesture of warning (tarjanī), pot (ghaṭa), spear known as Śakti, and axe (paraśu) (on the left side).

## ĀKHU

Rat, mouse, regarded as the vehicle (vāhana) of Gaṇapati (See GANAPATI). In temples to Gaṇapati, it is now customary to have an independent and stylized image of a rat in the ardha-maṇṭapa facing the Gaṇapati in the sanctum.

## ĀKHU-RATHA

The god who rides on the rat, viz. Gaṇapati. In sculptural representation of Gaṇapati as the rider, the rat is well-caparisoned and the legs of the rodent are made more prominent than natural; the animal almost looks like an elephant. Otherwise, the rodent is represented in miniature on the pedestal of the icon of Gaṇapati.

## ĀGAMA

Meaning 'well-structured and traditionally communicated wisdom' (ā + √gam), the

expression relates to the worship of iconic and aniconic forms of Godhead, especially in temples. The term 'āgama' signifies the practice of worship rituals as well as the texts in Sanskrit which document, reflect and explain these rituals. Depending on the ideological category of the iconic worship, the tradition occurs in numerous strands. The major divisions of the Āgama are Śaiva (where the iconic form worshipped is Śiva), Vaishṇava (where the iconic form worshipped is Viṣṇu), Śākta (where the iconic form worshipped is Śakti or Devī), Jaina (where the ideological background of worship is Jaina in orientation) and Bauddha (where the framework is Buddhist). While distinctions do obtain between these divisions, the general orientation of the Āgama (viz. representation of Godhead in icons, and belief in worship rituals as the royal road to salvation) is common to all of them.

Sometimes, the Āgama tradition is distinguished from the Vedic tradition (called Nigama), which attaches little value (if any) to iconic worship and which lays great stress on fire-rituals and sacrifices. Āgama is even projected as antagonistic to Nigama. It may indeed have been so in the early stages of religious culture in the country, but during the course of the development and spread of this culture there was an attempt at rapprochement. Enthusiasts of Āgama sought to provide support to it from the Nigama (cf. Yāmuna's *Āgama-prāmāṇya*). Now āgama occurs almost as a subsidiary culture within the Vedic framework.

There is a saying in Sanskrit that conduct must be in accordance with the Veda in the kṛta-age, in accordance with Smṛti texts in the Tretā-age, in accordance with the Purāṇas in the Dvāpara age, and in accordance with the Āgama in the Kali-age (i.e. the present age).

There is a broad division in this context between the Āgama tradition that was included within the Vedic framework, and the Āgama tradition that developed more or less independently of the Vedic framework. The former is designated as 'Vaidika'—āgama while the latter is described as 'avaidika' (non-Vedic). That this division can hardly be justified becomes evident when we consider the general approach in all these so-called divisions,



GANESA AS AKHU-RATHA



which transcends the sectarian affiliations and involves direct contact of the human spirit with the divine.

Nevertheless, it is usual to describe the Āgama that aligns itself closely with the Vedic tradition as 'Vaidika', and include in this division Śaiva, Vaishṇava and Śākta āgamas; the 'avaidika' division is made to include Jaina and Bauddha āgamas. However, from an examination of the practices and texts of Jaina and Bauddha āgamas, it becomes clear that these āgamas are only special developments of the Śākta āgama (included in the 'vaidika' division). Śaiva, Vaishṇava and Śākta āgamas differ among themselves mainly on account of the preferred form of Godhead, viz. Śiva, Viṣṇu, or Śakti (Devī) respectively.

The Āgama texts, of whatever division and pursuation, deal mainly with the worship (archanā) of the icons in temples (public, parārtha) and in household shrines (private, ātmārtha). But the texts also prescribe daily code of conduct for the temple priest or individual worshipper (nitya-kṛtya); discuss philosophical issues like creation (sarga), dissolution (prati-sarga), virtue and merit (puṇya), descent and forms assumed by god (mūrti-bheda) and the spirit of the age (yuga-dharma). They also elaborate on the advantages of pilgrimage and describe sacred places (tīrtha). Many of them deal with the six-fold magic and sorcery (ṣaṭ-karma), the efficacy of the mantra, the utility of the sacred designs called yantras, and the value of yogic practice and meditation (dhyāna). The importance of the Āgama texts for iconography consists in the 'dhyāna-ślokaś' they contain, which specify the nature and details of the several worship-worthy forms (mūrti, arcchā). The texts also occasionally include valuable information concerning the method and material used for the making of icons.

Most of the Āgama texts have a four-fold division of the subject-matter: (1) the section dealing with the philosophical principles (jñāna-pāda); (2) the section dealing with the spiritual practices (yoga-pāda); (3) the section dealing with the making and installation of icons in temples, worship-rituals connected with the icons, and construction of temples (kriyā-pāda); and (4) the section dealing with the right and appropriate conduct of the devotee

in daily life (charyā-pāda). These four sections are arranged in the descending order of importance and evolution, the first bringing about the highest reward (viz. sāyujya, or salvation), the second the next lower reward (viz. sārūpya), the third the next lower still (viz. sāmīpya), and the fourth the lowest reward (viz. sālōkya) (cf. *Rauravāgama*). Tāyumanavar, the celebrated Śaiva saint, considers the four stages in the reverse order, and describes them as bud, flower, raw fruit and ripe fruit respectively.

(1) Śaiva-āgama (which has as many as 125 major treatises) is grouped into 'pacific' (saumya) and 'violent' (raudra) divisions. The former has ten 'collections of texts' (saṁhitās), which are claimed to have been taught by Sadāśiva to the ten Śiva-forms (Prajāva, Sudha, Dīpra, Karaṇa, Suśiva, Īśa, Sūkshma, Kāla, Diśeśa and Amśa): *Kāmikāgama*, *Yagajñāgama*, *Achintyāgama*, *Kāraṇāgama*, *Diptāgama*, *Sūkshumāgama*, *Sahasrāgama*, *Suprabhedāgama* and *Amśumadbhedāgama*. These texts are claimed to have been delivered through the Īśāna-face of Śiva (who is five faced, See SIVA).

The other eighteen texts (belonging to the Raudra division) were communicated by Sadāśiva to the eighteen Rudras (Anādi-Rudra, Daśārṇa-, Nidhāna-, Vyoma-, Teja-, Brahmeśa-, Śiva-, Sarvātma-, Ananta-, Praśānta-, Śūli-, Ālaya-, Bindu-, Śiva-niṣṭha-, Somadeva-, Śrīdeva-, Devatarkhya-, and Śiveśa-): *Vijayāgama*, *Niśvāsa-tantra*, *Svāyambhuvāgama*, *Analāgama*, *Vitrāgama*, *Rauravāgama*, *Makutāgama*, *Vimalāgama*, *Chandrajñāna*, *Mukhabimbāgama*, *Prodgita*, *Lalitāgama*, *Siddhāgama*, *Santāna-tantra*, *Nṛsimha-tantra*, *Pārameśvara-tantra*, *Kiraṇāgama* and *Vātulāgama* respectively. These texts are claimed to have been delivered through the other four faces of Śiva, five texts from the Sadyojāta-face, five from the Vāmadeva-face, five from the Aghora-face, and three from the Tatpuruṣa-face (according to *Ajitāgama*).

Besides these twenty-eight texts called *Samhitās*, which are held in great regard by the followers of Śaivagama, there are several later definitive treatises called *Paddhatis* (eighteen in number, named after the originators of these lines of thinking, like Durvāsa, Piṅgala, Śrīkaṇṭha, Jñāna-śiva, Somasaṁbhu, Aghora-śiva, Īśāna-śiva-guru and Rāmanātha).

The above texts project the view that Godhead occurs in three aspects (called *tattvas*) : (1) 'Śiva', pure and transcendental, with five powers (*śakti*) which are also pure, pervasive and devoid of form (*nishkala*) ; transcending (*parā*), primordial (*ādi*), will (*icchā*), cognition (*jñāna*), and action (*kriyā*) ; (2) 'Sadāśiva', comprising of five forms (*sakala*) emanating from the above five powers, which are devoid of form (*nishkala*) : Śiva, Īśa, Brahmā, Īśvara and Īśāna, thus being both 'sakala' and 'nishkala' ; and (3) 'Maheśa' consisting of twenty-five iconic forms of Śiva (*sakala*), which are worshipped in temples.

Besides these aspects, the texts also prescribe details of the visualization of divine forms (called 'sāda', viz. involvement of forms in what really is devoid of form) : (1) 'Śiva-sāda', extremely subtle and transcendental (*śāntyatīta* or *parā*), and self-luminous ; (2) 'amūrta-sāda', the aniconic *liṅga* form as a pillar of light ; (3) 'mūrta-sāda', expression of power of will (*icchā-śakti*), the divine nature incorporated in concrete forms (*rūpa*) and qualities (*kalā*), as in *mukha-liṅga* (See *MUKHALINGA*), and human forms, with weapons involved in the aniconic *liṅga* ; (4) 'kartṛ-sāda', expression of the power of cognition (*jñāna-śakti*), elaborate human forms involved in the *liṅga* ; and 'karma-sāda', expression of the power of action (*kriyā-śakti*), all the twenty-five iconic forms of Śiva suggesting his bestowal of grace on devotees (*anugraha*), or destruction of evil (*saṁhāra*). It is this last 'sāda' that is relevant to iconography of Śiva (See *ANGA-BHAVA*)

(2) *Vaiṣṇavāgama* : There are two major divisions in the *āgama* pertaining to the worship of Viṣṇu : (A) 'Vaikhānasa', and (B) 'Pāñcharātra'. There is a third division, which has branched out from Pāñcharātra, *Tantrasāra*, which was crystallized by Madhva (b. 1199–1279) and which is adopted in the temples where the followers of Madhva serve as priests.

(A) *Vaikhānasa* : Vaikhānasas appear to have been a very ancient group devoted to the cult of Viṣṇu. They are referred to even in the Vedic texts. Besides having an *Āgama* of their own, the members of this group have distinguished themselves by their single-minded and exclusive adherence to the cause

of worship in temples. At one time, most of the Vaishṇava temples in the land utilized their services in all details of worship. After the eleventh century, however, the prevalence of the Pāñcharātra ideology proved a deterrent to the universal acceptance of the Vaikhānasa viewpoint. There are fewer temples now of the Vaikhānasa persuasion than of the Pāñcharātra, in South India at any rate.

The Vaikhānasa outlook is remarkable in that it effectively reconciles the Vedic tradition with the Tāntrik. Among the 'vaidika' *āgamas*, Vaikhānasa is undoubtedly most authentically *vaidika*. But its employment of Tāntrik rituals and symbolism is likewise most authentic. And the temple-cult has been the focal point of this as well as other *āgamas*. The contribution of the Vaikhānasa priests to the crystallization, popularity and spread of this temple culture has been considerable.

The Vaikhānasa tradition claims to have originated from the teachings of the great sage Vikhanasa (who was a partial incarnation of Viṣṇu) to four of his principal disciples. There is a collection of precepts entitled *Vaikhānasa-sūtra*, ascribed to the authorship of this sage, which emphasizes the value of worshipping Viṣṇu's icon (*mūrti*) for salvation (four-fold, *sālokya*, *sāmīpya*, *sārūpya*, and *sāyujya*). The compilation consists of thirty-two sections (called *Praśna*), affiliated to *Yajurveda* (*Yajñādhikāra*, 51), and relying on passages from the Vedic corpus (viz. the four Vedas, the Brāhmaṇas and the Āraṇyakas).

Vikhanasa's four principal disciples composed their own compilations, expounding the details of Viṣṇu-worship. These constitute the definitive texts for the Vaikhānasa-*āgama*. The four disciples were Marīchi (who wrote eight books called 'Saṁhitā' ; Jaya, Ānanda, Saṁjñāna etc.), Bhṛgu (who wrote ten books called 'Adhikaraṇa', Khila, Khilādhikāra, Archādhikāra etc.), Atri (who wrote four books called 'Tantra', Pūrva, Uttara, Viṣṇu and Ātreya), and Kaśyapa (who wrote three books, called 'Kāṇḍa', Satya, Dharma, and Jñāna). This is an immense literature running to over four lakh 'granthas' (a *grantha* meaning a verse in the *anushtubh* metre consisting of 32 syllables) ; but what is available today is a small portion of this bulk.

It is remarkable that the *āgama* texts of this tradition do not contain the 'jñāna' and

the 'yoga', sections ; they are content with the 'kriyā' section (construction of temples, installation of icons, worship rituals and festivals) ; and deal cursorily with the 'charyā' section. The texts deal with a variety of issues concerning temple-worship, like methods of installation, varieties of gopura and vimāna, the construction of chariot (ratha), the enclosures (āvaraṇa) of the temple, different kinds of utsavas, correction of lapses in worship rituals and so on.

Further, although the tradition accepts (with the Pāñcharātra) that Viṣṇu may be worshipped in a pot (kuṁbha), in a sacred design (maṇḍala), in the sacrificial fire (homāgni) or in an icon (bimba) (called chatuh-sthānārchanā), it lays stress on iconic worship. And in the iconic representation of Viṣṇu, it is rarely that the mace (gadā) or the gesture of protection (abhaya-mudrā) is shown. The icon should be duly installed at home or in a temple before it can be worshipped. And the icon which is less than six aṅgulas in height is not regarded as meritorious.

This tradition classifies worship into two varieties : with icons (samūrtārchanā) and without icons (amūrtārchanā). But it insists that the former is better, as it is necessary for all, and easy to adopt. The latter is principally the method of worshipping Viṣṇu who resides within the sacrificial fire as its inner controller (antaryāmi). Of the famous temples where the worship is conducted according to the Vaikhānasa tradition, may be mentioned the Venkateśvara temple on the Tirumalai-Tirupati hills.

(B) *Pāñcharātra* : While the Pāñcharātra viewpoint (also called Sāttvata-dharma or Bhagavac-chhāstra) which upholds the supremacy of Viṣṇu, aspects of the vyūha doctrine and commends devoted worship as the royal road to salvation is at least as old as the epic *Mahābhārata*, the textual tradition thereof is comparatively recent. But the texts comprising the tradition are not only elaborate and comprehensive but remarkably numerous (totalling one and a half crore granthas). The early Pāñcharātra texts are such perfect and inspiring works that they have been allowed to influence the Vaikhānasa and Śaiva āgamas.

There is some uncertainty about the precise significance of the expression 'pāñcha-

rātra'. The texts themselves give diverse meanings. *Īśvara-saṁhitā* (21), for instance, relates that Viṣṇu taught five sages (who were incarnations of the five weapons in Viṣṇu's hands) during five successive days and nights ('divārātram') : Śaṇḍilya (discus or chakra), Aupagāyana (conch or śaṁkha), Mauñjyāyana (mace or gadā), Kauśika (sword or khaḍga) and Bhāradvāja (bow or chāpa). Another text (*Vihagendra-saṁhitā*) gives the names of the five recipients of this teaching differently : Ananta, Garuḍa, Vishvaksena (who are attendants of Viṣṇu), Rudra and Brahmā. *Śrī-praśna-saṁhitā* explains that 'rātri' (night) means ignorance, and 'pāñcha' refers to the destruction of this ignorance (from the root *pach*). The five-disciplines which are incorporated in this tradition are also suggested : Veda, Vedānta, Purāṇa, Sāṁkhya and Yoga.

According to *Nārada-pāñcharātra*, the expression refers to five kinds of knowledge ('rātra') : cosmology (tattva), salvation (mukti), devotion (bhakti), practices (yoga) and principles (vaiśeshika). Elsewhere, attention is drawn to the five manifestations of Godhead : transcendental (parā), emanations (vyūha), incarnations (vibhava), immanent in the individual (antaryāmi) and worship-worthy (archā).

Vedānta-Deśika's *Pāñcharātra-rakshā* highlights the five periods of worship (pañchakāla-vyavasthā) : (i) early morning when one gets ready to worship (abhiḡamana, in the first watch or prahara of the day) ; (ii) latter in the morning (between 9 a.m. and 12 noon) when one collects the materials required for worship (upādāna), in the second watch of the day ; (iii) midday when the worship is actually performed (ijyā, in the third watch of the day) ; (iv) afternoon and evening, when one studies the religious texts and teaches them (svādhyāya, in the fourth watch of the day) ; and finally (v) in the night when one engages in intent contemplation (yoga, in the first watch of the night).

The texts of the Pāñcharātra tradition are generally classified into those which are (i) communicated directly by Godhead (divya), (ii) composed by sages (ārsha or muni-bhāshita), and (iii) written by human authors (mānusha). In the first group, the three texts

which are counted (*Sāttvata-saṃhitā*, *Paushkara-saṃhitā* and *Jayākhyā-saṃhitā*) are undoubtedly the most important and definitive. The second group is again divided into sāttvika-texts (like *Īśvara-saṃhitā*, *Pārameśvara-saṃhitā*, *Bhāradvāja-saṃhitā* and *Vaiḥāyasa-saṃhitā*); rājasa-texts (like *Sanatkumāra-saṃhitā*, *Padmodbhava-saṃhitā* and *Māyā-vaibhava*); and tāmasa-texts (like *Pāñcha-praśna*, *Śuka-praśna* and *Tattva-sāgara*). However, the basis of this division cannot be ascertained.

There is another classification into 'mantra-siddhānta' (where worship of a solitary icon, *ekamūrti*, viz. Vāsudeva, is recommended), 'āgama-siddhānta' (where four forms, *chatur-mūrti*, viz. Vāsudeva, Saṃkar-śaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha, are recommended), 'tantra-siddhānta' (where nine forms, *nava-mūrti*, viz. Nārāyaṇa, Viṣṇu, Hayagrīva, Nṛsiṃha and Varāha in addition to the above four, are recommended), and 'Tantrāntara-siddhānta' (where four-headed or three-headed forms are recommended for worship). However, Pāñcharātra tradition recognizes twelve emanatory forms (*vyūha-mūrti*), twelve 'other' forms (*mūrtiyantara*), ten incarnatory forms (*prādurbhāvāntara*), and twelve feminine powers (*śaktis* like Lakshmi, Pushṭi, Dayā etc.).

The Pāñcharātra texts are usually found to treat their subject-matter in four divisions: *jñāna-pāda* (where cosmological and psychological principles are dealt with), *Yoga-pāda* (where the yogic disciplines of various types is dealt with), *kriyā-pāda* (where easier methods of iconic worship, construction of temples, installation of icons, prescription for making icons and so on are dealt with), and *charyā-pāda* (where the details of ceremonies and rituals connected with the daily and occasional worship in temples, the initiatory rites, the ceremonial postures and gestures, sacred diagrams and so on are dealt with).

Besides details of temple-worship, some of these texts contain information about medicinal herbs, therapeutic procedures, myths and legends in the *purāṇas*, mantras and yantras used in worship as well as folk cures, prayers and hymnology, iconometry and architecture. Some of the texts are extensive, like *Pādma-saṃhitā* (which has eighty-

two chapters and 9000 slokas, 11 to 22 dealing with matter pertaining to iconography), *Ahīrbudhnyā-saṃhitā* (which has sixty chapters and runs to 3800 ślokas, but contain little information of iconographic interest); *Paushkara-saṃhitā* (which has forty-three chapters and 5900 ślokas, two whole chapters, 38 and 40, dealing with iconography) and *Jayākhyā-saṃhitā* (which has thirty-three chapters and 4500 ślokas, dealing with a wide variety of subjects).

The most influential among the Pāñcharātra-saṃhitā texts (which run to more than two hundred in number) are Pādma, Paushkara, Jayākhyā, Īśvara, Ahīrbudhnyā, Viṣhvak-sena, Śrī-praśna, Sāttvata and Hayagrīva. Most of the extant Pāñcharātra texts are South Indian in origin, but a few of them (like *Kāpila-saṃhitā*, *Ātreya-saṃhitā* and *Hayaśirsha-saṃhitā*) have been popular in the North. The popularity and prevalence of the Pāñcharātra tradition in temple-worship in the South are due to the encouragement given by Yāmuna (10th cent.), Rāmānuja (1019-1139) and Vedānta-deśika (1269-1369).

(C) *Śāktāgama*: In the āgama-tradition, Śāktāgama (which deals with the worship of Śakti or Devī) is sometimes included within the fold of Śaivāgama (cf. the division of Śaivāgama into Śaivāgama, Devyāgama, Vātulāgama and Vira-śaivāgama), as the Śaivāgama texts do contain details of Śakti-worship. Śakti being the consort of, and inseparable from, Śiva. But there are texts which eulogize Śakti and deal exclusively with Śakti-worship. Śakti in this context is not regarded so much as a spouse of Śiva as an independent, absolute and highest divinity, the mother of all beings and the matrix of the universe. Śiva without Śakti is described as a corpse (*śava*); and Śiva is regarded here as a devotee of Śakti, even as Viṣṇu and Brahmā and all the other gods are.

Probably, the ideology of Godhead as the Mother and the treatment of womanhood as the most supreme manifestation of Godhead are at least as old as the earliest strata of the Vedic corpus. They find expression definitely in the 'Saubhāgya-kāṇḍa' of the *Atharva-veda*. Practices connected with the worship of Godhead as the Mother were (and still are) prevalent all over the country. The textual

tradition groups the practices into four regions: Kerala (from Aṅga upto Mālava, 'kahādi' worship, with Tārā and Nīla-sarasvatī as the principal divinities); Kāśhmīra (from Madra upto Nepāl, 'hādi' worship with Tripurā-sundarī as the principal divinity); Gauḍa (Assama to Sindhu, mainly Bengal, 'kādi' worship, with Kālī as the principal divinity); and Viśāla (all regions, with the other modes of worship and other forms of the Goddess).

The extensive prevalence and the inclusive nature of the practices connected with Śakti-worship are further evidenced by the ideology of the nine 'seats' or 'centres' (pīṭhas): Vidyā-, Śakti-, Śaiva-, Gaṇeśa-, Chandra-, Svāyambhuva-, Chīna-, Bauddha- and Vaidika. It may be seen that Śakti-worship has entered into the Vedic fold, Buddhist context (especially in Nepāl, Tibet and China), and folk worship of deified human beings of unusual excellence.

The definitive texts of the Śāktāgama are numerous in number (as many as 327 are oft-quoted works) and varied in approach. They are generally called 'āgama' (which word is explained as the device for knowing the things comprehensively, clearly and effectively (''ā jñā vastu samantāc cha gamyate'') and 'tantra' (the tradition which spreads, ''tan vistāre'' and saves as it spreads ''trāyate''). There are said to be eighteen āgama texts and 108 tantras composed by Mahādeva (cf. *Nīsvāsa-tantra* and *Meru-tantra*).

The āgama texts are said to deal with creation (sṛṣṭi), dissolution (pralaya), proper worship of gods and goddesses (devatānām yathārchanam), spiritual discipline and practice (sādhana), repetition of the sacred words with visualization (puraścaraṇa), the six magical practices (ṣaṭkarma-sādhana), meditation and mental culture (dhyāna-yoga).

The 'tantra' texts, on the other hand, are required to deal with iconographic stylization (devatā-saṁsthāna), propriety of the mantra (mantra-nirṇaya), places of pilgrimage (tirtha-varṇanā), conduct and duties of lay life (āśrama-dharma), the sacred diagrams (yantra), the spirit of the times (yuga-dharma), organization of the body and its forces in terms of the kuṇḍalinī (adhyātma-varṇanā) and so on.

There is another classification of texts in accordance with their tone and approach; if the sattva-guṇa predominates, the texts are

called 'tantra'; if the rajo-guṇa prevails, then they are 'yāmalas'; and if the tamo-guṇa is more apparent, the texts are called 'dāmaras'. There are sixty-four tantras which are held in high regard, like Vātula-, Mālinī-, Chandra-jñāna-, Mahāsammohini and so on. The 'yāmalas' are said to have been taught by the eight Bhairavas (See BHAIRAVA): Rudra-yāmala, Skanda-, Brahma-, Viṣṇu-, Yama-, Vāyu-, Kubera-, and Indra-Yāmala. There is a collection of five texts which are regarded as especially meritorious (śubhāgama-pāñchaka); and they are the saṁhitās communicated by Vaśiṣṭha, Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanat-kumāra and Śuka.

There is a division of the land where Śakti-worship prevails into three zones, each having sixty-four definitive tāntrik texts: aśva-krānta (from the Vindhya ranges to Mahāchīna), Viṣṇu-krānta (from the Vindhyan ranges to Chāṭṭāla) and Ratha-krānta (from the Vindhyan ranges to the sea). According to *Sammohatantra*, Chīna (including Tibet) has one hundred principal tantras and seven subsidiary tantras, the Drāviḍa region twenty principal tantras and twenty-five subsidiary tantras, and Kerala sixty principal tantras and five hundred subsidiary tantras.

The Śāktāgama texts, like the Śaivāgama texts, treat their subject-matter in four sections: vidyā-pāda, kriyā-pāda, yoga-pāda and charyā-pāda. Śakti is dealt with in these texts in three distinct aspects: the power of the mantras (mantra-śakti); the power within the human body (kuṇḍalinī-śakti); and the power of the iconic forms (vidyās). On each of these aspects there are treatises, manuals and handbooks. One of the vidyās (viz. Śrī-vidyā in the third aspect) has an extensive literature (See ŚRĪ-CHAKRA) and a subsidiary tradition of worship, symbolism and meditation (See also DASA-VIDYĀ).

## ĀGAMA-SIDDHANTA

A division in the Pāñcharātra system (See ĀGAMA and PANCHARATRA), which advocates worship of the four emanatory forms (vyūha) of Viṣṇu, viz. Vāsudeva, Saṁkarshaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha on equal footing. The forms are to be represented in the sanctum

either in a progressive (prabhava, viz. beginning with Vāsudeva and ending with Aniruddha) or in a reverse (apyaya, viz. beginning with Aniruddha and ending with Vāsudeva) order (cf. *Pādma-saṃhitā*, Charyā-pāda, 19, 116-117). All the four forms are regarded as equally perfect in terms of the six divine qualities (See SHADGUNYA).

This division has been described in *Kālattara-saṃhitā* as 'self-manifest' (svayam-vyakta), in contradistinction to the other three, 'Mantra-siddhānta' which is said to be divinely transmitted (daiva), 'Tantra-siddhānta' which is regarded as 'communicated by the adepts' (saiddha) and 'Tantrāntara-siddhānta', which is taught by the sages (ārsha). These four divisions are called in *Śrīkara-saṃhitā*, Veda-, divya-, tantra- and purāṇa-siddhāntas. Further, Āgama-siddhānta is classed along with Mantra-siddhānta in the category of sāttvika (or nāgara), as distinguished from Tantra-siddhānta which is rājasika (or drāviḍa), and Tantrāntara-siddhānta, which is tāmasika (or vesara) (cf. *Nārāyaṇa-saṃhitā*).

The contemplative icons of the four forms are prescribed in this system to be two-armed, devoid of weapons, white-complexioned, and wearing white garments. They must all be installed on the same pedestal, preferably in the Yoga posture and there must be no attendant divinities inside the sanctum. Worship in this case precludes processions for food-offering (bali-yātrā), daily festivities as part of worship ritual (nityotsava), and ceremonials like putting the deity to sleep (śayanotsava).

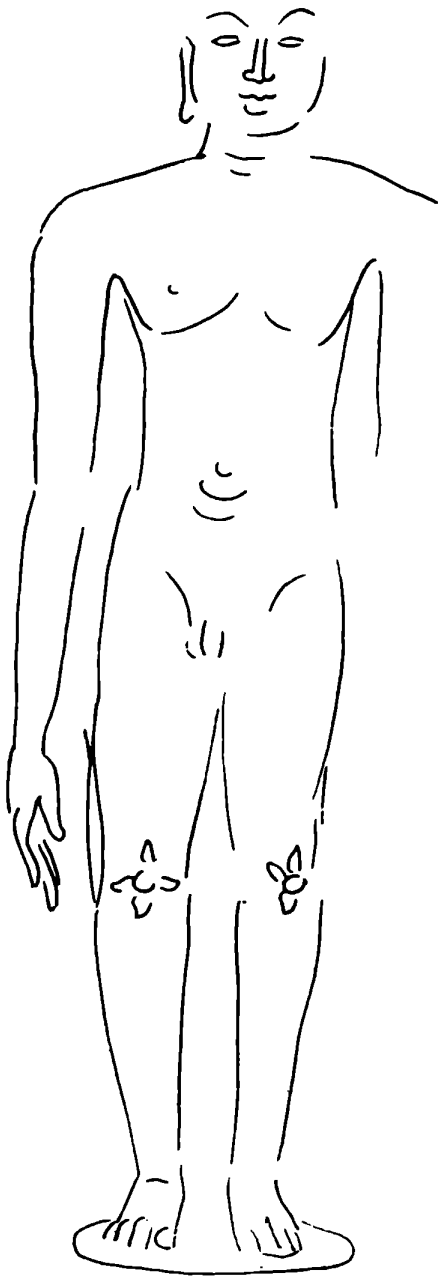
The eligibility for performing worship in this system requires formal initiation (dikshā), which involves abandonment of worldly desires and activities (karma-saṃnyāsa), but not giving up home-life (cf. *Paushkara-saṃhitā*, 38, *Īśvara-saṃhitā*, 21, and *Pārameśvara-saṃhitā*, 19)

### ĀJĀNU-LAMBA-BĀHU

The iconographic detail of the arm extending upto the knee, which is one of the physical characteristics of a great person (See MAHA-PURUSHA-LAKSHANA).



AJĀNU-LAMBA-BAHU



AJANU-LAMBA-BAHU



PRATIMA KOSHA

## ĀÑJANEYA

Hanumān; son born to the vānara princess Añjanā and her husband Kesari, the vānara chieftain. Añjanā was the daughter of Kuñjara, a chieftain of the vānara tribe. In her previous life, she was a charming heavenly damsel (apsaras) named Puñjikāsthālā (Māna-garva) and was cursed for her vanity and arrogance to be born as a monkey in the Himālayan region. The birth of Hanumān lifted the curse, and she returned to her heavenly abode soon after the baby-son was born.

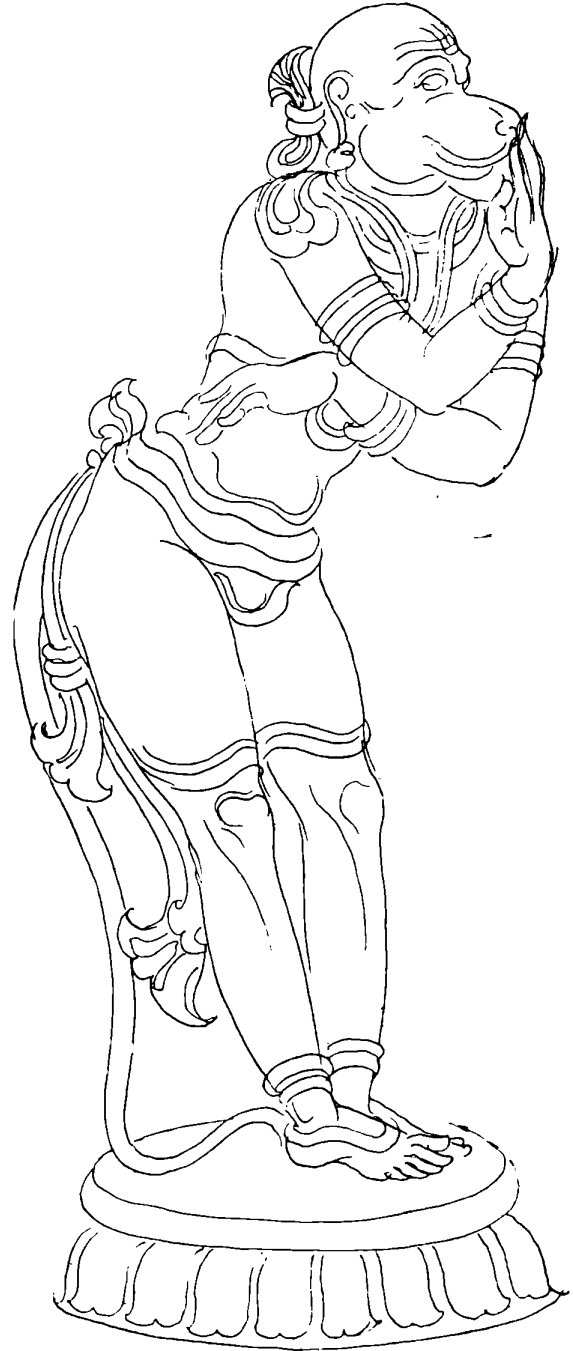
There is a story concerning the birth of Hanumān to Añjanā. Once Śiva and Pārvatī were playing about in the woods on the southern slope of the mountain Mahā-meru, assuming the form of monkeys. Pārvatī conceived, but asked the wind-god Vāyu to take away her unborn infant. Vāyu received it from Pārvatī and transferred it miraculously to the body of Añjanā, who was at that time performing a penance in the woods for the sake of progeny, and for whom Vāyu had lost his heart.

The account in *Rāmāyaṇa* (kishkindhā-kāṇḍa, sarga 66) relates that Añjanā, who had the power to assume whatever form she liked, had taken a human form of exceeding loveliness and was standing on top of a mountain peak; Vāyu, the wind-god, was entranced by her beauty and embraced her instantly. Añjanā was taken aback, and reviled Vāyu for his violent and improper advances to a married women. Thereupon Vāyu asked her pardon, but confessed that his mind was set on her; and he assured her that it was only wind that had clasped her in its arms, and that her modesty was not outraged in any sense. To make amends, he bestowed upon her a boon that a supremely valiant and intelligent son would be born to her. (For the iconography of Āñjaneya, See HANUMAN)

## ĀTMĀRTHA-PŪJĀ

Worship for ones own sake. Āgama distinguishes between worship by the householder for his own sake at home from worship by the priest for others in a temple (parārtha-pūjā). The former is for spiritual benefit of

the worshipper, while the latter has as its objectives welfare of the people, prosperity and power for the king, peace and plenty in the land. The household worship is done only once in a day while the temple-worship can be done three, five or seven times during twenty-four hours.

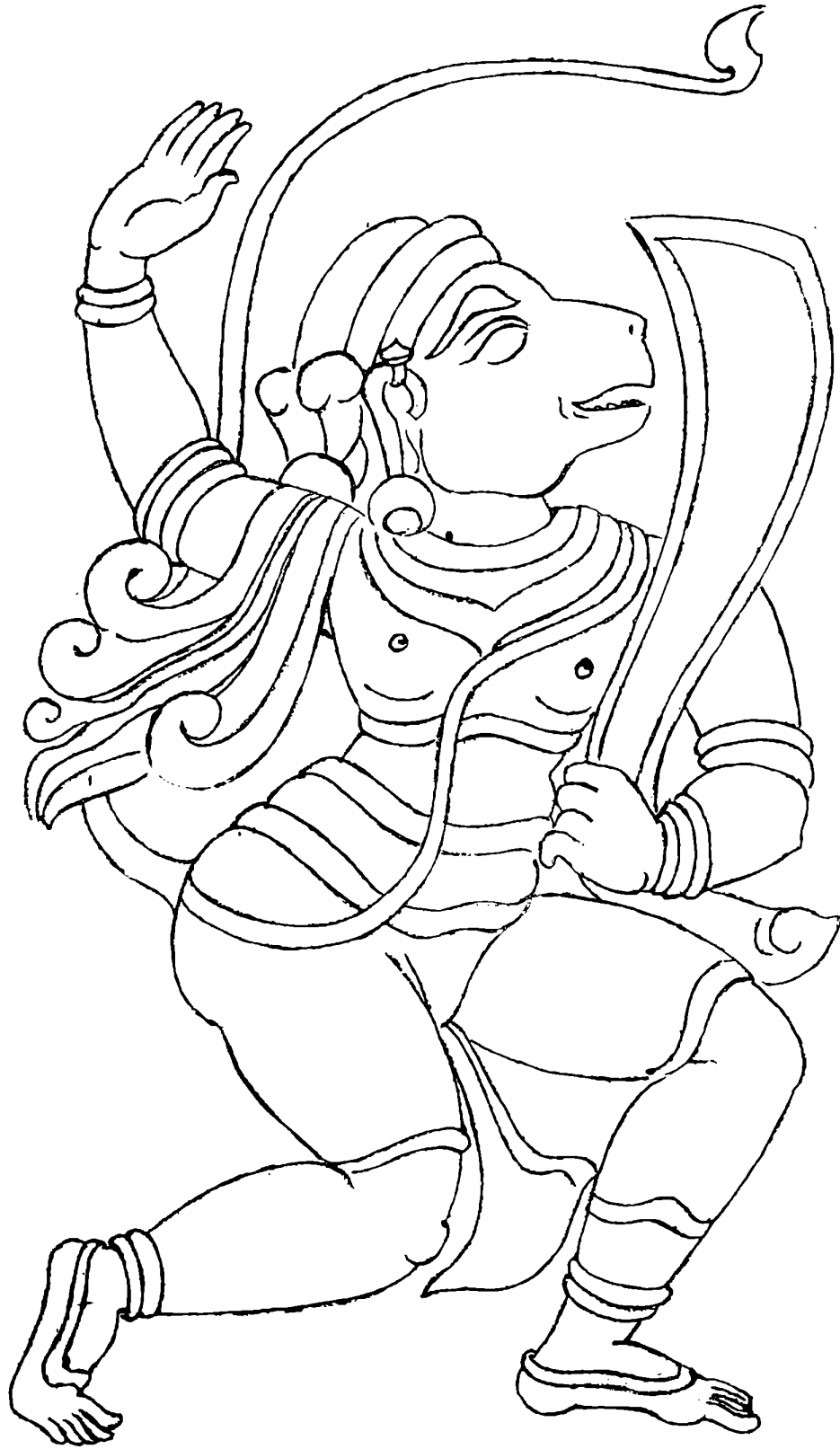


HANUMAN (Stone, Padmanabhasvami temple)





ANJANEYA



ANJANEYA

Worship at home is preceded by ritualistic purification of the ground on which worship is conducted (bhūmi-śuddhi), initial worship of Gaṇapati or one's guru, ceremonial assumption of seat (āsana), sanctification of water to be used in worship (jala-śuddhi), and sanctification of the body and the parts thereof (aṅga-śuddhi). Worship follows sequences like beseeching the presence of the divinity in the icon (āvāhana), installation (sthāpanā) and orientation (sannidhikarṇa). The worship proper consists of offering water of welcome (pādyā), applying fragrant unguents (gandha), offering flowers (pushpa), burning incense (dhūpa) and waving lights (dīpa) in front of the icon, and offering sanctified food (naivedya) to the deity. These are called upachāras (See UPACHARA).

## ĀDI-KŪRMA

'The primordial tortoise' is the form assumed by Viṣṇu to support the Mandara mountain, which was used as the churning rod by the gods and demons to get ambrosia from the milky ocean (kṣhīra-sāgara) and which was sinking under the waters. (See AVATARA, KURMA, VIṢṆU)

## ĀDI-GADĀDHARA

Name of Viṣṇu, as the first to wield the mace (gadā) (See VIṢṆU)

## ĀDI-CHANDĒŚA

(See CHANDESVARA)

## ĀDI-JINA

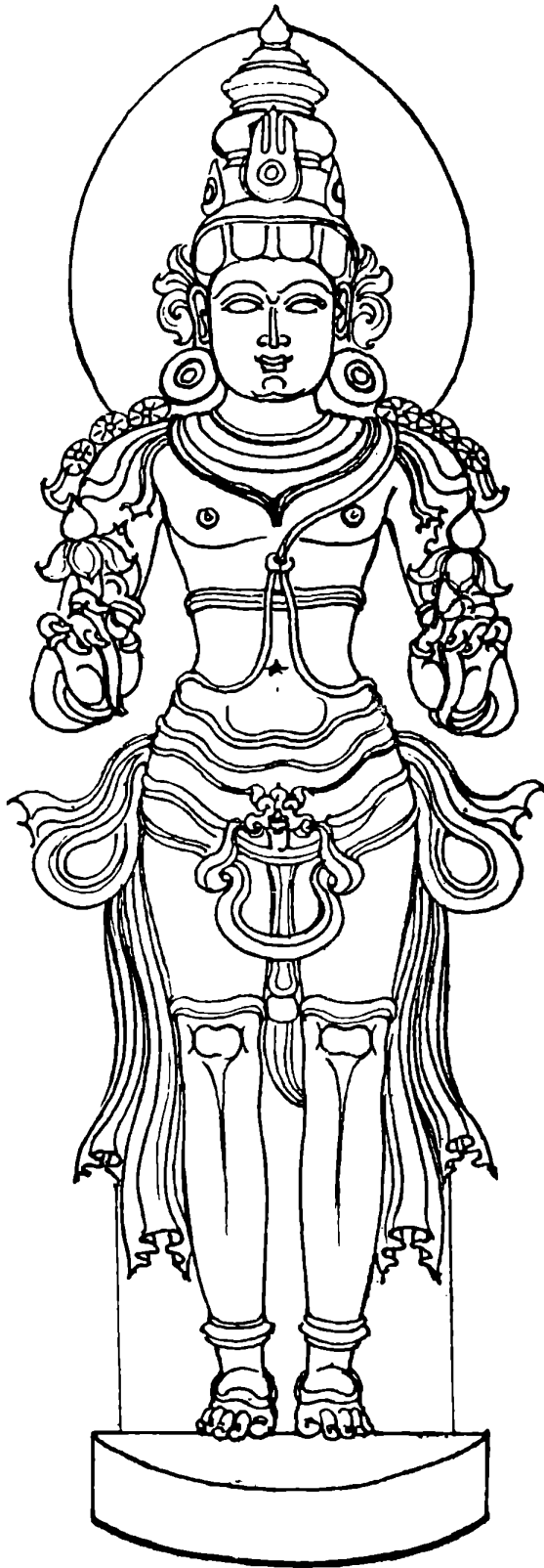
Rṣhabha, the first tirthankara (See RSHABHA, TIRTHANKARA)



ADI-CHANDESA

## ĀDITYA

Meaning the son of Aditi, daughter of Dakṣha-Prajāpati and wife of the sage Kaśyapa (son of Marīchi), the word refers to the Sun. Kaśyapa is said to have married all the daughters of Dakṣha-prajāpati, seventeen of them according to *Bhāgavata* and thirteen in *Mārkaṇḍeya-purāṇa* and *Mahābhārata*. Aditi, according to these accounts, was the eldest of the daughters, and Kaśyapa begot from her Āditya.



ADITYA (Stone, Salar Jung Museum)

But the expression Āditya is often used in the plural, and there are twelve ādityas who are named. According to legend, when Āditya, son of Aditi, grew-up, Saṁjñā, the daughter of Tvashṭṛ married him ; but she was unable to bear the extraordinary brilliance of Āditya (viz. the Sun-god). Her father, Tvashṭṛ, who was the artisan of the gods, cut up Āditya's lustre into twelve parts, and Saṁjñā lived each month of the year with one of the parts of Āditya's lustre. Thus there came to be twelve Ādityas, one Āditya for each of the twelve months of the year.

Twelve Ādityas, thus, are the aspects of the Sun-god, and the names of these Ādityas are all synonyms of Sūrya (See SURYA). Iconographically, the twelve Ādityas are represented as four-armed, the two normal hands of all of them holding lotus-flowers (which symbolize the solar energy), and the other two hands carrying the distinguishing weapon or implement : (1) Dhātā, lotus garland (sraja) in the right hand and water-vessel (kamaṇḍalu) in the left ; (2) Aryaman, discus (chakra) and mace (kaumodakī) in the right and left hands respectively ; (4) Mitra, moon (soma) in the right hand and spear (śūla) in the left ; (4) Śakra, also called Rudra, rosary (akshamālā) and discus (chakra) ; (5) Varuṇa, discus (chakra) and lasso (pāśa) ; (6) Sūrya, also called Amśa, water-vessel (kamaṇḍalu) and rosary (akshamālā) ; (7) Bhaga, spear (śūla) and discus (chakra) ; (8) Vivasvān, spear (śūla) and garland (sraja) ; (9) Pūshan, lotus flowers in both hands ; (10) Savitṛ, mace (gadā) and discus (chakra) ; (11) Tvashṭṛ, sacrificial ladle (sruk) and curlew born of the sacrificial fire (homaja-kalikā) ; and (12) Vidhātṛ, also called Vishṇu and Urukrama, discus (chakra) and lotus flower (padma).

While the twelve Ādityas are more frequently mentioned and named, the early Vedic corpus counts only six (Mitra, Aryaman, Bhaga, Varuṇa, Daksha and Amśa, RV, 5, 54) or seven (*ibid.* 5, 49). It is probable that the seven Ādityas represented the seven days of the week (in the solar calendar). It may be recalled that the Sun-god is said to ride a chariot drawn by seven horses. The twelve Ādityas have been for the first time mentioned in *Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa*, and the number has been retained in the purāṇas. *Śatapatha-*

*brāhmaṇa* also mentions that Sūrya (like Agni and Indra) performed sacrifices and became preeminent. All the Ādityas are said to be included in Sūrya.

Iconographically, the twelve-Ādityas are seldom separately represented. The divinity known as Āditya is generally taken to be the unitary Sūrya (Sun-god) (For iconographic details, See SURYA).

She is represented as exceedingly charming and as wearing garlands of flowers. Her right hand is in the gesture of protection along with a lotus flower (*padmābhaya*) and the left hand in the gesture of boon-bestowal (*varada*). There is an aura of brilliant light (*prabhā-mandala*) around her. She is also seen with the eight auspicious things' (*Ashṭa-maṅgala*) (See ASHTA-MANGALA) (See also LAKSHMI).

## ĀDI-NĀTHA

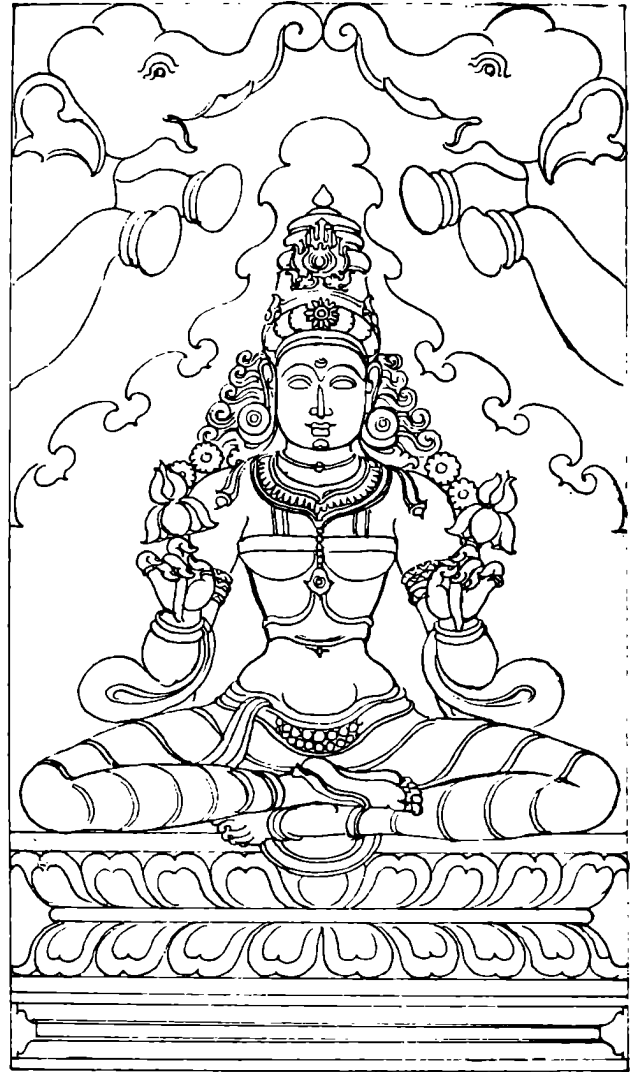
The first Jina, or the first tīrthaṅkara (See RSHABHA)

## ĀDI-LAKSHMĪ

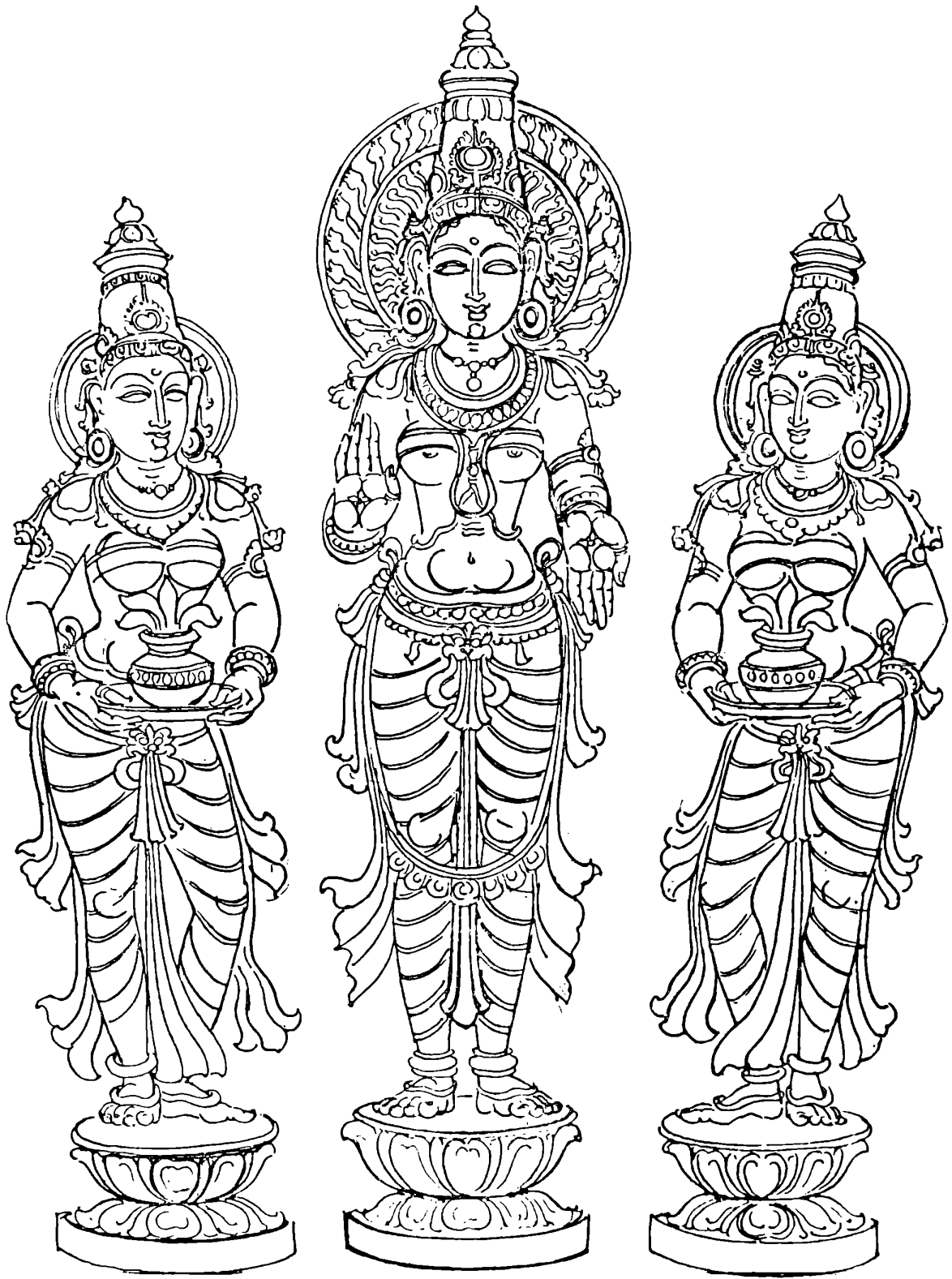
'The primordial Lakshmi', one of the forms of Lakshmi as she appeared from the milky ocean when it was churned. Iconographically, she is two-armed, two-eyed, seated in an easy posture, and bedecked with all ornaments.



ADI-LAKSHMI



ADI-LAKSHMI (Stone, Gangaikonda Cholapuram, Tamil Nadu)



ADI-LAKSHMI (with attendants, Tiruvannamalai)



ADI-LAKSHMI

## ĀDI-VARĀHA

Vishṇu as the primeval boar. The legend in *Bhāgavata* is that the creator, Brahmā, wondered where the beings to be created by him would reside, since the earth was hidden deep within the watery mass (in the general dissolution or pralaya). He meditated upon Vishṇu for guidance. As he was meditating, a baby boar whose size was that of a thumb ('aṅguṣṭha-pramāṇo varāha-potah') proceeded from his nostril out into the wide space. In a moment, it grew to gigantic dimensions. Brahmā recognized that it was none other than Vishṇu and offered it worship. The boar dived into the waters and lifted the earth with its huge tusks. Then there appeared on the earth the progenitor of the beings, Svāyambhuva-Manu.

(See AVATARA, VARAHA, VISHNU)

## ĀDI-ŚAKTI

(See SAKTI)

## ĀDI-ŚESHA

The primordial (or first-born) Serpent or dragon, also called Ananta, (See ANANTA), is regarded as one of the progenitors (prajāpatis), evolving from Brahmā, who in turn evolved from Vishṇu. This is also considered as the tāmasic form of Vishṇu, abiding in the bottom of the netherworld (pātāla) and worshipped by the gods and sages. He is iconically represented as a thousand-hooded serpent, illuminating the entire universe by the lustrous gems which crown his thousand hoods. He is two-armed, and carries a plough-share (lāṅgala) and pestle (musala) in his hands (suggesting the kinship of the concept of Ādiśesha with that of Balarāma or Saṁkarshaṇa). He supports the world on his head. His energy is so great and overflowing that his eyes rotate all the time. He wears garlands of bright and white gems and wears blue garment. He is also identified with the first-born child of Kaśyapa (son of Marīchi) by Kadrū (daughter of Daksha-prajāpati). Kadrū had one thousand serpents as her children, of whom Śesha was the eldest; important among the other children are Vāsuki, Airāvata, Takshaka, Kārkoṭaka, Kāliya, Kalmāsha, Nahusha, Kuñjara, Kumuda and Kumudāksha (See ŚESHA)

## ĀDYA-KŪRMA

(See KURMA)

## ĀDYĀ-KĀLĪ

Kālī (See KALI), who appeared at the very beginning of creation ('ādeu bhavā'). She is also called Tārā, Tripura-Sundarī and Bhuvanēśvarī (*Tantra-sāra*). She is first among the mahā-vidyās (See DAŚA-VIDYĀ) and therefore she is 'ādyā'. *Muṇḍamālā-tantra* (10th paṭala) relates that the first among the mahā-vidyās in the first age known as Satya-yuga is Sundarī, in the second age known as Tretā-

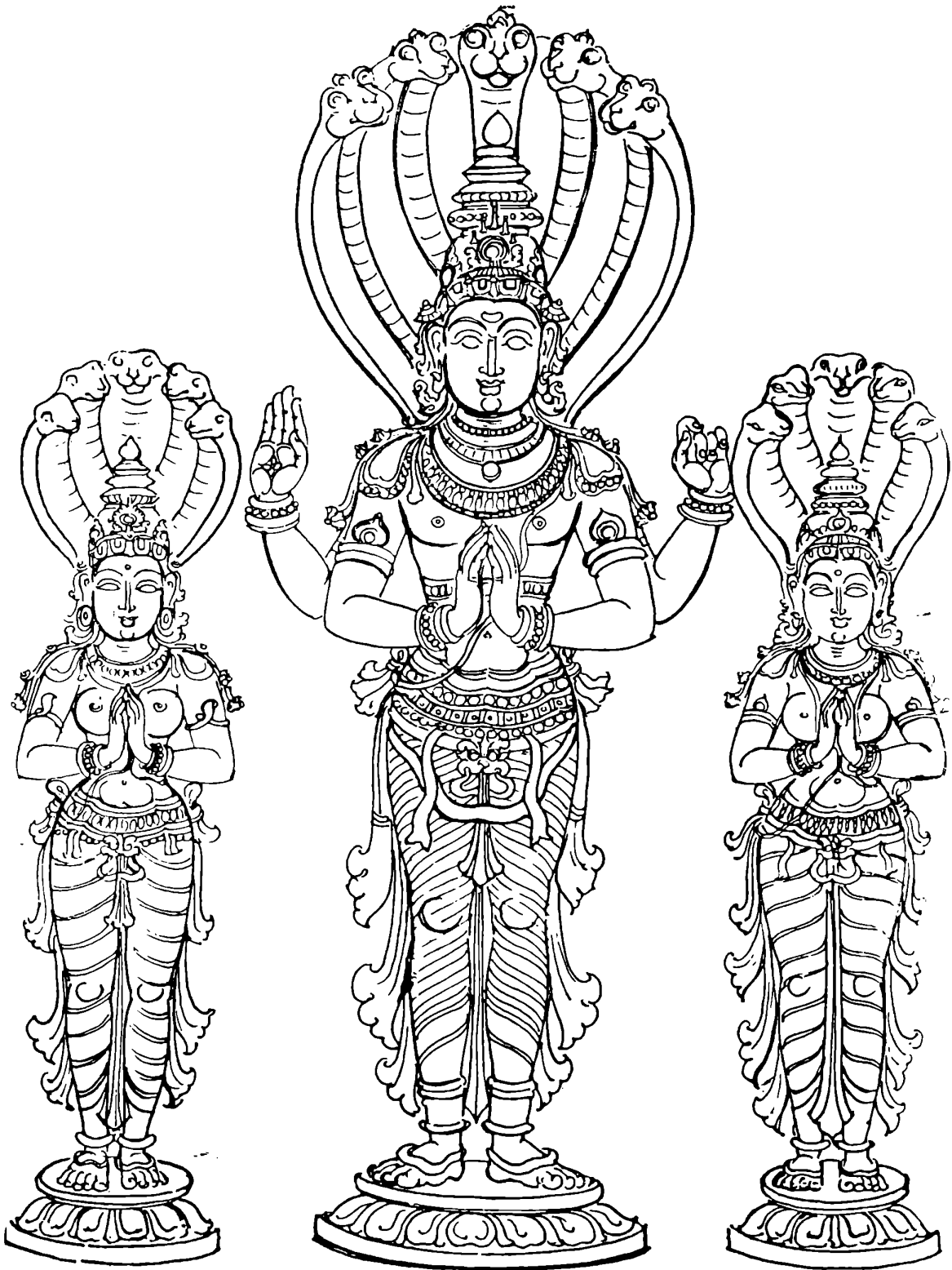


ADI-VARAHA





ADI-VARAH



ADI-SESHA, (Stone, Chidambaram)

yuga Bhuvaneśvari, in the third age known as Dvāpara-yuga Tārīṇī (or Tārā), and in the present age, known as Kali-yuga, Kālī.

## ĀDHĀRA-ŚAKTI

The 'power that supports' is ritualistically involved in the preliminary sequence of the worship, *i.e.* worship offered to the pedestal, or base of the icon, or the seat on which the icon is to rest during worship (pīṭha). The power that the icon will acquire is supposed to be derived from where the icon rests. The texts prescribe that the right and left sides of the pedestal (or seat) be offered worship, and then the central portion. Invoked in this area are several levels of support, the most fundamental level (*i.e.* at the deepest level) being the 'ādhāra-śakti', the divine power that supports all things. On this 'ādhāra-śakti', rests the primordial nature (mūla-prakṛti) which is the source of the entire universe; on this is the primeval Tortoise (Ādi-kūrma) (See ADIKURMA), which bears on its back the aboriginal Serpent (Ananta) (See ADISESHA, ANANTA).



ADHARA-SAKTI

On this rests the earth (pṛthivī), in the central region of which is the Ocean of Milk (kshīra-samudra) if the worship follows the Vaishṇava āgama (See AGAMA), or the Ocean of sugar-cane juice (ikshu-sāgara) if the deity to be worshipped is Gaṇapati. The Śaiva āgama omits either of these details. In the midst of the Ocean of Milk and supported by it is the Śveta-dvīpa (the abode of Viṣṇu). The Śaiva-āgama pictures mount Kailāsa (the abode of Śiva) instead of this level, and omits the further levels. In the Śveta-dvīpa is the jewelled pavilion (ratna-maṇḍapa), along with the wish-fulfilling tree (kalpa-vṛksha), the white parasol (śveta-cchatra) and white fly-whisks (śita-chāmara). In the midst of this is the jewelled throne (ratna-simhāsana), which is identified with the portion of the pedestal or seat where the icon actually rests.

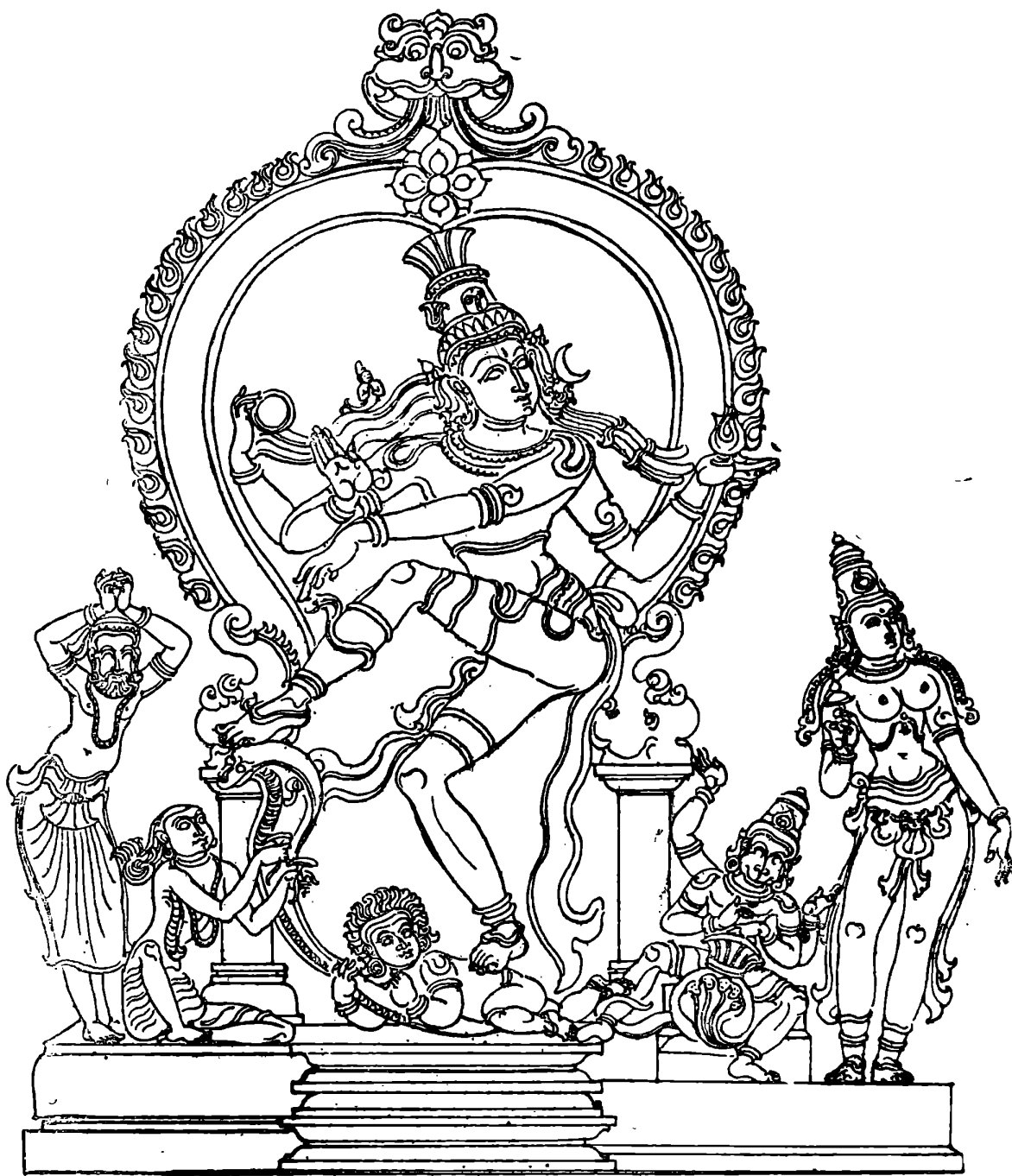
Each one of these twelve levels is worshipped with an appropriate mantra, beginning with the 'ādhāra-śakti' (the mantra being 'ādhāra-śaktyai namah') and ending with the 'throne'.

## ĀNANDA

Attendant of the Jaina Śvetāmbara Guardian-deity (kshetra-pāla), who is a variant of Vaṭuka-Bhairava. He is also said to be the guide for the sixty-four Yoginīs (See YOGINĪ).

## ĀNANDA-TĀṆDAVA

One of the seven (according to *Kāraṇā-gama* and *Śrī-tattva-nidhi*) or nine (according to *Śilpa-ratna*) or eighteen (according to *Kaśyapa-śilpa*) classical forms of dance that Śiva as Naṭarāja is engaged in (See NATARAJA, NRTTA-MURTI, SIVA). The sculptural representation of this form is most celebrated and more often met with, especially in South India. Tillai (Chidambaram in Tamil Nadu) is said to be the place where Śiva danced this form before his spouse Śiva-kāma-sundarī, and to please his devotees, Patañjali and Vyāghrapāda (for the story See NATARAJA). This has been most celebrated even in the literary works of the sixth century (*e.g.* Tirumūlar's *Tiruman-tiram*, 2749-2803). This form of dance is also called 'nāḍānta-naṭana' or 'bhujaṅga-trāsa' ('puyaṅgam' in Tamil, *cf.* Appar's *Tevāram*, seventh century).



PONNAMBALA NATARAJA (Stone, Minakshi temple, Madurai)

This form of Naṭarāja's dance was adapted to bronze modelling during the early Chola period (about 850 A.D.) and the iconic style reached its perfection during the reign of Parāntaka I (907-955 A.D.). There is a large number of exquisite bronzes of this icon in the Śiva temples of Tamil Nāḍu and Karṇāṭaka.

Textual prescriptions for this form are not only elaborate but precise. Principally, *Kāraṇāgama*, *Śilpa-ratna* and *Kaśyapa-śilpa* deal with this at great length. There are also Tamil works which describe the image of Naṭarāja as visualised by the saints, and also explain the symbolism of the iconographic details (See NATARAJA). *Kāraṇāgama* says that this dance-form is truly marvellous for the onlookers ('didṛkshūṇām mahādbhutam'); *Śilpa-ratna* and *Kaśyapa-śilpa* say that the dance was presented by Śiva for the welfare of all mankind ('sarva-loka hitāvaham'). *Kaśyapa-śilpa* adds that this vigorous dance enthuses the devotees ('utsāha-varadhanār-thāya').

The form presents Śiva in a dance-pose with the right leg planted firmly although bent (kuñchita) on the personification of evil (Apasmāra-purusha or Mūyalaka) (See APASMARA-PURUSHA) and the left leg lifted and thrown across to the right side. The dancer is four-armed, and carries kettle-drum (ḍamaru) and fire (agni) or bowl containing fire (vahni-pātra, according to *Śilpa-ratna*) in his right and left upper hands. The right lower hand is in the gesture of protection (abhaya); the other arm is thrown across (prasārita-bhujā) in a swing ('dolāyamānam' or dolāhastā) and the hand points downward to the left foot that is lifted up.

Around the head, the locks of hair are spread out ('prasārita-jaṭā', *Kāraṇāgama*), and the knot on the head is adorned with serpents (*Kāraṇāgama*, but *Śilpa-ratna* has 'serpents of many kinds', 'nāna-nāga-vichitritam'), flowers dhattura arka (calotropis gigantea), hasti-śirīshaka and jewelled band (koroṭi-ratna-bandhana) above the forehead. On the right side of the knot of hair on the head must be the crescent moon, according to *Śilpa-ratna*. The face is smeared with powdered red-lead (sindhūra), and the rest of the body is daubed with ash. The face must show a slight smile ('kiñchit-prahasitānana') according to *Śilpa-ratna* and

*Kaśyapa-śilpa*. The dancer must be wearing sacred strands called 'upavīta' or 'Yajñopavīta', and the loins must be covered with tiger's skin. The fingers of the hands and the toes of the legs must be adorned with golden rings with jewels set in them (ratna-hemāṅguliyaka).

The two-armed dwarf apasmāra-purusha (Mūyalaka) on whom Śiva is dancing must be made in 'chatustāla' measure (See TALAMANA). He must be lying prostrate on his belly with the head to the right of the dancer; the hands and legs must be thrown about. In his right hand he must hold a serpent (vyāla), the left hand clutching its tail. The dwarf must be greenish dark in complexion, and must be bedecked with ornaments.

Beneath the prostrate apasmāra-purusha should be the lotus-pedestal (padma-pīṭha) starting from which the circle of lights (prabhāmaṇḍala) surrounds the dancing figure. To the left of Naṭarāja must be standing Umā or Pārvatī (called Śiva-kāma-sundarī).

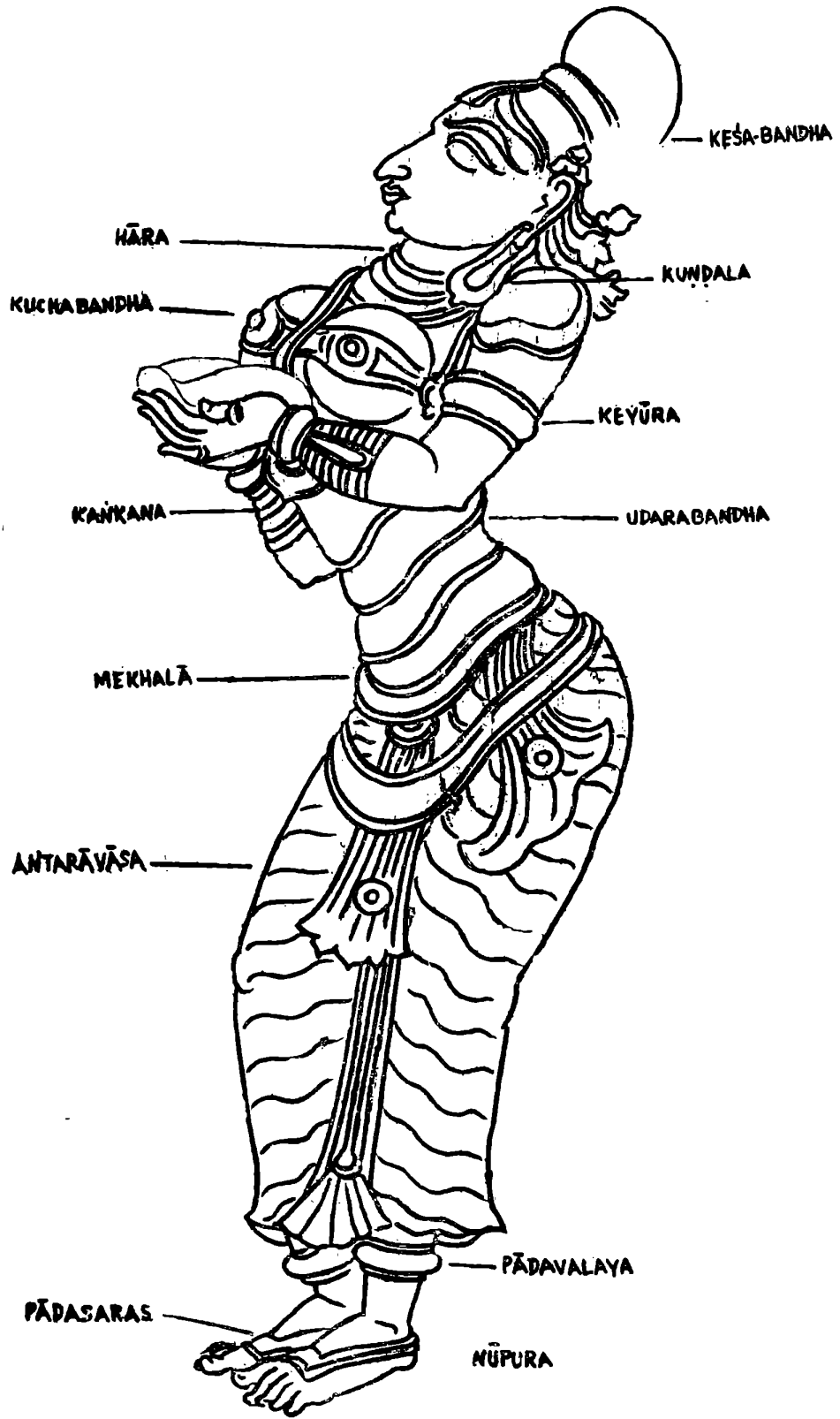
*Kaśyapa-śilpa* (65th paṭala) gives elaborate iconometric details concerning the dancing figure, the apasmāra-purusha, the lotus pedestal, and the circle of lights. According to this text, Naṭarāja icon must be fashioned in the superior variety of Daśa-tāla measure (See UTTAMA-DASA-TALA)

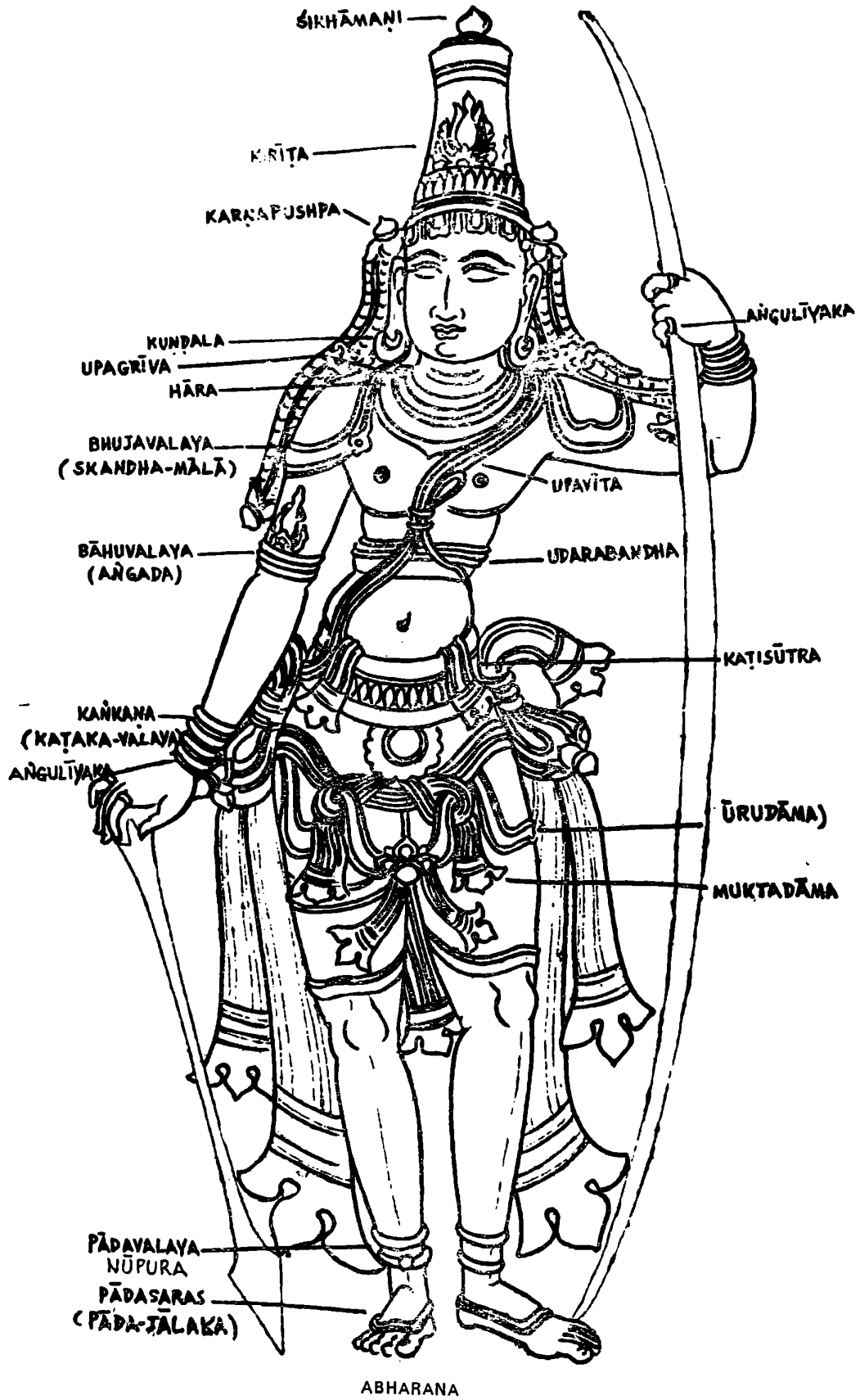
## ABHAṆGA

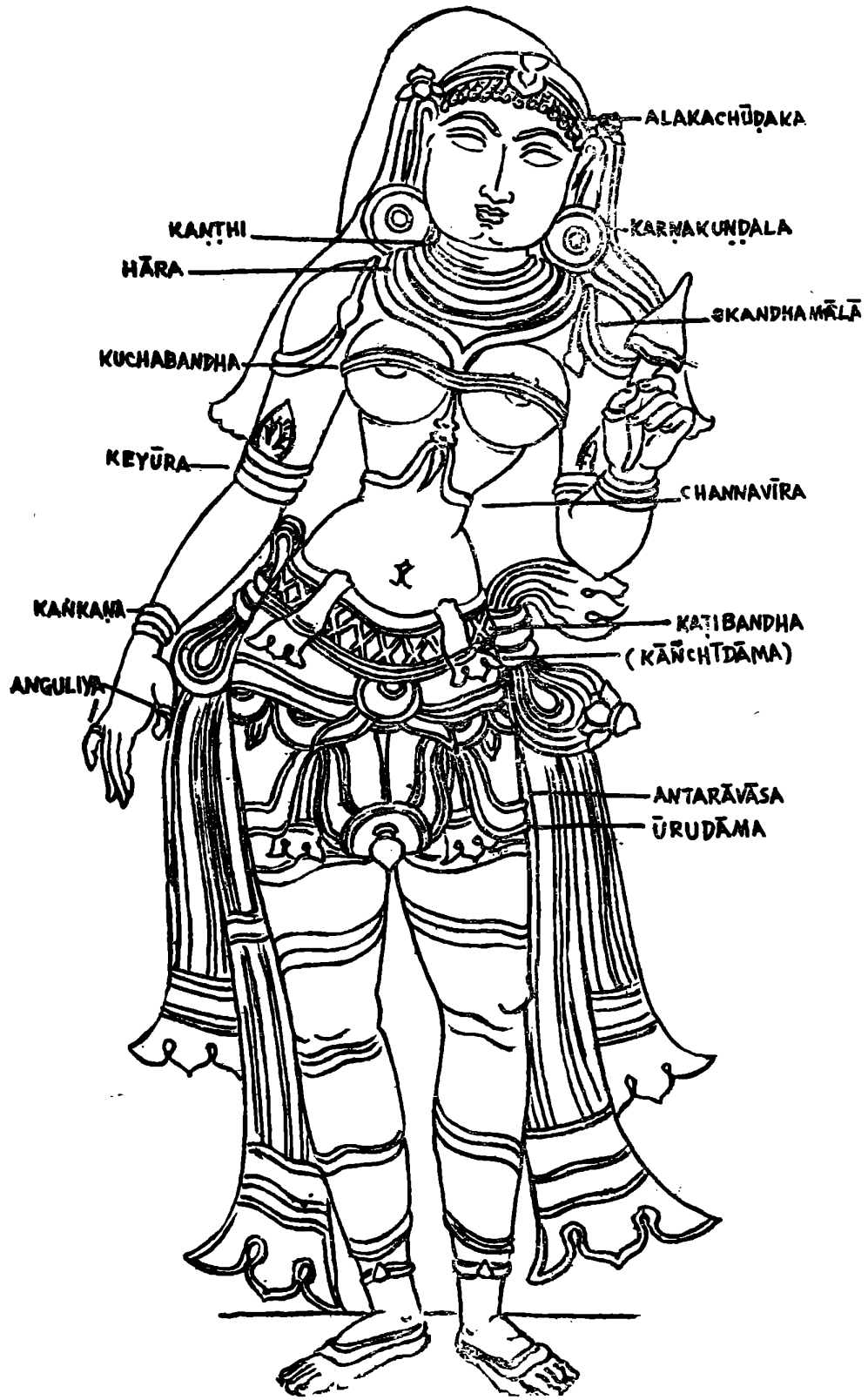
A posture of the body "in which the plumb-line or centre line, from the crown of the head to a point midway between heels, passes slightly to the right of the navel" (Abanindranath Tagore, cited in J. N. Banerjee, op. cit). The posture is characterized by a slight bend in the entire figure; especially the head is turned to a side, and the lower portion of the torso also shows a bend.

## ĀBHARAṆA

Literally meaning 'ornament', the expression refers to the stylized decorations on the icons in human form. Indian art (painting and sculpture) regards beauty (masculine or feminine) as inseparable from ornamentation, and employs this detail invariably in the icons for

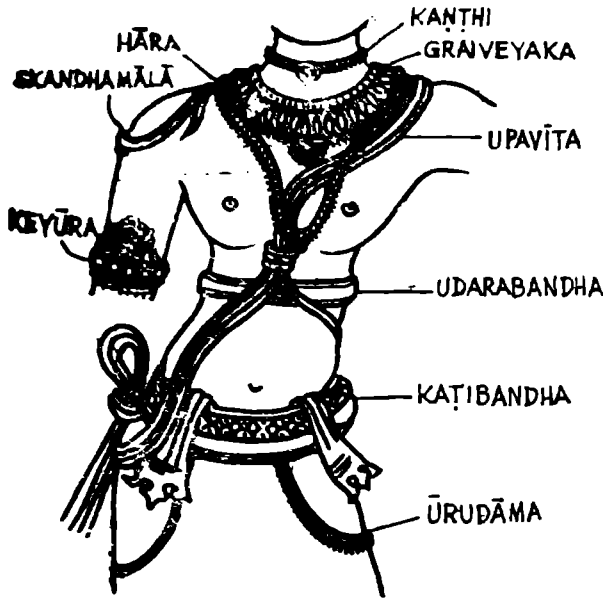






ABHARANA





ABHARANA

display as well as for worship. The exceptions are the icons of the Jaina tīrthaṅkaras and the Buddha. Even yogis and hermits have their characteristic and light ornaments. Most of the forms and styles of ornaments in the icons are adopted from the actual ornaments used by well-to-do Indian masses, especially on festive occasions and members of the royal household; but some of them are of course derived from the artist's imagination and inventiveness; and a few are meant only for gods, goddesses, heavenly damsels, and not to be found among humans.

Classical texts (like *Manu-Smṛti*, 7, 22) classify ornaments into four varieties: (1) āvedhya (worn after piercing the part of the body) like ear-pieces of various kinds; (2) bandhaniya (tied round the part of the body), like the strings of pearls or flowers tied round the hair, or arms; (3) kshepya (slipped on to the part of the body) like rings on the fingers; and (4) āropya (hung round the neck or down the shoulders) like necklaces and garlands.

While all visible parts of the body are considered suitable for decoration with appropriate ornaments, the head (śīras), neck (kaṇṭha), chest (ura), arms (bāhu), legs (pāda), loins or hip (kaṭi) and the fingers (aṅgulī) of the icon are more often and especially covered with ornaments. The ornaments are usually in aesthetically elegant designs,

and contain sometimes mythical motifs (like makara, sarpa, siṃha-lalāṭa and vyāla). In sculpture, they resemble the actual ornaments made in gold and set with precious stones (pearls, diamonds, moonstone, sapphire etc.) As said earlier, there is an unmistakable stylization in the ornaments appropriate to each organ; and the texts contain distinct and suggestive names for each one of them.

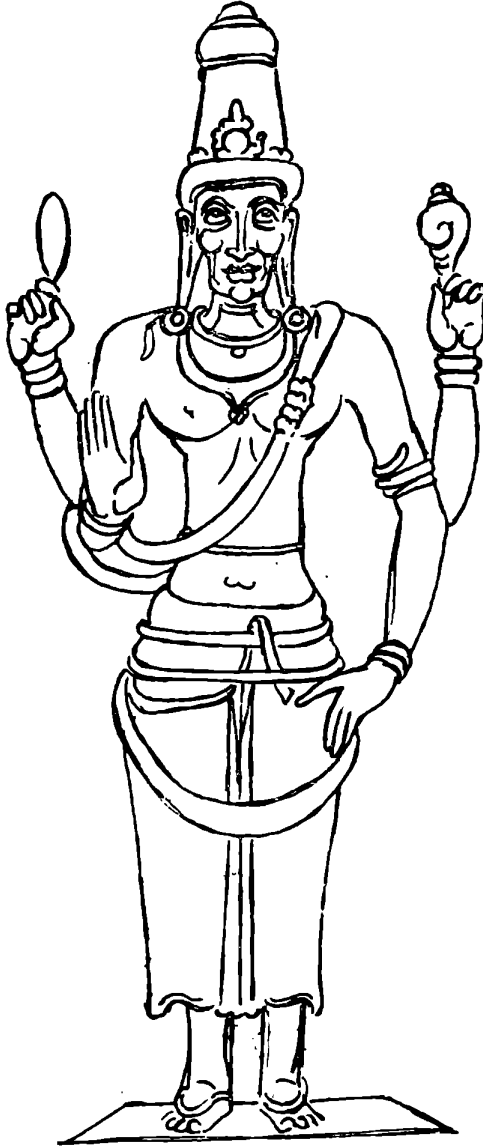
Most of the ornaments are common to all classes of gods and goddesses (including those of Jaina and Buddhist persuasion). But some ornaments have conventionally got associated with some divinities and serve to distinguish them from others, like kaustubha on the chest and Vaijayanti garland over the body with Viṣṇu, and garland of severed heads with Bhairava as ugra-śakti. Generally, ornaments are decorative devices and are meant to enhance the loveliness of the physical appearance of the icon. But ornaments may also be used to suggest ferocity and violence, as for instance the garland of severed heads on Bhairava, the garland of severed hands on Kālī, the wreath of intestinal passages on Narasiṃha, creeping serpents on the body of Śiva, or the crown of writhing snakes on Chaṇḍī.

Ornaments on the head are crowns (kirīṭa mukuṭa or mauli) of various kinds (See KIRITA), braids of hair coiffured into a crown-like or rolled-up shape (See KESA-BANDHA, and DHAMMILLA), and turbans (śīrastrāṇa). Ears are decorated with ear-pieces of several types (See KUNDALA). The neck-ornaments include clasps (kaṇṭhi), necklaces (hāra) made of nishka coins, torque, pearls with jewel pendants (See HARA). The torso is adorned with ornamental upavīta, cross-bands, breast-band (kuchabandha), stomach belt (udara-bandha) and waist-bands (kaṭi-sūtra) of several kinds (See CHHANNAVIRA, UDARA-BANDHA, UPAVITA). The shoulders have tassel-like ornaments called skandha-mālā (See SKANDHA-MALA). The arms are adorned by arm-lets (keyūra, aṅgada) in the upper arms and bracelets (valaya, kaṅkaṇa) on the wrists (See KANKANA, KEYURA).

The thighs are adorned by bound tassels hanging from the girdle (ūru-dāma). The feet are decorated by the tight-fitting anklets (pāda-valaya) and flowing jālaka.

## ĀBHICHĀRIKA-MŪRTI

One of the four types of Viṣṇu icons, according to the Vaiṣṇava-āgama (the other three being Yoga-, Bhoga-, and Vira-mūrtis). This type of icon is employed mainly for occult benefits and is said to abound in tamogūḇa. The iconic details include emaciated body, shrunken face, and eyes turned upward. The icon is meant to spell ruin for the enemies.



ABHICHARIKA-MURTI

The shrine to this form should be built only on inaccessible mountain-tops, or in the thick jungles. The icon requires to be installed in an inauspicious moment (vipan-muhūrta and chara-lagna); worship is to be conducted through magical formulae and practices of sorcery.

## ĀYATANA-PŪJA

'Āyatana' (also called 'ālaya') is 'abode', 'residence'; the expression is usually employed to signify temple as the abode of the iconic representation of God. Worship (pūjā) in a temple is distinguished from worship in the household on several counts: (1) it is conducted in public by a professional priest (archaka); (2) it is elaborate, and is conducted several times (three to six times) during twenty-four hours; (3) it involves periodic processions and festive ceremonies (utsava) during a year; (4) it is meant for the welfare of all the people in the region or realm, and for the prosperity of the kingdom; (5) it entails occasional sacrificial rituals (yāga), and when necessity arises the rites of purification of the temple-premises; (6) it does not require the 'prāṇa-pratishṭhā' ('endowment with life'), 'āvāhana' (formal invocation) of the deity in the icon prior to the worship) and 'visarjana' (dismissal of the deity after worship) (See ARCHANA, ĀLAYA-PUJA).

## ĀYUDHA

'Weapon', literally 'with which the fight is conducted' ('āyudhyate anena', from the root 'yudh', 'to fight'). It is classified into three types: (1) praharaṇa (with which one strikes, like sword or spear); (2) pāṇi-mukta (the weapons that are discharged or thrown from the hand, like discus); and (3) yantra-mukta (the weapons that are released mechanically, like arrow from the bow).

The iconic representation of gods and goddesses (in Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism) are made to carry weapons, to signify the role of these gods and goddesses as fighters against evil and defenders of the good. Legends are legion about the gods and

goddesses killing the asuras and rākshasas who were tormentors of the worlds of gods and human beings. In fact, the hardship to the good folk caused by the wicked giants and demons is the main reason for the appearance of gods and goddesses in various forms. The 'sportive forms' (līlā-mūrti) of Śiva, the 'descents' (avatāra) of Viṣṇu and the incarnations of Śakti are all to punish the wicked and reward the devout.

The supernumerary arms often seen in the icons of gods and goddesses are primarily designed to accommodate various weapons. The deities represented as violent (ugra-mūrti) and as engaged in the destruction of wicked demons (saṁhāra-mūrti) usually have eight, sixteen or thirty-two arms, most of them carrying different weapons of destruction. The pacific deities have usually two or four hands; and even if the hands are made to carry weapons, they are more often meant to distinguish and help identify the deity, like conch (śaṁkha) and discus (chakra) in the icons of Viṣṇu, trident (triśūla), and kettle-drum (ḍamaru) in those of Śiva, battle-axe (paraśu) or goad (aṅkuṣa) and lasso (pāśa) in those of Gaṇeśa, spear known as Śakti (vela) in that of Subrahmaṇya, the thunderbolt (vajra) in that of Indra, lasso (pāśa) in that of Varuṇa, bow and arrow (dhanur-bāṇa) in the hands of Rāma, and sword (khaḍga) in the hands of Kalki.

The hands of multi-armed deities are made to carry, besides the weapons of warfare, objects like lotus (kamala), blue lily (utpala), sugar-cane stalk (ikshu-daṇḍa), rosary (akṣha-mālā), book (pustaka), drinking bowl (pāna-pātra), ploughshare (hala), deer (mṛga), a severed head (śiras) and human skull (kapāla). These are also sometimes referred to (albeit erroneously) as āyudhas. The hands may also assume gestures of protection (abhaya) boon-bestowal (varada), or warning (tarjanī) (See MUDRA). The āyudhas may sometimes be accommodated within the gestures, as, for instance lotus or rosary in the gesture of protection (padmābhaya), or drinking bowl in the gesture of boon-bestowal.

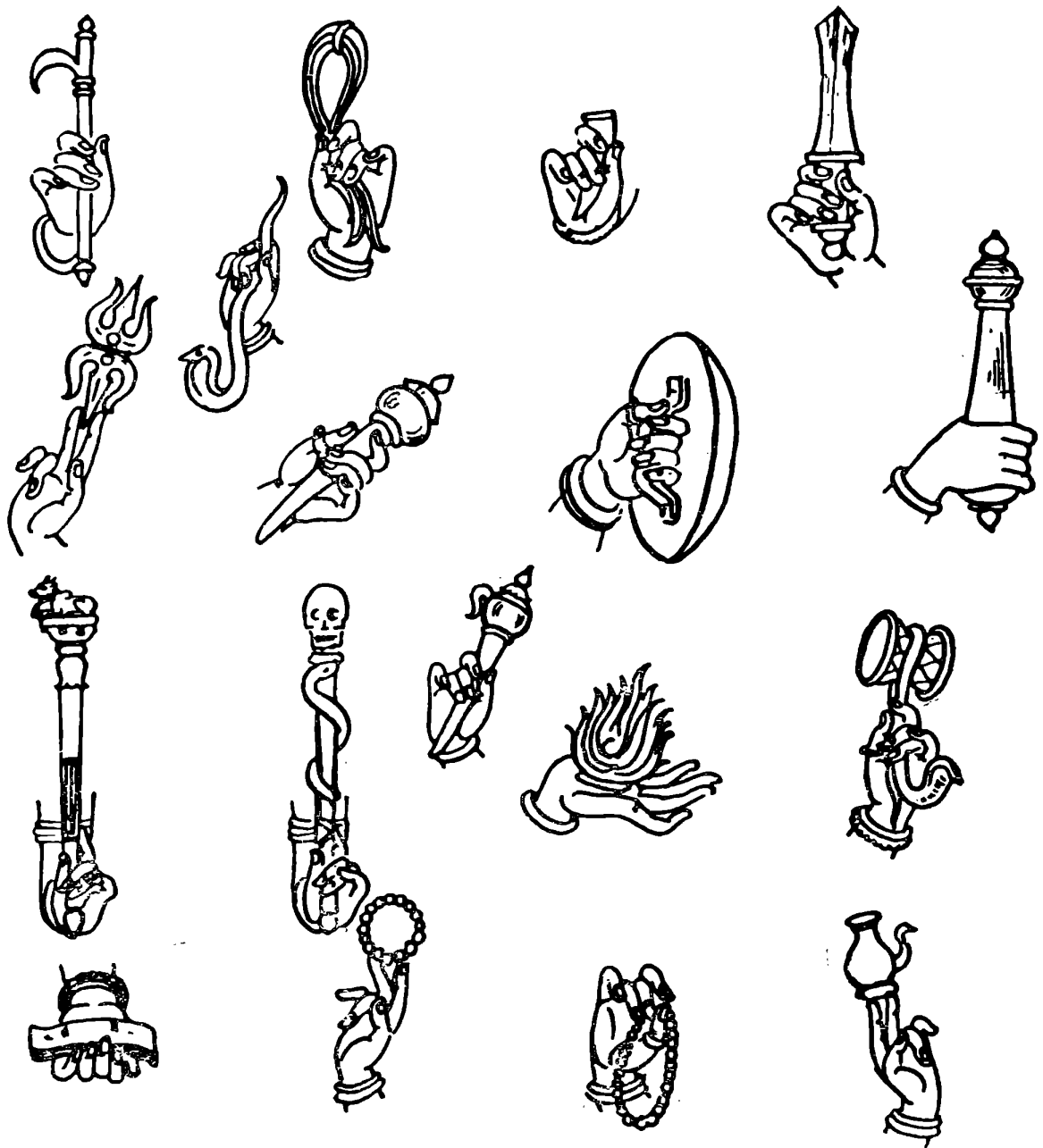
Apart from the legendary associations with regard to the weapons (e. g. the bow called Pināka in the hand of Śiva as the destroyer of the Tripura, the bow called Kodaṇḍa in the

hand of Rāma as the killer of Rāvaṇa, the spear in the hand of Durgā as the killer of Mahishāsurā, the butchering broad blade in the hand of Vīrabhadra who slaughtered Dakṣa, and the magical spear called Śakti used by Kārtikeya in killing Tārakāsura), weapons are symbolic of divine attributes. Trident (triśūla) represents the conjoint functioning of the three guṇas (sattva, rajas and tamas). The battle-axe (paraśu) is symbolic of the invincible power (śakti) of Godhead. The lasso (pāśa) is the divine will to project the phenomenal world and delude souls into it (māyā). The conch (śaṁkha) is the creative urge (sṛṣṭi), and discus (chakra) or fire (agni) or sword (khaḍga) represents dissolution of the world (saṁhāra). The sugar-cane-stalk (ikshu-daṇḍa) is the relish (rasa) which the individual soul experiences in the phenomenal world. Lotus (padma) represents bounty and plenitude (aiśvarya). Elephant-goad (aṅkuṣa) is the principle of restraint and regulation (niyamana). The symbolism is explained in the Āgama texts, especially those belonging to the Śaiva pursuation, like *Vātulāgama*.

Some weapons appear on the icons frequently in pairs, like bow (dhanus) in the left hand and arrow (śara) in the right; sword (khaḍga) in the right hand and shield (charma) in the left; elephant-goad (aṅkuṣa) in the right hand and lasso (pāśa) in the left; conch-shell (śaṁkha) in the left hand and discus (chakra) in the right.

Weapons appear in different shapes and kinds. An ordinary cudgel (daṇḍa), the mace or Indian club (gadā), the wooden pestle (musala), the iron club or javeline (tomara), and the magical wierd weapon known as khaṭvāṅga (the long bone of the human forearm crowned by a skull attached through its foramen) are variations of the same staff. The last mentioned weapon is seen in the fierce forms of Śiva, Chāmuṇḍā and Bhairava. The legend is that Śiva was required to carry this weapon as well as human skull (kapāla) and wander about for fourteen years as a vagrant in expiation for his sin of having severed a head of Brahmā (cf. Sāyaṇa's comments on *RgVeda* 10, 9, 1).

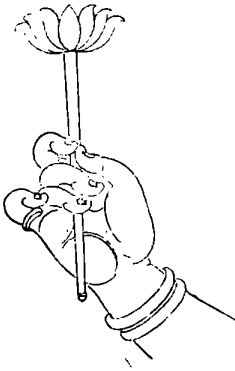
The pestle is held by Saṁkarshaṇa or Balārāma. Ploughshare (hala) is also used by



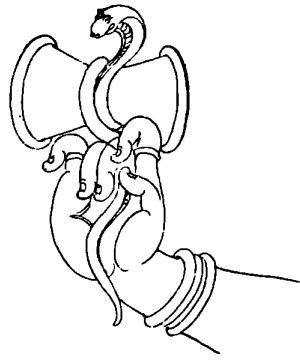
**AYUDHA**



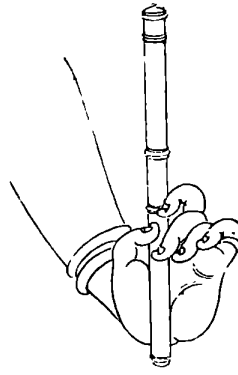
**AYUDHA**



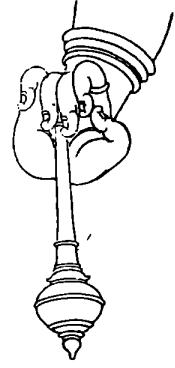
**Padma**



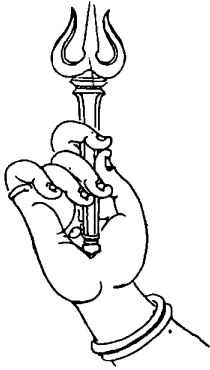
**Damaru**



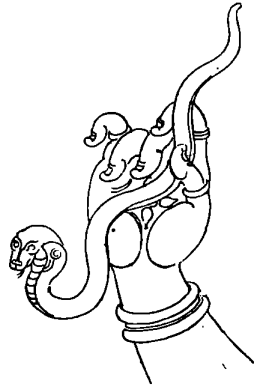
**Danda**



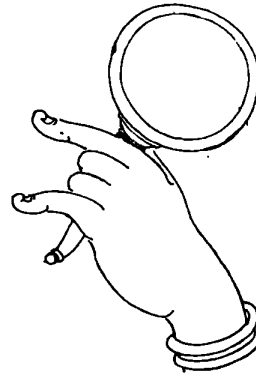
**Gada**



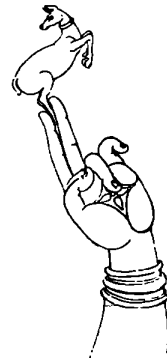
**Trisula**



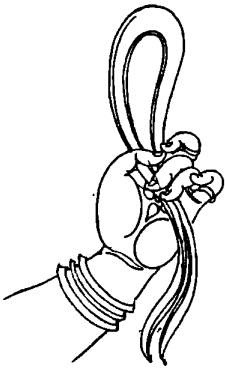
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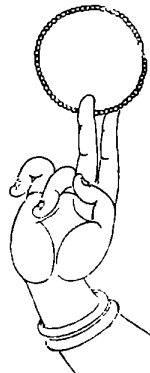
**Darpana**



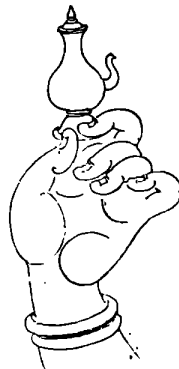
**Mrga**



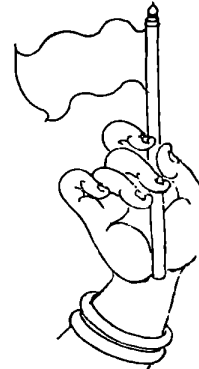
**Pasa**



**Aksha-mala**



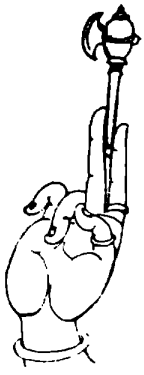
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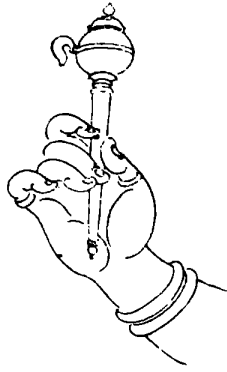
**Pataka**



**Khadga**



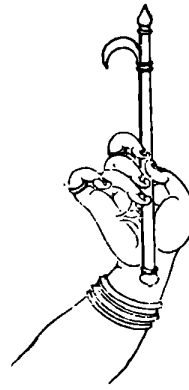
**Parasu**



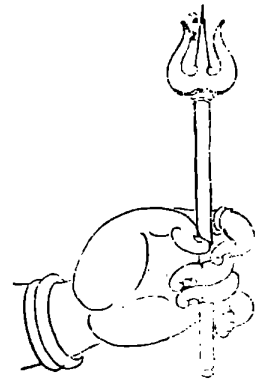
**Ankusa**



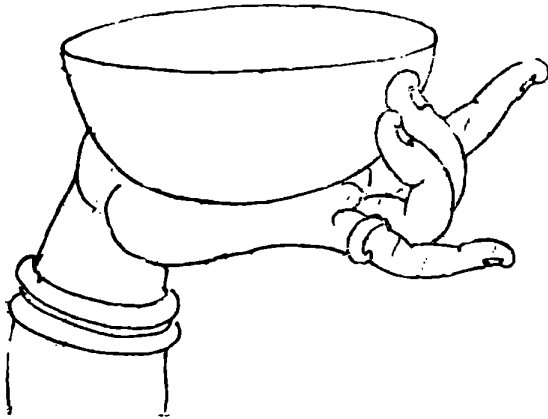
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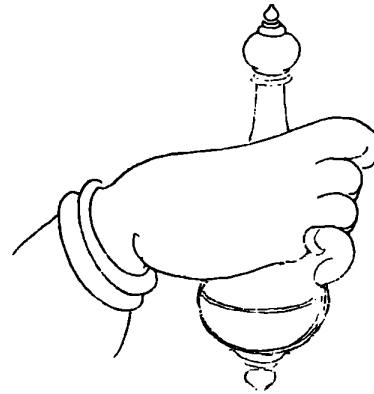
**Ankusa**



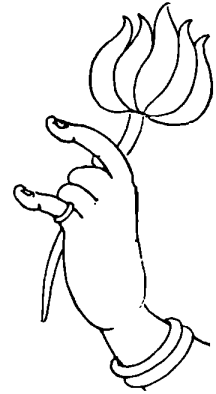
**Trisula**



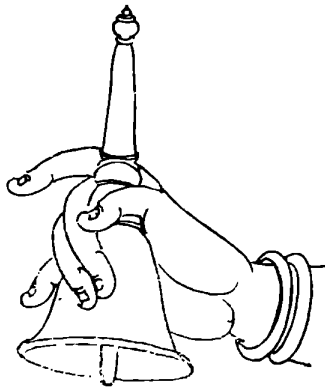
**Kapala**



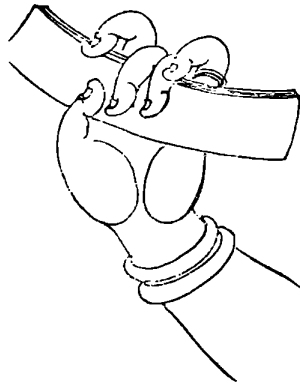
**Gada**



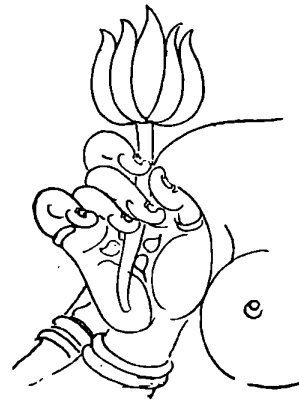
**Padma**



**Ganta**



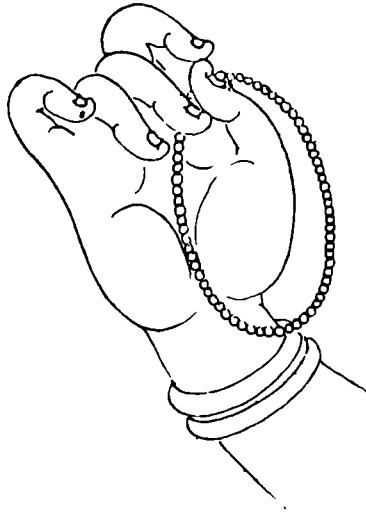
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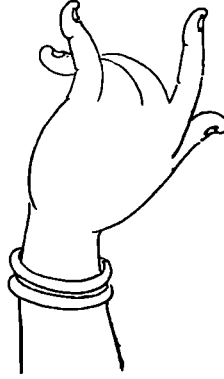
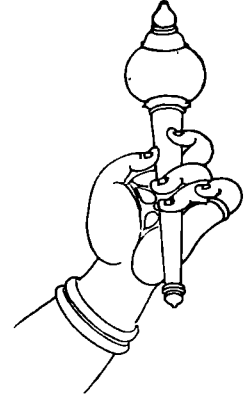
**Padma**



**Sakti**



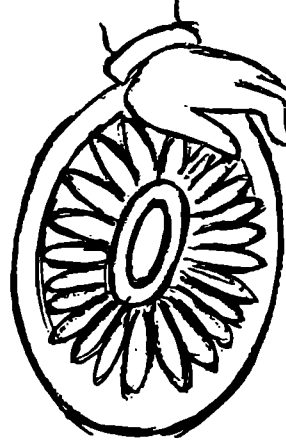
Aksha-mala



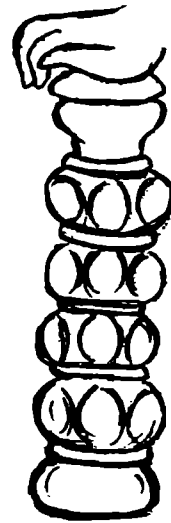
Tanka



Samkha



Chakra



Gada

Bala-rāma as a weapon. There are different kinds of spear (śūla), like trident (triśūla), śakti, thunderbolt (vajra), and three-edged spear (paṭṭīśa). The lasso (pāśa) to bind the opponent may occur with a variation, viz. the magical serpent-lasso (nāga-pāśa). The shield (charma) could be round in shape, or oblong ; it may be made of wood, metal or skin. The discus (chakra) may be stationary in aspect (when it is called sthiti-chakra), or ready to be despatched (prayoga-chakra). The battle-axe (paraśu) may occur in a smaller version in the hand of Śiva as 'khaṇḍa-paraśu'. The fire (agni) as a weapon of destruction in the hand

of Śiva may appear in a bowl held in the left upper hand, or directly as flames on the outstretched palm, as seen especially in the Naṭarāja icons. Another weapon peculiar to Śiva icons is the stone-mason's chisel (ṭaṅka).

*Aparājita-sūtra* (235, 10-13), ascribed to Viśvakarma, gives a list of thirty-six 'āyudhas': triśūla (trident), chhurikā (knife), khaḍga (sword), kheṭa (shield), khaṭvāṅga (skull mounted on the long bone of the fore-arm), dhanus (bow), arrow (bāṇa), noose (pāśa), goad (aṅkuśa), war-bell (ghaṭṭā), rishṭa (a tearing weapon), darpaṇa (mirror), daṇḍa (cudgel), śaṅkha (conch), chakra (discus),



gadā (mace), vajra (a powerful weapon with tridents on both ends), śakti (a magical spear), mudgara (mallet), bhushuṇḍī (a weapon of uncertain description), muśala (wooden pestle or club), paraśu (battle-axe), karrikā (cutting instrument), kapāla (human skull), śiras (severed head), sarpa (serpent), horn (śṛṅga), hala (ploughshare), kunta (lance), pustaka (book), aksha (rosary), kamaṇḍalu (water-pot), sūchi (sharp-pointed instrument or gesture of warning), padma (lotus), patra (pātra, liquor-bowl), yoga-mudrā (yogic gesture).

Besides the above, there are other weapons like paṭṭiśa (sharp-edged spear with three faces), taṇka (stone-mason's chisel), and agni (fire for burning), which have been mentioned above. The animals and birds held in the hand, symbolic of various details, are also counted among āyudhas ; like antelope (mṛga) in the hand of Śiva, cock (kukkuṭa) in the hand of Subrahmaṇya and some devī-forms, mangoose (nakuli) in the hand of some forms of Kubera and other yakshas, and snake (sarpa) in the hand of Bhairava and some Devī-forms.

Musical instruments also figure among āyudhas : small kettle-drum (ḍamaru), flute (veṇu), lute (vīṇā), drum (bheri) another percussion instrument called ḍholak, and pair of metal cymbals (karatāla). Pot of water (kumbha), small pitcher (kuṇḍikā), some fruit (like citron, mātuluṅga), sweet-cake (modaka), pen (lekhanī), scissors (kartari) and banner (patāka, dhvaja) are also seen in the hands of some icons.

The āyudhas are grouped under three heads, (1) sāttvika (like water-vessel, rosary, lotus, book and sacrificial ladle) ; (2) rājasika (all musical instruments, including conch and bell) ; and (3) tāmasika (all weapons of destruction, stone-mason's chisel, scissors, fire, snake and animals or birds held in the hand).

## ĀYUDHA-PURUSHA

Meaning 'Personified weapon', (also called 'astra-mūrti') it is the human representation of the weapons of warfare as aiding the deity in his fight against evil. It suggests that the weapons in the hands of a god or goddess are in fact manifestations of divine powers. The



Gada-devi



Gada-devi



Chakra-purusha

Śaiva āgama thinks of an aspect of divinity known as 'sāṅga', which is constituted of the divine qualities manifesting themselves as weapons. The Pāñcharātra system also has a similar notion and prescribes the worship of weapons in the hands of Viṣṇu as distinct, although subordinate, divinities.

There is an enumeration of ten āyudhas in *Uttara-Kāṁikāgama* and *Pūrva-Kāṁikāgama* (14th Paṭala), each of which is prescribed to be visualized as a person with one face, two eyes, two arms held in the gesture of añjali (See ANJALI), wearing the headgear known as karaṇḍa-makuṭa and decorated with various ornaments. These personified weapons are required to be made in eight-tālamāna measure (See ASHTA-TALA). The ten weapons to be personified thus are thunderbolt (vajra), spear known as Śakti, staff (daṇḍa), sword (khaḍga), lasso (pāśa), elephant-goat (aṅkuśa), mace (gadā), trident (triśūla), lotus (padma), and discus (chakra). Of them, two are feminine (Śakti and mace), two are neuter (lasso and lotus), and the rest are masculine. The persons must be represented as carrying their respective weapons on their heads ('teshām mūrdhni'), or as attached to their crowns ('mukūṭopari'), or as clutched by both their hands ('hastayor antare'), or held in the right hand ('vāmetara-kare').



CHAKRA-PURUSHA (Stone, Calcutta Museum)

*Vishṇu-dharmottara* has a more elaborate description of the personified weapons. According to this text, the weapon called Śakti is feminine, red-complexioned, and riding on a wolf ('vṛkāśrita'). The staff (daṇḍa) is masculine, black-complexioned (kṛṣṇa), with red eyes and terrible appearance (ghora). The sword (khaḍga) is masculine, blue-black in complexion (śyāma) and with angry eyes (krুদ্ধa-lochana). The lasso (pāśa) has a serpent's body with seven hoods (sapta-phāṇa), and with a tail (puccha). The mace (gadā) is a damsel, yellow in body-colour and with well-formed breasts and thighs. The trident (triśūla) is masculine, with blue-black body and divine and resplendent lustre. The bow (dhanus) is feminine, with a body of the colour of red lotus, and carrying on her head the strung bow (mūrdhni pūrta chāpa-bhṛt'). The arrow (śara) is masculine, red-complexioned and with lustrous eyes. The missile (hetī), however, is feminine. The conch-shell (śaṅkha), which is blown for battle-cry, is a man, with lustrous white as body-colour and with beautiful eyes. The war-flag (dhvaja) is a strong man, yellow-complexioned and with wide open mouth. According to this text, the weapons must be

represented as resting on the shoulders of the weapon-person ('skandha-lagnam'), held by the two hands.

The most important and picturesque among the weapon-persons in the Śaiva iconography is the 'Pāśupatāstra' (which was presented by Śiva to Arjuna, See ARJUNA). This is pictured as having four faces, and three eyes on each face. It has four arms, carrying the weapon known as Śakti, conch-shell (śaṅkha), sword (khaḍga) and mallet (mudgara). It is seated in the lotus posture (padmāsana). The faces must be terrible-looking, with fangs in the mouth, hair standing on end and mustacheoed.

However, the iconic representation of personified weapons is most often illustrated by the two weapons of Viṣṇu the masculine discus (Chakra-purusha or Sudarśana) and the feminine mace (Gadā-devī or Kaumodakī). Both of them are stylized, and occur frequently in the Gupta sculptures in North India. Viṣṇu is seen in these sculptures as placing his hands upon these two attendant-divinities, who are represented as two-armed and in various postures. Gadādevī is usually standing, while the Chakra-purusha is sometimes

seen dancing. In the south, Gadā-devī is seldom seen and Chakra-purusha is represented independently and never as a weapon carried by Vishnu. Chakra-purusha is stylized as Sudarśana (See SUDARSANA), which in temples of Śrī-vaishṇava persuasion is used as a bali-bera (See BALI-BERA), even as in the Śaiva temples Astra-deva (trident personified) is used.

## ĀRĀDHANĀ

Worship or adoration of, and service to, the deity in the temple or in the household. The expression signifies the desire and attempt to please the divinity by offering various services (upachāra) accompanied by eulogy (stotra) (See ARCHANA and UPACHARA).

## ĀRYĀ

Name of Durgā. A hymn to Durgā in *Harivaṃśa*, 3, 3 (supplement to *Mahābhārata*) has been called 'Āryā-stava'. Āryā is here identified as the daughter of Yaśodā and Nandagopa, who were foster-parents of Kṛṣṇa ('Yaśodā-garḍbha-sambhūtām'; 'Nanda-gopakule jātām'). She is described as worshipped by several tribes such as the Śabarās, Barbaras and Pulindas. She is also called Kauśikī, which suggests her association with another wild tribe (See DURGA).

## ĀRYA-JĀṄGULĪ

One of the four deities attending upon Mahāśrī-Tārā (others being Eka-jaṭā, Aśoka-kāntā and Mahāmāyūrī), a Mahāyāna goddess well-known in Tibet. She is green in body-colour, and carries a serpent in her right hand and the gesture of boon-bestowal (varada) in her left.

## ĀRYA-TĀRĀ

A Mahāyāna goddess, celebrated in Nepal, Tibet and China, who is identified with Vaśya-

Tārā. Her body-colour is said to be green. She is two-armed and carries in her right hand the gesture of boon-bestowal (varada) and blue lotus (utpala) flower in her left hand. She is an emanation of the dhyāni-buddha, Amogha-siddhi, a representation of whom she carries on her crown.



ĀRYA-TĀRĀ (copper gilt from Nepal)

## ĀRYA-MAÑJUŚRĪ

An important deity in the Mahāyāna pantheon, and popular in Tibet, Nepal, China and Japan. Two texts are especially devoted to his cult: *Ārya-mañjuśrī-mūla-kalpa* and *Svayambhū-purāṇa*. His worship is said to confer on the devotee intellectual eminence and eloquence. His iconographic representations are distinguished by the sword which he carries in his right hand and by the book (*Prajñāpāramitā*) in his left hand. (See MANJUSRI)



ARYA-MANJUSRI (Bronze from Tobo monastery in Spiti valley in upper Himalayas)

## ĀLAYA

Meaning 'abode', 'residence', in its extended sense the word refers to temple, as the abode of the iconic representation of Godhead (devālaya). There are textual prescriptions regarding where and how the temples are to be raised, consecrated and maintained. There is also information in the texts about the different types of temples, and various parts of the temple-complex.

It is said that during the first age called Kṛta (the age of perfect virtue) there were no temples, for the gods appeared in their own normal forms to the human beings and conferred benefits directly. In the second age when virtue diminished in its quality and effect, Tretā, the gods appeared in their own normal forms as well as iconic forms. But there were still no temples, for pious folk

installed iconic forms in their own homes and worshipped them ('gṛhe pratishṭhā'). In the third age, Dvāpara, when virtue and vice almost vied with each other, the sages installed iconic forms in jungles and built shrines over them for the benefit of the good folk ('aranyeshu ṛshibhiḥ'). In the final (and present) age, when vice predominates over virtue, Kali, there is great need for temples in towns and villages for people to worship, for it is only the divine presence in iconic forms that confers benefits during this period.

A shrine is broadly divided into two kinds: (1) 'svārtha' or private, inside the household to bring benefit to the members of the household ('svagṛhe sthāpito devah'); and (2) 'parārtha' or public, built on the top of a mountain or within the township ('parvatāgre vā nagare vā pi') (*Aniruddha-saṃhitā*, 12, 12-18). The former is likened to a lamp in the house (gṛha-dīpa) while the latter is like the light from the Sun (Sūryajyoti). The latter is the temple, and it is of five types: (1) 'svayam-vyakta' (self-manifest, Godhead appearing in an iconic form and enshrining himself in a temple, for the blessing of humanity, 'bhaktānukampayā devah yasmin āvirbhavet svayam'); (2) 'daivika' (iconic forms installed by gods and shrines built over them by the celestial architect Viśvakarmā); (3) 'ārsha' (shrines built by sages of yore); (4) 'paurāṇa' (the temples built and celebrated during the age of the purāṇas, each form of Godhead having a legend associated with it); and (5) 'mānusha' (temples built by human kings, chieftains and devotees, and consecrated by priests) (cf. *Śrī-praśna-saṃhitā*, 5, 3-4 and *Vishṇu-tantra*, 34, 4-6).

There is a further classification of temples into two broad types: (1) 'siddhāyatana', the temples built in places like mountain-top ('parvata-mūrdhani'), river-bed ('nadi-tīre'), river-meet ('saṅgame'), sea-shore (samudra-tīre'), forest ('kāṇane') and holy spot ('tīrthe'), by sages engaged in penance, and worshipped by adepts (siddhas); and (2) 'asiddhāyatana', temples built by human kings and devotees in villages and towns ('grāma-nagarāḍau') and worshipped by common folk. The former is obviously most meritorious and of universal benefit ('sarva-śānti-kari') whereas the latter is of restricted value ('grāmādi-sthiti-hetukam')

and dependent upon several factors like the manner in which consecration has been done, the type of worship that is being conducted, the personal quality of the priests and the austerity of the premises that has been preserved (cf. *Pādma-saṃhitā*, *kriyā-pāda*, 1, 12-14 and *Śrī-praśna-saṃhitā*, 5, 34).

The texts, however, provide that temples may also be built in towns ('nagare'), villages ('grāme'), residential quarters ('jana-vāse'), or wherever convenient ('sarvatrayatanam śastam') (cf. *Nārāyaṇa-saṃhitā*, 14), although some texts count temples built on mountains as among the best ('uttamam parvatāgreshu'), those built in the depths of the forests as of midling merit ('madhyamam vana-rājishu'), those raised on banks of river inferior ('adhamam tu nadī-tīre'), and those built within the villages worst ('grāmeshu adhamā-dhamam') (cf. *Śilpa-saṃgraha*, 10). There is also a saying that one should not live even for a day in a town or village which is devoid of temples (*Suprabhedāgama*, 23, 73). Temples in the Kali age are said to be the only means of salvation.

Temples in towns and villages are either 'svatantra' (independent) or 'para-tantra' (dependent). According to *Pārameśvara-saṃhitā* (19, 132, ff), when the temple is built even before the township develops, it is 'independent', and it is superior in nature. If, on the contrary, the temple is constructed when there is already a township, the temple is 'dependent', and inferior. Further, to build a temple in a town or village, the permission of the ruler of the realm is indispensable ('anu-jñām prāpya nṛpateḥ kuryāt'), and the temple is dependent on this count. To build a temple on a hillock or forest, or to instal an icon for worship at home no such permission is needed; it is independent in this sense.

Temples are built in stone (śilā), bricks (iṣṭikā) wood (dāru) or mud (mṛt). The texts like *Kāpīñjala-saṃhitā* (10, 3-4), *Viśvā-mitra-saṃhitā* (31, 4) and *Śrī-praśna-saṃhitā* (9, 3-4) take the above types of temples as progressively inferior. Temples which are built in only one of the above materials ('eka-dravya') is called 'pure' (śuddha); if two materials are employed, it is 'mixed' (miśra); if three or more are employed it is 'complex' (saṅkīrṇa). If the temple from its foundation

(homa or ādhāra-śilā) to the pinnacle (stūpi), is built entirely either in stone or in bricks, the temple is regarded as 'masculine' (pumān). If both stone and bricks are employed (viz. the bottom portion in stone and the superstructure in bricks), the temple is 'feminine' (aṅganā). If the temple is built by a combination of wood and bricks, it is 'neuter' (shaṇḍa) (cf. *Kaśyapa-śilpa*, 28, 50-51). Alternately some texts (like *Vishvakṣena-saṃhitā*, 34) regard the temple built entirely of wood as 'feminine', and the temple where all three materials are employed as 'neuter'.

There is another classification made according to one or more materials used for the entire construction, from foundation (adhi-śṭhāna) to finial (stūpi). If but one material is used (whatever), the temple belongs to the 'sañchita' type; if however a combination of two materials is used, then it is 'asañchita'. If three materials are used, it is 'upasañchita'; and if more than three are used, it is 'vyāmiśra'.

It is usual for temples to be classified according to styles prevalent in different regions. For instance, temples which are four-sided (chaturasra) are called 'nāgara', suggesting probably that it was the style popular in the northern regions of the country; the temples which are octagonal (aṣṭaśra) or hexagonal (ṣaḍaśra) in shape are 'drāviḍa', meaning the style prevalent in the southern parts of the country; and the temples which are circular in shape (vṛtta) are 'vesara', suggesting the popularity of this style in the central regions. The texts, however, say that it is the shape of the superstructure called vimāna over the sanctum (consisting of kaṇṭha, śikhara and stūpi) that is here taken into account (*Isāna-Śiva-guru-deva-paddhati*, 'śikharasya bhedenā sarveśhām bhedam uddiśet').

Texts like *Kāmikāgama* (49, 2) mention besides these three styles, three more: 'sārva-deśika' (universal), 'kāliṅga' (prevalent in the Kāliṅga region) and Varāṭa' (prevalent in the Varāṭa region). Other texts (like *Śrī-Vishṇu-tantra*) add other three types (the exact significance of which however is uncertain): 'mandira', 'bhavana' and 'yoga'.

Many texts are content with enumerating four styles: circular (vṛtta), squarish (chaturasra), oblong (vṛttāyata) and rectangular

(chaturasrāyata) (cf. *Nāradya-saṁhitā*, 14, 88). The benefits for the builder or patron of these styles of temples are said to be the obtainment of all good things in life (sarvam) for the first, and for others fulfilment of desires (vāñchhitam), salvation (moksham), and peace and nourishment (śāntim pushtim cha) respectively.

*Śilpa-ratna* (9, 9-15) prescribes that temple to Viṣṇu must be built so that it looks upon the village from the eastern or western direction. Śiva temple must be built to the north-east of the village, Devī temple to the north-west, Kārtikeya temple to the north, Vināyaka temple to the south-west. However, a temple to any deity may be built in the central area of the village or township. The shrine to Brahmā must always be in this area. Temples for fierce deities (like Nṛsimha, Vīrabhadra, Virāñjaneya, and Kālī) must always face away from the village ('ugrāḥ parāṅg-mukhā śastā') while those for the benevolent deities (like Viṣṇu, Lakshmī, Gaṇeśa, Skanda and Sarasvatī) must open towards the village ('saumyās tu sammukhāh').

Before a temple is built, there are various ritualistic procedures to be gone through like cleansing the earth (bhūmi-śodhana), worship of the ground-divinities (vāstu-pūjā), making of food-offerings (bali-dāna), fire-rite (homa), laying of the first brick (ishṭikā-nyāsa), womb-consecration (garbha-nyāsa) and so on. Unless these rituals are gone through, the icon installed within the temple built by human donors will fail to accommodate divine presence. However, these rituals are unnecessary for temples built and consecrated by divine beings or sages of great austerity.

The expression temple ('ālaya') strictly means the sanctum (garbha-gṛha), and it is only in its extended sense does it refer to the structures around the sanctum. *Viṣṇu-tantra* (50) says that the temple is God's body and the icon inside the sanctum is the soul ('mad-geham śarīram syāt pratimā jivām uchyate'). There is an elaborate symbolism identifying the temple with the body, for it is said that the wise will worship in the temple with the understanding that the temple indeed is a person ('prāsādam puruṣam matvā pūjayet', *Śilpa-ratna*, 16, 114). Texts like *Vātulāgama*, *Īśvara-saṁhitā* (3, 115), and *Śilpa-ratna* (16,

114-123) describe that the sanctum is the head of the divine person; the superstructure on the sanctum (śikhara) is the hair on the head done into a crown; the porch in front of the sanctum (śuka-nāsī or ardha-maṇḍapa) is the nose; the circumambulatory path around the sanctum (antarāla) is the neck; the assembly hall in front of the sanctum (maṇḍapa) is the body; the compound wall (prākāra) stands for the hands; and the entrance-tower (gopura) is like the feet.

## ALIṄGANA-MŪRTI

A form of Śiva iconically represented, and a variation of the form known as Umā-sahita "accompanied by his consort Pārvatī". Sometimes, it is taken as one of the three varieties of Chandraśekhara (wearer of the crescent moon) (the other two being Kevāla or "alone", and Umā-sahita or "along with Pārvatī"). In Umā-sahita, Śiva and Pārvatī stand apart, on two different pedestals (lotus-seats or padma-pītha), and each is oriented to the front. But in Āliṅgana, Śiva is seen in the act of embracing Pārvatī, who is standing to his left; Śiva and Pārvatī are oriented towards each other. Śiva holds Pārvatī in embrace by placing one of his left hands on the left shoulder of Pārvatī or just above her waist. Pārvatī likewise holds Śiva in embrace by putting her right hand round him. There are also sculptures in which Pārvatī does not hold Śiva in embrace.

Śiva in this form has four arms, and carries in his upper hands battle-axe (paraśu) and antelope (mṛga) or kettle-drum (ḍamaru) in the right and left hands respectively. His normal right hand will be in the gesture of protection (abhaya), sometimes with rosary (akṣhamālā) tucked in, while the left arm goes round Pārvatī in embrace. Pārvatī is two-armed. When her right arm goes round Śiva's body the left one will carry a red-lotus (padma). But when she is not embracing Śiva, the right hand will hold the lotus and the left will be in a free dangling manner (dolā-hasta), or placed on the thigh below the waist (kaṭyavalambita).

Both Śiva and Pārvatī are usually shown in the three-bend stance (See TRIBHANGA). Sometimes, however, Pārvatī alone will be in the three-bend stance, Śiva being in balanced



ALINGANA MURTI (Wood, Basava temple, Bangalore)



ALINGANA MURTI (Stone Anantesvara Temple, Chidambaram)



standing posture (*sama-bhaṅga*). In rare sculptural representations, the two offsprings of Śiva and Pārvatī, viz. Gaṇapati and Kārtikeya, are also shown at the sides in miniature size.

According to some texts (like *Śrī-tattva-nidhi*), Śiva's body-complexion is reddish (like coral, *pravāṇa*), and Pārvatī's blue-black (*śyāma*). The Devī (*i.e.* Pārvatī) should be three-eyed (*trinetra*), should stand with the right leg straight and planted firmly, while the left is slightly bent (*kuñchita*), and carry a blue-lotus flower (*nilotpala*) in her right hand.

(See SIVA, UMA-SAHITA, CHANDRASEKHARA)

## ĀLĪḌHA

The typical posture assumed by the archer or hunter (*'dhanvinām'*) who has sighted his prey and is ready to shoot. The bow is held firmly with the right hand; and the arrow held in the left-hand is harnessed to the bow. Corresponding to this posture of the upper body, the lower body will be in the *'ālīḍha'* posture: the right leg will be put forward, stretched out (*prasāra*) and the left leg will be slightly bent (*saṅkocha*). According to the lexicon *Chīntāmaṇi*, the front (*viz.* right) thigh is bent (*'namita pūrva-jāṅghā*), the left is stretched out (*'paśchimā praguṇā bhavet'*), and the torso is twisted (*'asamo madhya-kāyah'*) (*cf.* *Śabda-kalpa-druma*).

Among iconic representations, Manmatha (the god of love), his tāntrik variation Vajrānaṅgā, Tripurārī (Śiva as the fighter against Tripura), Durgā fighting with Mahishāsura, Kurukullā, and the eight-armed Marīchi (of Vajrayāna) are illustrations of this posture.

## ĀVARAṆA

Enclosure around the sanctum (*garbha-grha*). While the main purpose is to provide space for circumambulating the sanctum, the enclosure is also meant to accommodate the attendant-divinities, the retinue-deities (See *PARIVARA-DEVATA*) and minor gods and goddesses, the main iconic form of Godhead who receives all worship being located inside the sanctum. Viṣṇu and Śiva are supposed

to have their own characteristic attendant-divinities, who must also be represented. The enclosures are also meant to provide place for different worship sequences (*karmārchā*) like bathing (*snapana*), putting the processional deity to bed (*śayana*), processions (*utsava*), fire-rituals (*homa*) and so on. Other particulars of the temple organization like kitchen, store-room, rooms where the vehicles for processions are kept, library, office etc. are accommodated in the enclosures.

In the Viṣṇu temples, for instance, seven enclosures are regarded as the best (*uttamottama*). A temple which has four enclosures is regarded as midling (*madhyama*), and the temple with only one enclosure is considered the worst (*adhamādhama*). The hierarchy of the temples based on the number of enclosures is justified from the ideology that worship of the main icon with the full compliment of all the attendant divinities is most meritorious.

In the Vaiṣṇava outlook, for instance, even the temple with a single enclosure should house (in the enclosure) Viṣṇu's five attendant-divinities (*pañcha-parivāra*) viz. Viṣṇvakṣena, Garuḍa, Śrī-bhūta, Nyaksha and Mahābhūta (or Bhūta-pīṭha). A variant list omits Nyaksha and Mahābhūta, and has instead Chakra and Śaṁkha.

This however is the worst type of temple (*adhamādhama*). If in the single enclosure, there are, besides these five, the guardians of the temple (*vimāna-pāla*) and the guardians of the realms (or quarters, *lokapāla*), then the temple is slightly better (*adhama-madhyama*). If there is an additional enclosure, which accommodates also the guardian of fire offerings (*havīrakshaka*), the keeper of flower (*pushpa-rakshaka*) and keeper of food-offerings (*bali-rakshaka*), the temple is best among the inferior variety (*adhamottama*).

The midling variety of temples too have three grades: those with three enclosures accommodating all the above mentioned deities spread out (*madhyamādhama*), those with four enclosures, accommodating all the above-mentioned deities together with cabins for processional icons (*madhyama-madhyama*); and those with four enclosures accommodating not only the aforesaid divinities but other goddesses like the 'seven mothers' (See

SAPTA-MATRKA), and minor goddesses like Kūhū, and Jayā (madhyamottama).

The temples with five enclosures is the most inferior among the best variety of temples (uttamādhama); those with six midling in this group (uttama-madhyama); and those with seven the most superior (uttamottama). In the superior variety, the processional icons and the entire assembly of all the attendant divinities, retinue-deities and minor gods and goddesses are present in separate shrines, receiving due worship, and in the most superior, there are places for ceremonial worship (karmārchā) in the second or third enclosure surrounding the sanctum, where various processional icons (See UTSAVA-BERA) are housed.

The first or second enclosure will have a 'room for sleep' (śayyā-deśa) for the processional icon, in the eastern or south-eastern quarter, guarded by Kaumodakī (personified mace). In one of the first two enclosures a place is set apart for storing water for ceremonial bath (snapana) for the processional icon, between the eastern and north-eastern directions, facing the sanctum. Close by will be the place where the icon's garments are washed and dried; flowers for the garlands decorating the icons will also be stored here. The former operation is said to be supervised by Tvashṭā and the latter by Pushpa-rakshaka.

The temple-kitchen (pāka-śālā) with four apartments must be located in the second or third enclosure, in the south-eastern quarter facing the sanctum; and the ovens of the kitchen are guarded by Havī-rakshaka, while the raw grains like rice etc. are guarded by Chāmuṇḍā. In the southern quarter of the same enclosure must be the place for offering fire-oblations and performing fire-rituals (havissthāna) with a structure for housing the daily fire (nityāgnikuṇḍa); the area is guarded by Bali-rakshaka.

## ĀSANA

The word 'āsana' (derived from the root 'ās', "to sit") has two meanings in the context of iconography: (1) posture of sitting, a manner of keeping hands and legs (kara-charaṇādi-samsthāna-viśeṣa), and (2) seat, on which one sits (upaveśanādhāra).

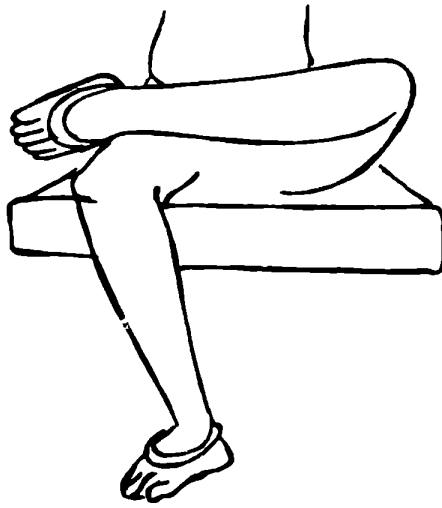
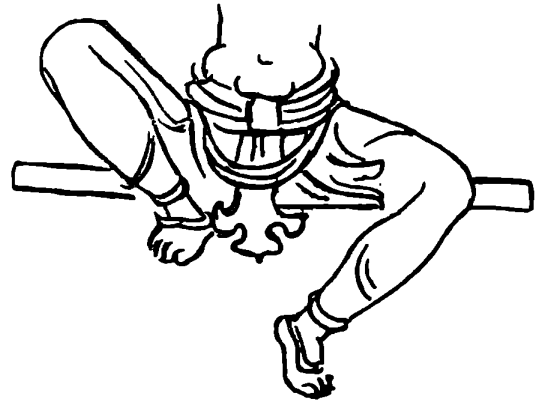
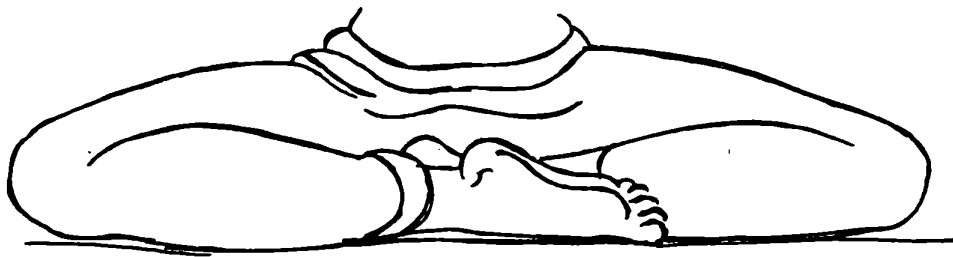
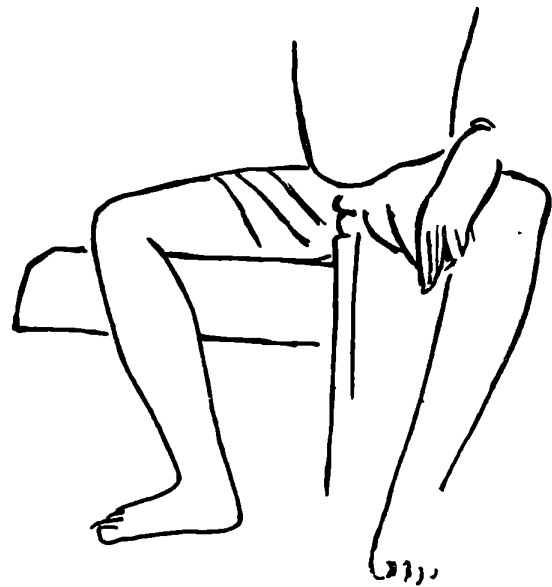
In the first sense, iconography has borrowed from the Yoga and tāntrik texts which prescribe 'āsana' as one of the eight limbs. Books on Haṭha-yoga especially deal with many kinds of āsanās, for concentration of mind as well as keeping the body in health and shape. There are as many as 108 āsanās which are mentioned and described. A Tāntrik work (*Nirukta-tantra*) says that there are as many āsanās as there are living beings on earth, viz. eighty-four lakhs. However, important among the āsanās for which there are descriptions are five, according to *Tantra-sāra* (quoted in *Śabda-kalpa-druma*): Padmāsana, Svastikāsana, Bhadrāsana, Vajrāsana and Virāsana. *Ahīrbudhnyā-saṁhitā* (30) omits Vajrāsana and adds seven: Chakra, Kūrma, Mayūra, Kaikkūṭa, Siṁha, Mukta and Gomukha. It can be seen that most of these additional āsanās are modelled after animal stances; tortoise, peacock, cock, lion and cow's head.

(i) Padmāsana resembles a full-blown lotus flower: while squatting, the legs are crossed so that the feet rest on the thighs, and the big toes of the feet are held by the hands, arms crossed behind the body. In iconography, only the position of the legs is attended to. There is a variation in this posture known as 'ardha-padmāsana' (half-lotus), when only one of the legs (usually the right) rests on the thigh (left), and the other leg is tucked underneath. This is the most popular sitting posture of the gods or goddesses represented as icons in stone or bronze.

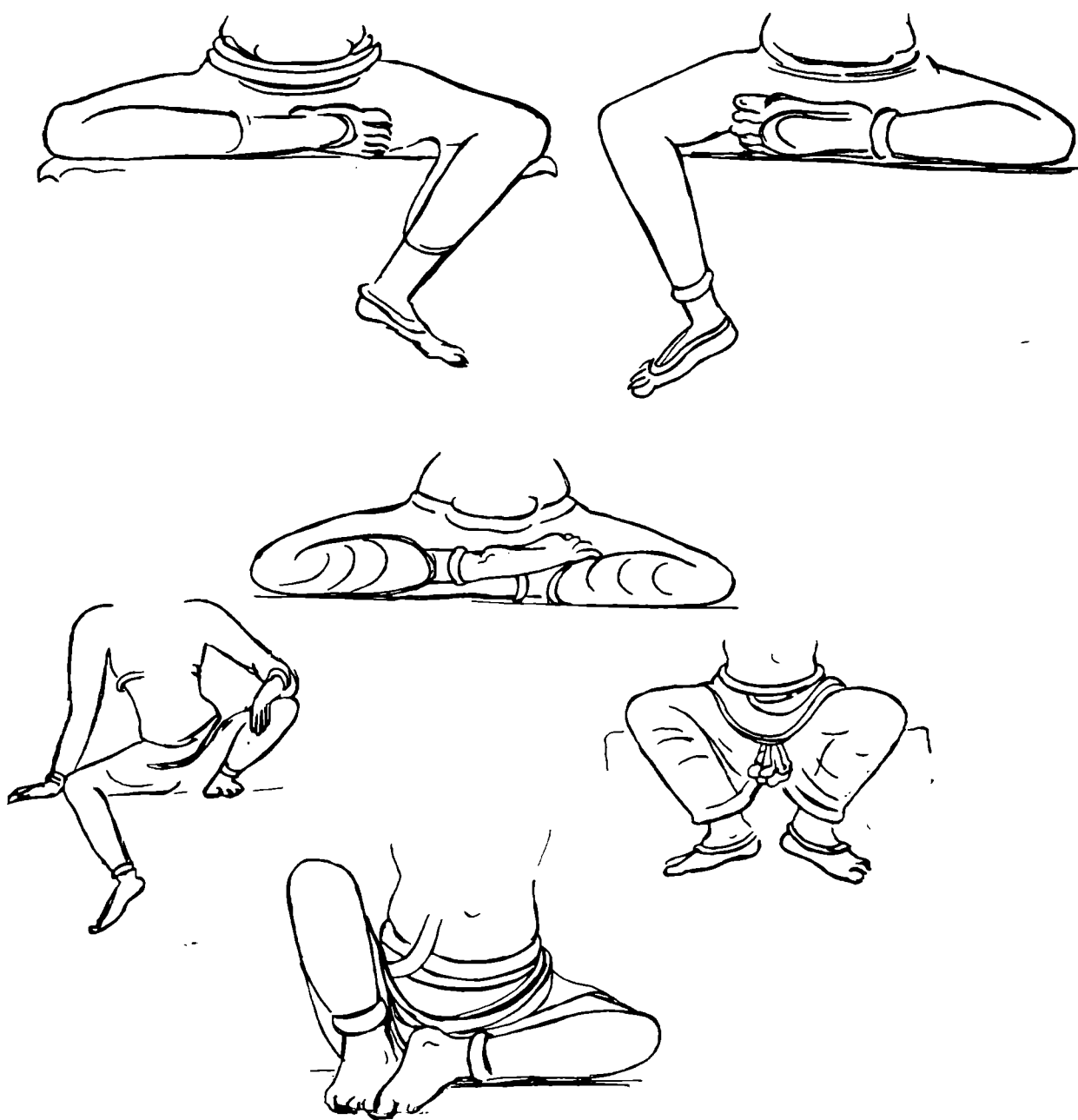
(ii) Svastikāsana is the posture resembling the Svastika design, where, while squatting, the two thighs are raised and crossed so that the knees are on the same level and the feet are stretched out to make crossed lines. The icons of Śiva like Dakṣiṇāmūrti are sometimes shown in this posture. And often, there is a yoga-paṭṭa (cloth-band) going round the thighs to keep the posture steady. This is also known as yogāsana.

(iii) Bhadrāsana is the steady and auspicious posture with the ankles of the legs held firm and placed on either side of the scrotum, the heels tucked under the testes and the big toes of the feet held by the hands.

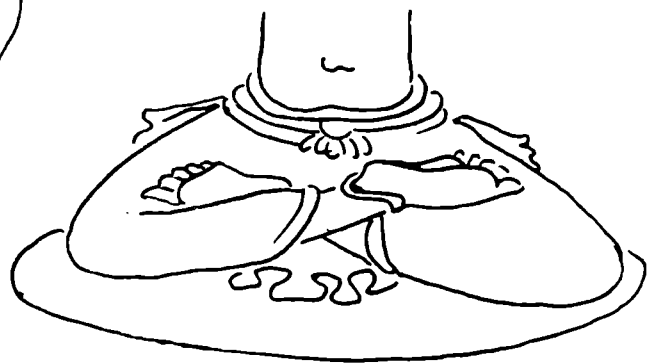
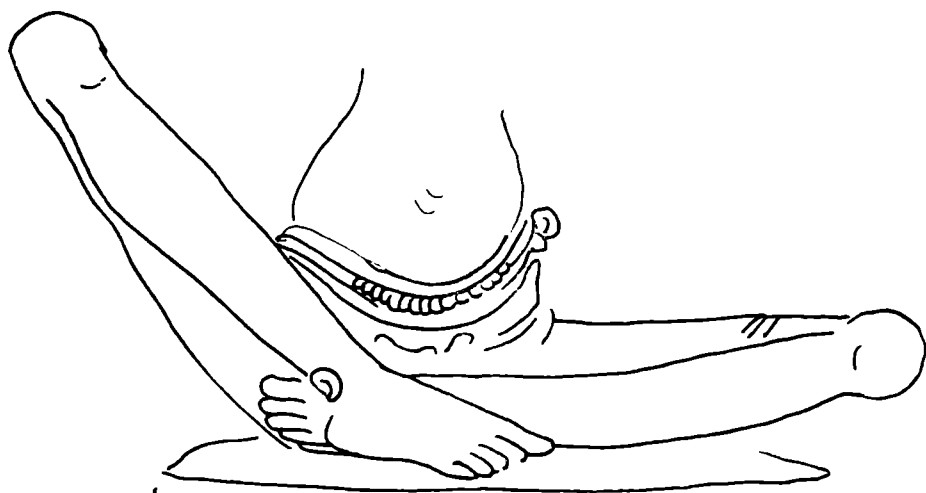
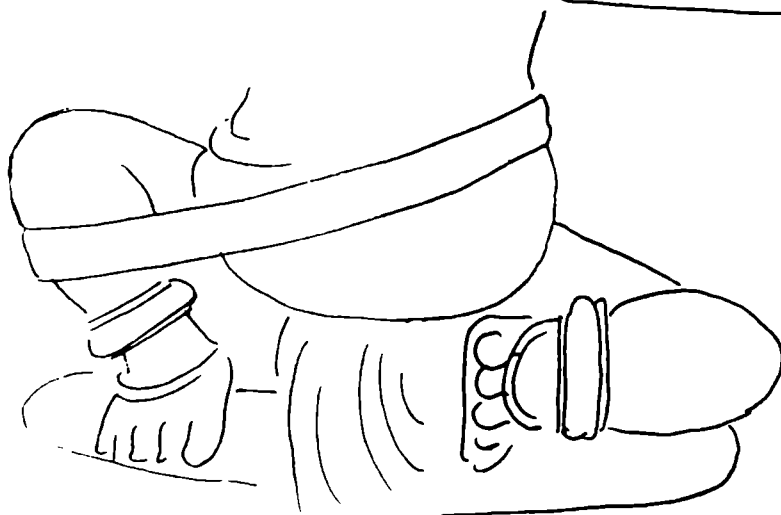
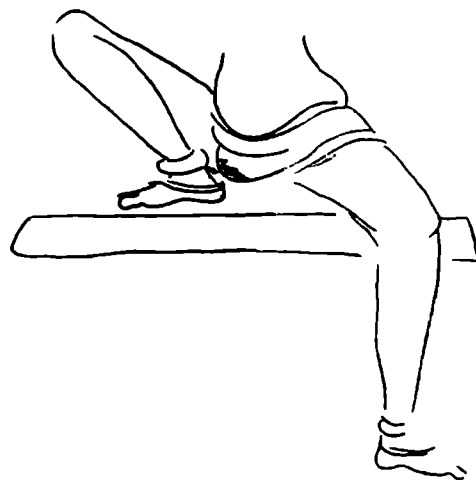
(iv) Vajrāsana is a variation of padmāsana, with the two legs crossed and placed



ASANA



ASANA



ASANA

on the thighs, and the hands placed in front resting on the crossed legs, so that the fingers of the two hands face each other (pratyāṅg-mukhāṅguli). The posture assumed by the Buddha and Yoga-nārāyaṇa illustrates this posture.

(v) Virāsana is the firm posture where the body is held erect, with one of the legs (usually the right) hanging down or placed firmly on the ground (or in the case of Dakṣiṇāmūrti on the apasmāra-puruṣa), and the other (viz. left) leg placed on the right thigh. The icons that are meant to exhibit valour, courage, and steadfastness are made to assume this posture. Dakṣiṇāmūrti, the seven mothers and Śāstā are frequently represented in this posture.

There are other āsanās like 'paryāṅka' (where both legs hang down), 'ardha-paryāṅka' (where one of the legs, usually the left, while squatting, is placed doubled-up on the seat with the other leg, the right, hanging down), 'sukhāsana' (where one of the legs, usually the left, is placed on the seat as above, but the thigh of the other leg is raised above the seat, the knee is held high, and the foot rests on the seat), 'mahārāja-lilā' (the easy and relaxed posture with the attitude of the legs as above, and the right arm held across and allowed to dangle, resting on the right knee that is raised, and the left arm made to support the body-weight with the hand placed on the seat behind the left thigh) and so on.

Āsana in the sense of seat is also relevant to iconography (See PITHA). The iconic representation of a deity is made to rest on seats like padmāsana (circular in shape, resembling an open lotus), bhadrāsana (solid and segmented seat), kūrmasana (oval in shape, with the delineation of a tortoise, usually wooden), śimhāsana (circular or rectangular seat which stands on four stylized lions as legs), and pretāsana (human carcass serving as the seat, as in the case of the fierce deity Chāmuṇḍā).

The idea of seating the deity to receive various worship details is involved in the concept of 'upachārāsana'. Texts like *Suprabhedāgama*, *Nāradya-samhitā*, and *Śrī-praśna-samhitā*, mention five seats in this context. The seats according to *Suprabhedā* are : (i) anantāsana, a triangular seat, meant to

accommodate the icon, when the deity is to preside over an assembly (āsthāna), like the king in his court ; (ii) śimhāsana, rectangular seat, for the icon to receive the customary bath (snāna) ; (iii) yogāsana, octagonal seat, on which the icon is made to rest when invocation is being presented (āvāhana) ; (iv) padmāsana, circular seat, for the deity to rest in order to receive the main sequence of worship (archanā) ; and (v) vimalāsana, a hexagonal seat for the deity to receive the food offerings (naivedya).

The *Nāradya Samhitā* (27, 61-62) gives different names for the five āsanās : yogāsana, snānāsana, alaṅkārasana, bhojanāsana and yātrāsana. They are more properly sequences in the worship routine : the deity is ceremonially and formally awakened and got ready for the day in yogāsana (also called mantrāsana) ; (ii) the deity is given a bath in snānāsana ; (iii) the deity is offered fresh garments, unguents and decorations, and got ready for the assembly in alaṅkārasana ; (iv) cooked food for the deity is presented in bhojanāsana (also called bhojyāsana); and (v) the bali-icon is taken out for presenting food-offerings (or bali to the attendant-deities within the temple premises in yātrāsana).

## ĀSĪNA

The seated posture of the deity as distinguished from standing (sthānaka), recumbent (śayāna) and walking (yānaka) postures. The seated forms of Śiva (like Anugraha-mūrtis, Umā-sahita and Somā-skanda) and Viṣṇu (like Lakṣmī-nārāyaṇa, Yoga-nārāyaṇa and Garuḍa-vāhana) are usually pacific (śānta) and benevolent. Some seated forms of Devī like Lakṣmī, Sarasvatī, Lalitā, Annapurṇā and Āmbikā are pacific (saumya), but some others like Bhadrā-kālī, Bhairavī, Pratyāṅgirā and Chāmuṇḍā are fierce (ugra). While the seated posture is delineated, several manners of it are employed (See ASANA).

## ĀLVĀRS

The Tamil word meaning "those who are deeply immersed in the divine experience", it

refers to the twelve saints of the Tamil country who were great devotees of Viṣṇu. They popularized the doctrine of devotion, and brought into prominence the cult of iconic worship in temples. They were the authors of splendid hymns in Tamil called 'Pāsurams', which were latter collected in an anthology called *Divya-prabandha* or Nāl-āyira-prabandam (in Tamil, meaning "4,000 compositions"). In these hymns they celebrated the iconic forms of Viṣṇu in several places like Śrī-raṅgam, Tirupati, Kāñchīpuram, Kumbhakoṇam and Mahābalipuram (all in Tamil Nadu). They have left a deep impression upon the Vaishṇava religion in South India, and most of the temples of the Śrī-Vaishṇava pursuation ceremonially recite their hymns as part of the daily worship.

The first three ālvārs (Poygai, Būtan, Pey) are said to have lived around 719 A.D. The other ālvārs succeeded them in about a hundred years : Tiruppāṇa (born 601 A.D.), Tirumaḷiśai (born 720 A.D.), Periyālvār (born 725 A.D.), Kulaśekhara (about 760 A.D.), Āṇḍāl or Godā-devī (born around 776 A.D.), Tirumaṅgai (about 776 A.D.), Toṇḍar-aḍi-ppoḍi (about 787 A.D.), Madhura-kavi (born 797 A.D.) and Nammālvār (born about 798 A.D.). (The dates given here were computed by the well-known Dr. Swami-Kaṇṇu Piḷḷai and accepted by authorities like T.K.T. Virarāghav-āchārya, author of the "History of Tirupati"). Of these ālvārs, Nammālvār is regarded as the greatest.

The cult of these saints (the pantheon of twelve saints as incarnations of various ornaments and weapons of Viṣṇu, singing their hymns in temples, worshipping them in an enclosure within the temple) probably took shape during the days of Yāmuna (also called Ālavandār), who was the illustrious predecessor to the great Rāmānuja (first quarter of 11th century). Yāmuna's teacher Nātha-muni is credited with having recovered the lost hymnal literature of the ālvārs, having heard by chance a soul-stirring composition of Nammālvār. However, it was only after the days of Rāmānuja that the hymns of ālvārs became popular, and the worship of ālvārs in temples began.

Many of the temples of the Śrī-Vaishṇava pursuation (*viz.* bearing the impact of the

teachings of Rāmānuja) in South India have separate enclosures accommodating the iconic representation of these ālvārs (or at least the more important among them like Nammālvār, Āṇḍāl, Periyālvār and Kulaśekhara) and of Rāmānuja (the shrine being called Bhāshya-kāra-sannidhi). There is daily worship accorded to these saints, after the worship of Viṣṇu in the sanctum is completed. This is the practice especially in temples where the Pāñcharātra mode of worship is prevalent.

## IKSHU

'Sugar-cane', the stalk of which plant is held in the hand of Gaṇeśa and Manmatha among the gods, and Rājarājeśvarī among the goddesses. When iconographically represented, it assumes the form of bow (ikshu-chāpa), and in the multi-armed deities it takes the place of bow (dhanus). The symbolism of the sugar-cane bow (ikshu-kodaṇḍa), which Lalitā is said to carry in her hand (*Lalita-sahasra-nāmam*, 10), is explained by Bhāskara-rāya as "mind characterized by saṁkalpa and vikalpa." The arrows that are set to this bow are the five subtle elements (pañcha-tanmātra-sāyaka). The bow and arrows together represent the dynamic energy (kriyā-śakti) of the mother-goddess (See KRIYA-SAKTI).

## ICCHĀ-ŚAKTI

"The power to will and bring forth the entire universe" is one of the three energies distinguishing Godhead (the other two being, the power to know all things all the time, jñāna-śakti, and the power to do everything independently, kriyā-śakti). According to *Yoginī-hṛdaya*, the power to will is iconographically symbolized in the lasso (pāśa, the instrument for binding the beings in the phenomenal world) that some deities, especially the forms of Devī, carry in their hands. The power to know is symbolized in the elephant-goad (aṅkuśa), and the power to act in the bow and arrows which also the deities carry (See KRIYA-SAKTI, JNANA-SAKTI). *Vāmakeśvara-tantra* described this power as the head of the Devī (knowledge being her torso and action being her feet).



ICCHHA-SAKTI

## IJYĀ

The word means worship or sacrifice (from the root 'yaj', pūjāyām), and is used to refer to one of the five duties of the house-holder devotee (pañcha-kāla-kṛtya), during the course of a day (the five being abhigamana, upādāna, ijyā, svādhyāya, and yoga) (See PANCHAKALA-PRAKRIYA). Ijyā refers to the duty enjoined in the noon; it consists of formal and elaborate worship of the icon at home (including mādhyāhnika and vaiśvadeva), followed by taking food (in the company of guest-devotees).

## IDĀ

The daughter of Ikshvāku-king and wife of Budha, one of the seven grahas (See BUDHA

and NAVA-GRAHA). According to *Hari-varṇṣa*, however, she is one of the seven attendant divinities of the Mother-goddess (others being Śruti, Pṛiti, Kānti, Śānti, Puṣṭi, and Kriyā). The word is also used to denote one of the three major channels of the vital current in the body (the other two being piṅgalā and sushumnā (See KUNDALINI).

## INDIRĀ

(See LAKSHMI)

## INDRA

Chief of the gods (devarāja) and lord of the heavenly firmament, he is the god of Vedic antiquity. In the *R̥gVeda* he is an important god and a worthy benefactor of mān. His fights and victories against asuras like Vṛtra, Śāmbara, Ahi and Vala are celebrated in numerous hymns. He wields the remarkable weapon called Vajra ('thunderbolt'), fashioned specially for him by the celestial artisan Tvashtṛ out of the bones of the sage Dadhichi.

But in later times, his celebrity was considerably lost, and he survived only as the guardian of the eastern quarter (See ASHTADIKPALAKA). There were also festivals in isolated pockets, where Indra was invoked, during early and medieval times. But Indra's only association with the present day Hinduism is in Indra's banner ('Indra-dhvaja') which is hoisted at the commencement of the principal annual car-festival (brahma-rathotsava) in temples. The background idea is that Indra himself comes down to earth and performs this festival. Likewise, in Jainism, Indra is the one who anoints the Jina (tīrthaṅkara) and worships him as the first one in Jina's career to recognize the greatness of the Jina; this is known as Indrābhisheka.

Indra is regarded as the first among the twelve sons Aditi (elder daughter of Dakṣha-prajāpati) had from Kāśyapa (son of Marīchi, who in turn was the mind-born offspring of the creator, Brahmā); and is therefore one of the ādityas (See ADITYA). In every one of the fourteen eonic periods of Manu (manvantara), there is an Indra and there is an assembly of gods he presides over. Indra is, therefore





INDRA, Bhuvanesvar



INDRA-Nepal (15th century)

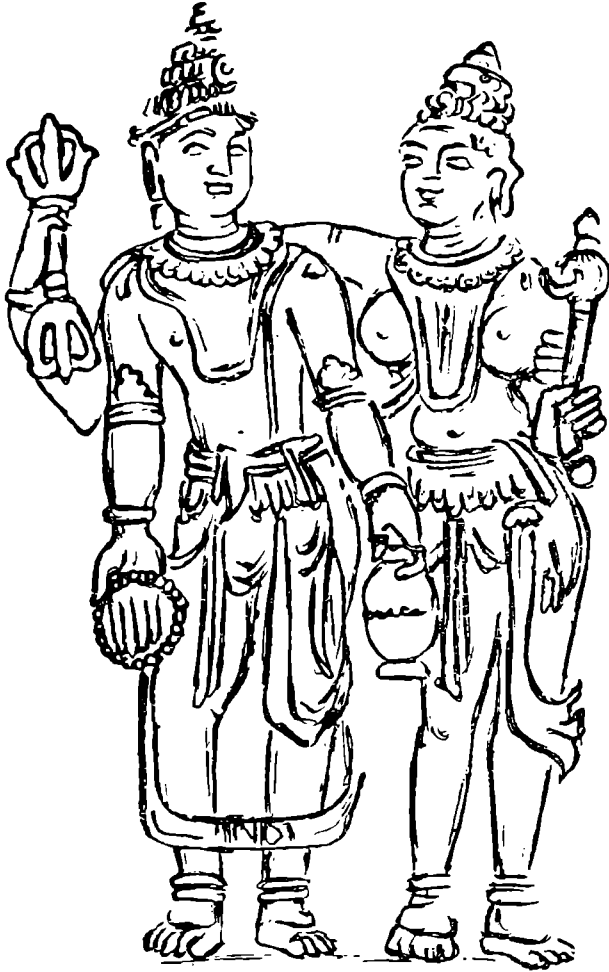
more an office than a person. In the present period, he is distinguished by his wife Śāchī (See INDRAṆI) ; his elephant Airāvata, his horse Uchchaiśravas, and his weapon Vajra.

While there are no independent temples to Indra, sculptural representations of this demi-god in the temples to Śiva, Viṣṇu or Devī are not uncommon. He is represented not only as a guardian of quarters (dikpālaka), but as one who honours the principal deity of the temple by his presence. There are also textual prescriptions about the details of his image. He is represented either as two-armed (as *Aṁśumadbhedāgama* insists) or as four-armed (as the usual depiction is). When he is two-armed, he holds vajra in his right hand,

and elephant-goad (aṅkuṣa) in his left. When he is four-armed, he carries, besides these two weapons, red lotus (padma) and holds his consort with the left normal hand. He is invariably represented as handsome in appearance, and well bedecked with various ornaments including a splendid and lordly crown. He is often seen having two eyes, but there is a textual direction that the third eye must be horizontally shown on his forehead. His neck must be thick, and body rather rotund. The body-colour may be dark (as *Aṁśumadbhedāgama* has) or white. He may be depicted as standing, or as sitting either on a bhadrā-piṭha or on his elephant (See AIRAVATA).

He is more often represented, while in standing posture, as accompanied by his consort Śachī, who stands to his left, the two embracing each other (See INDRANI).

When he is not iconically represented, he is symbolized by the weapon Vajra (See also AINDRA-MANTRA).



INDRA-INDRANI

### INDRĀKSHĪ

According to *Śrī-tattva-nidhi*, a form of Devi with two arms, carrying the weapons Vajra in her left hand and the gesture of boon-bestowal (varada) in her right hand. She wears two garments, yellow in colour, and her body-colour also is yellow. She is bedecked with various ornaments, and her face is calm and lotus-like. She is surrounded by celestial damsels (cf. *Śakti-devatā-lakṣaṇa-nidhi*, 96).



INDRAKSHI

### INDRĀNĪ

Wife of Indra, Śachī by name, is regarded more often as Indra's energy (Indra-śakti). She is described as the daughter of Puloma (an asura born to Kaśyapa from Diti). She is found in sculptural representations along with Indra (See INDRA), standing by his side to the left. She must be of golden colour, according to texts, and must be two-armed. Her right arm must go round Indra in embrace, and her left hand must carry a blue lotus (nīlotpala), or a bunch of flowers known as 'santāna-mañjarī'. She must be extremely pretty in all features, joyous in her appearance, and well-bedecked with all ornaments.

Indrāṇī is also worshipped independently as the bestower of prosperity (saubhāgya-devatā), seated on a lotus, within an excellent pavilion in the garden of wish-fulfilling trees ('kalpa-drū-dhānamadhye'). She is to be represented, in this context, with large breasts ('pīnottuṅga-stana') and thick thighs ('pṛthujaghana-bhāra'); and her eyes must be wide open like the lotus-leaf ('padma-patrāya-tākshī'). She must be surrounded by eight celestial damsels: Urvaśī, Menakā, Rambhā, Pramlochā, Puñjikā-sthala, Tilottamā, Ghṛtāchī and Surūpā (See ARSARAS).



INDRANI (from an icon in Bharat Kala Bhavan, Banaras)

As one of the seven mother-goddesses (See SAPTA-MATṚKA) she is called Aindrī, and is benevolent of aspect (saumyā), gold-coloured (hemābhā), stationed on an elephant (gajasāṁsthītā), and six-armed, carrying in her hands vajra, rosary (sūtra), and gesture of boon-bestowal (varada) on the right side, and red-lotus (kamala), water-vessel (pātra) and gesture of protection (abhaya) on the left side (cf. *Śrī-tattva-nidhi*, 1, 48). *Aṁśumadbhedā* as well as *Pūrva-kāmikāgama*, however, prescribe four hands for this goddess who is red in body-complexion (rakta-varṇā), and in her hands vajra, spear called Śakti, and the gestures of protection and boon-bestowal. According to one of these texts (the former), she is three-eyed (trinetra); but according to the other, she is only two-eyed. According to another text, *Rūpa-maṇḍana*, she is many-eyed (lochanair bahubhir vṛtā). *Śrī-tattva-nidhi* describes her as thousand-eyed (sahasradṛk).

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## INDRĀ-PARAMEŚVARĪ

A form of the goddess, who is golden coloured (suvarṇa-varṇā) and is seated on a resplendant lion (divya-simhāsane sthitā). She holds a scymitre (karavāla), and has fierce aspect, with her mouth wide open. She wears a garland of full-blown lotuses (vikachakamala-mālā) and listens to the songs of the yogins ('yogi-saṅgita-śilā') (cf. *Śrī-tattva-nidhi*, 1, 98)

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## ISHṬA-DEVATĀ

Also called 'abhīṣṭa-devatā' or "chosen-deity", it is the particular iconic representation of God that delights one's heart. Although one is aware that God really has no material or specific representations, and that all representations alike are indicators of the glory of Godhead, one has his own preferences for a particular iconic form, determined by his temperamental disposition, intellectual presupposition, early associations, situational proclivity, emotional needs and so on. Adoration of this form especially satisfies, and enthuses the devotee as no other form does. This is in contradistinction to the other forms like tutelary deity (kula-devatā), village-deity (grāma-devatā), preceptor-given deity (upadishṭa-devatā), occasional deity (uddishṭa-devatā), place-deity (tīrtha-devatā) and so on.

## ĪŚA

Literally meaning 'the ruler', 'the lord' ('Iṣṭe iti'), it is a general appellation for any god, but more frequently it refers to Śiva (See SIVA). The expression is also employed as a suffix to other names to denote authority and prowess, e.g. Nandiśa, Chaṇḍeśa, Naṭeśa.

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## ĪŚĀNA

A name of Śiva; one of the eight aspects of Śiva (See ASHTA-MURTI), representing the Sun; also one of the eleven Rudras (See EKADASA-RUDRA). Also a dik-pālaka.

## IŚĀNI

The Śakti of Iśāna, one of the forms of Pārvatī. Also one of the seven mother-goddesses (See SAPTA-MATRKA) representing the feminine counterpart of Iśāna, also called Maheśvarī. She is in this aspect represented as holding a trident (triśūla) and riding an ox; she wears on her head the crescent moon (See MAHESVARI)

## IŚVARA

Meaning 'the ruler' or 'the lord', the word, like Iśa, generally signifies any god, but more popularly represents Śiva (See SIVA).

## IŚVARI

One of the sixty-four Yoginīs (See YOGINI); her symbol is ox (vṛshabha).

## UGRA-CHANDĀ

Meaning 'violently angry', it is a form of Devī, assumed to kill the fierce Mahishāsura (the demon in the guise of a he-buffalo). According to *Kālikā-purāṇa* (59 and 60) she appeared as Ugrachandā in the first phase of creation ('ādi-sṛṣṭau'), as Bhadrā-Kālī in the second phase, and as Durgā in the present period ('adhunā') to kill Mahishāsura. She is also associated with the destruction of the twelve-year long sacrificial rite begun by Dakṣha, to which she was not invited. Her appearance is said to have been on the ninth day of the dark fortnight when the sun had entered the kanyā zodiac ('navamyām kṛṣṇa-pakṣe kanyām gate ravau'). She is also called Yoga-nidrā and Mahā-māyā (See DURGA).

## UGRA-TĀRĀ

'Exceedingly fierce' (ugra), but 'a saviour from all fear and harm' (tārā) ('ugrād api bhayād bhaktam trāti tārayati'), she is a form of the mother-goddess, whose appearance from the body of a mataṅga-damsel (and hence

called Mātangi) is ascribed to the entreaties of all the gods to save them from the terrors of the two asuras, Śumbha, and Niśumbha (cf. *Kālikā-purāṇa*, chap. 60). She is dark like collyrium (bhinnāñjanā) in body-colour (and hence called Kālī); she wears a garland of severed heads (muṇḍa-mālā); and her head, neck and chest are adorned by coiling snakes. Her eyes are blood-shot (rakta-lochanā) and so are her teeth (rakta-dantikā). She has one tall braid of hair (eka-jaṭā), which is her distinguishing feature (and hence she is also called Eka-jaṭā).

She wears dark garments (kṛṣṇa-vastradharā) and a tiger's skin on her loins ('kaṭyām vyāghrājīnā'). Her left foot is placed on the heart of a corpse (śava-hṛdi), and her right foot on the back of a lion (simha-pṛṣṭhā), which should be shown as licking the corpse ('lelihānā śavam'). She roars in maddening, wild and fierce laughter ('sāṭṭahāsa-mahāghorā'). She is four-armed, and carries in her right hands sword (khaḍga) and lotus (indīvara), and in her left hands cutting, feathered arrow (kartrī) and skull-bowl (kharpara). She has a hanging belly (lambodarī).

She is accompanied by eight yoginīs: Mahākālī, Rudrāṇī, Ugrā, Bhīmā, Ghorā, Bhṛāmari, Mahārātri and Bhairavī. She is identified with the goddess at Kāmākhyā in Assam (cf. *Kālikā-purāṇa*, chap. 81 'Kāmākhyā-rūpa-nirṇaya').

## UGRA-NARASIMHA

One of the variant forms of the man-lion (nara-simha) incarnation of Viṣṇu (See AVATARA, VISHNU). Although all forms of Narasimha are fierce (ugra), for the very purpose of that incarnation was to tear asunder the invincible asura Hiraṇya-kaśipu, the show of ferocity was at its height during the encounter with the asura. After the asura was killed, the 'man-lion' became pacific, benevolent to his youthful devotee, Prahlāda (Prahāda-varada).

The aspect of Narasimha as he emerged suddenly from the pillar, with a thunderous roar and sparks of fire darting out of his awesome face, and rushed towards the asura



UGRA-NARASIMHA (Wood, chariot, Suchindram temple)



UGRA-NARASIMHA (Wood, Kaviyoor temple, Kerala)



UGRA-NARASIMHA (Stone, Ahobilam temple)

is really the ugra-form. This is called 'sthauṇa-narasimha'. In iconography, however, his ripping open the bowel of the asura, thrown prostrate on his lap, illustrates the 'ugra' form. There are several variant forms (like Jvālā-narasimha, Ghorā-narasimha, Vidāraṇa-narasimha, Āveśa-narasimha, Chaṇḍa-narasimha, Aṭṭahāsa-narasimha and Bhairava-narasimha) which answer to this description.

Narasimha in his ugra aspect is represented with eight, ten or sixteen arms, seated or standing in an āliḍha posture (See ALIDHA) (for details See NARASIMHA).

Icons showing the ferocious aspect, in order to punish the wicked are called 'ugra-mūrtis'. Some of them are also called 'Saṁhāra-mūrtis'. These are illustrated in the forms of Śiva like Kālārī, Gajāsura-saṁhāra, Tripurārī, Bhairava, Virabhadra and Śarabha; in the forms of Viṣṇu like Narasimha, Varāha, Kalki; and in the forms of devī like Kālī, Durgā, Chaṇḍikā, Ugra-Tārā, Chāmuṇḍā, Tvaritā, Bagalā-mukhī, Jvālā-mālīnī and Pratyāṅgirā.

It is usual for these forms to have numerous arms (eight to thirty-two), carrying a variety of weapons. There may also be multiple heads. The eyes are wide open and blood-shot; the mouth looks ferocious with fangs, and sometimes the tongue, lolling out. The forms are shown as fighting with, or killing, asuras. The posture will be full of vigour and action (usually āliḍha or pratyāliḍha). The deities of this type are personifications of anger (krodha-devatā).

These forms are not supposed to be fit for worship at home or in a temple within the township. Shrines to the violent forms of gods and goddesses are usually built on mountain-tops, in the thickness of jungles or in the vicinity of burning-grounds. When built in proximity to a village or town, such shrines must always be outside the boundaries and must turn away from the village or town (See ALAYA). The icons characterized as 'ugra' are suitable for practitioners of black magic witchcraft and sorcery; they are in this context known as 'Ābhichārika-mūrtis' (See ABHICHARIKA-MURTI). Worship to these deities are mostly conducted according to Tāntrik rites.

A magical device to uproot the enemy from his stronghold and banish him to a distant place, it is included in the six-fold black magic (shaṭ-karma or abhichāra). The icon that is worshipped during this rite is that of Durgā, and the suitable time of worship is the eighth day of the dark fortnight and Saturday of the week (cf. *Śāradā-tīlaka-tantra*)



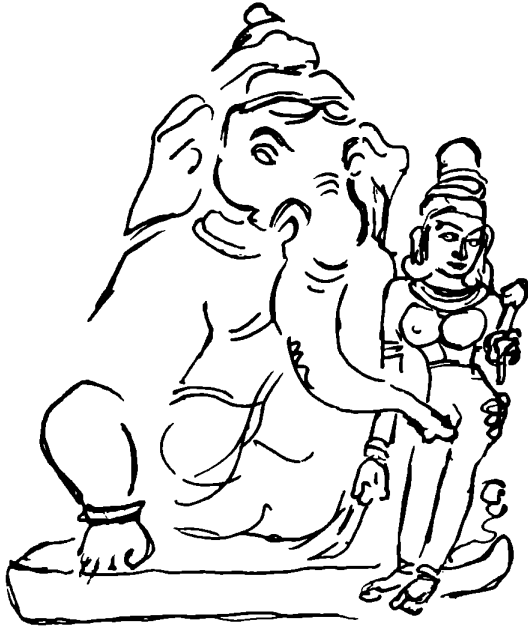
## UCCHHISHṬA-GAṆAPATĪ

One of the thirty-two major forms of Gaṇapati (See GANAPATĪ), frequently mentioned in texts and popularly worshipped.

Iconic representations of this form are also frequently found in South Indian temples. This form is obviously a tāntrik one, and is worshipped for magical ends. The mantra specific to this deity says that he is a mighty sprite of wilderness ('mahā-yaksha').



UCCHHISTA-GANAPATĪ



UCCHHISHTA-GANAPATI

The expression 'ucchishṭa' signifies Brahman, who remains over when everything disappears during the great dissolution (pralaya). The word also means 'left over' and therefore 'unclean'. The former meaning is taken from *Atharva-veda*, and the latter from the Smṛti-texts. The import is that this form of Gaṇapati is absolute, mighty and unclean; absolute in his nature, mighty in securing whatever the devotee desires, although 'unclean' or indecent in appearance. There is a folk goddess known as 'ucchishṭa-yakshiṇī' (whose mantra is 'Om jagattraya-mātṛike padma-nibhe svāhā') who is said to favour the devotee even when the devotee worships her while he is in an unclean condition. This form of Gaṇapati may have a similar nature.

The distinguishing feature of this form is the amorous overtone. Gaṇapati is seen here seated with his wife, who is stripped naked ('vivastra-patnyā'), attempting coitus with her ('surata-pravṛttam'); he is touching the devi's vulva with the tip of his trunk ('nārī-yonirasāsvāda-lolupam'), according to *Uttara-kāmikāgama*, and she is prescribed to be two-

armed. Gaṇapati himself is six-armed, carrying in his hands lotus (lilābha), pomegranate (dāḍima), musical instrument (vīṇā), bunch of paddy grains (śālī-puñja), and rosary (aksha-sūtra), according to Aghora-Śiva's *Kriyā-kramadyotini*; or he is four-armed, carrying arrow (śara), bow (dhanuṣ), lasso (pāśa) and elephant-goad (sṛṇi), according to *Mantra-mahārṇava*; or, alternately, lasso, elephant-goad, bowl of sweet-cake (modaka-pātra) and his own tusk (danta).

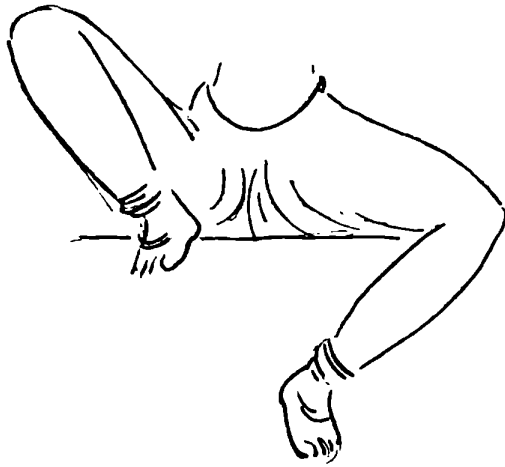
The Gaṇapati must be three-eyed and dark in colour, and must wear on his head a jewelled crown (*Uttara-kāmikāgama*). He must be seated upon a reddish lotus ('ārakta-saroruhastha') (*Mantra-mahārṇava*). *Mantra-mahodadhi* calls this form 'unmatta-uchchishṭha' (See UNMATTAGANAPATI). The mantra specific to this deity is 'Gaṁ Haṁ Klauṁ Glaṁ Uchchishṭa-gaṇeśāya namah'.

## UCCHHUSHMA-JAMBHALA

A form of Jambhala who is a god of wealth and prosperity (See JAMBHALA). In this form, he is an emanation of Ratna-sambhava (or alternately Akshobhya), and is seen in the pratyālīḍha posture (See ASANA), trampling upon the prostrate Kubera (Dhanada), who is vomiting pearls. He has a terrible aspect with fangs in his mouth, three circular blood-red eyes, and the tawny hair on the head sticking up; serpents are his ornaments. He is nude, and has hanging belly (lambodara); his penis is erect (ūrdhva-līṅga). He is two-armed, holding in one hand the skull-cup full of blood, and in the other a mangoose (nakuli) which is vomiting pearls from its mouth. This form is also known as Jambha.

## UTKUṬAKĀSANA

More frequently spelt 'utkuṭikāsana', this refers to a posture where one sits on the hams; with one of the legs folded and held upright and the other dangling down (See ASANA).



UTKUTAKASANA

४००

## UTTAMA-TĀLA

Of the three varieties of icometric norms, the best suited is *uttama* ('the superior'), (the other two being '*madhyama*' and '*adhama*') (See *TALAMANA*). Most frequently used are the '*uttama-daśa*' and '*uttama-nava*' tālas (See (*DASA-TALA* and *NAVA-TALA*).



UTKUTAKASANA

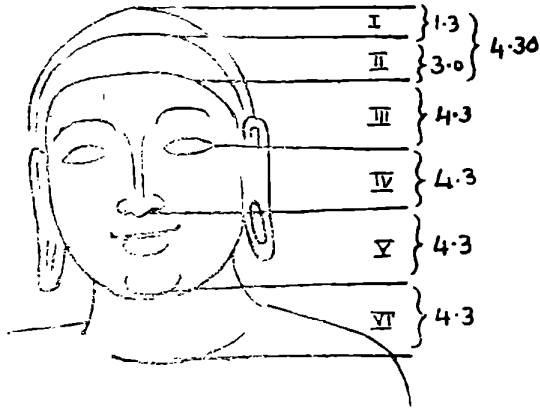
४०१

## UTTAMA-DAŚA-TĀLA

A measure that is commended for making images of principal male divinities like *Brahma*, *Vishṇu* and *Śiva*. The entire height of the image (including the headgear, *ushṇīṣha*, and excluding the pedestal, *pīṭha*) is divided into one hundred and twenty-four parts (*aṁśas*, digits or *aṅgulas*, See *ANGULA* and *TALAMANA*) as follows (*cf. Mānasāra*, 65, 1-5) :

## Parts

|                                                                                                      |               |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| From the fillet of the crown (ushṇīṣhāt)<br>till the hairline (keśa-paryantam)....                   | 4             |
| From the hairline till the jawline (hanu)                                                            | 13            |
| The height of the throat (gala-mānam) ..                                                             | $\frac{1}{2}$ |
| The length of the neck (gala-tuṅgakam)                                                               | 4             |
| From the bottom of the neck (galānta)<br>till the lower limit of the heart-<br>region (hṛdayānta)... | 13½           |
| The belly (udaram) till the navel<br>(nābhi-sīmakam)....                                             | 13½           |
| From the navel till the penis (meḍhra) ...                                                           | 13½           |
| From the bottom of the penis till the<br>knee (meḍhrāntam ūru-dairghyam)...                          | 27            |
| The height of the knee (jānu-tuṅgam)...                                                              | 4             |
| The shank (jaṅghā), from the knee to the<br>ankle (same height as thigh)...                          | 27            |
| The height of the foot (pāda), same as<br>that of the knee (jānu-samottuṅgam)...                     | 4             |
| <b>Total height</b>                                                                                  | <b>124</b>    |

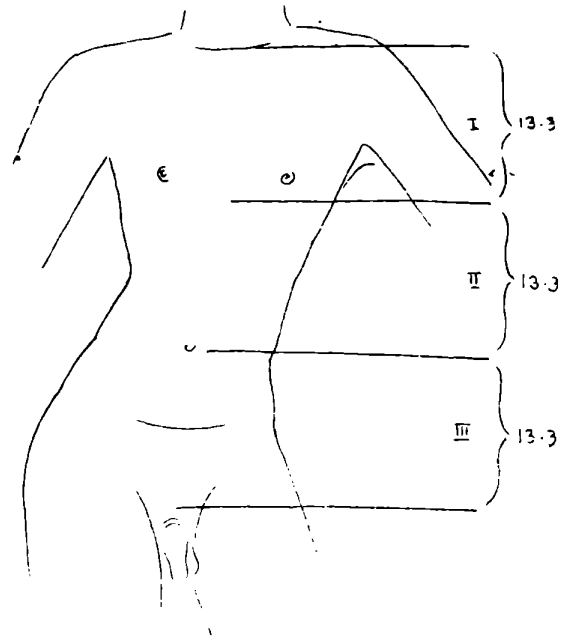


SIROBHAGA—THE HEAD

(Vertical Measurements according to Dasa-tala of the  
Uttama order)

|                               |           |        |
|-------------------------------|-----------|--------|
| I. From ushnisha to murdhanta | 1 angula  | 3 yava |
| II. From murdhanta to kesanta | 3 angulas |        |
| III. From kesanta to netranta | 4 angulas | 3 yava |
| IV. From netranta to nasanta  | 4 angulas | 3 yava |
| V. From nasanta to chibukanta | 4 angulas | 3 yava |
| VI. gala (till hikke)         | 4 angulas | 3 yava |

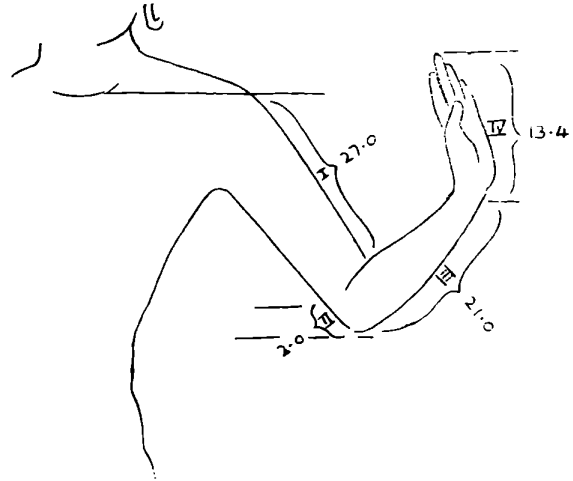
(ushnisha—crown of head  
murdhanta—upper limit of head  
kesanta—hair-line  
netranta—corner of eye  
nasanta—tip. of nose  
chibuka—chin  
gala—larynx depression)



MADHYABHAGA—THE TORSO

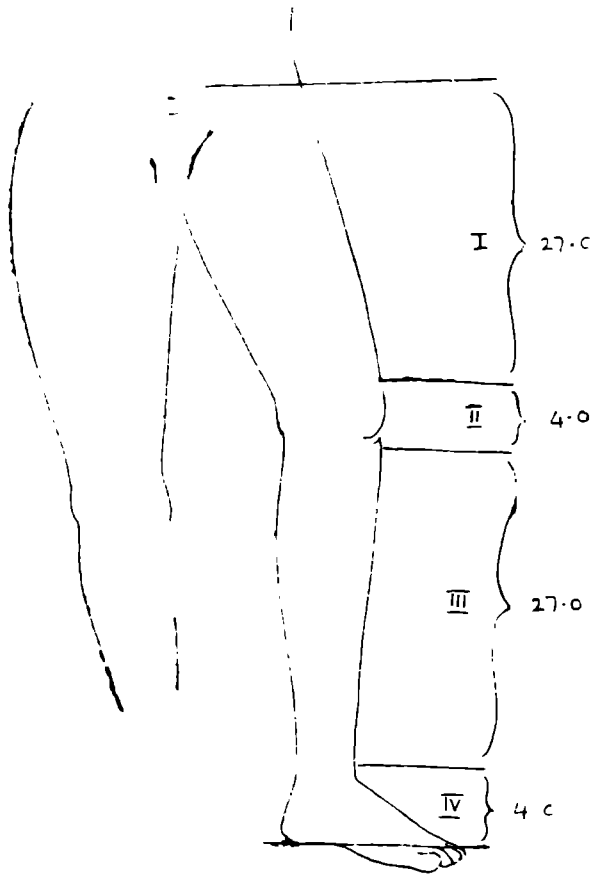
- I. From gala (viz. hikke) to hṛdaya 13 angulas 3 yava
- II. From hṛdaya to nabhi 13 angulas 3 yava
- III. From nabhi to medhagra 13 angulas 3 yava

(hṛdaya—heart region  
nabhi—navel  
medhanta—top of penis)



BAHU—THE ARMS

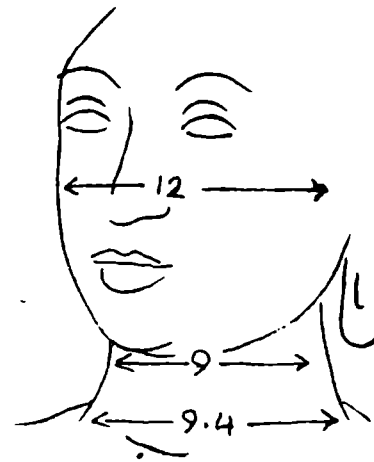
- I. From hikke-aura to kurpara 27 angulas
  - II. kurpara-desa (elbow) 4 angulas
  - III. prakoshtha (forearm) 27 angulee
  - IV. kera (from wrist to middle-finger) 13 angulas 4 yava
- (kurpara—elbow  
prakoshtha—forearm  
kera—hand)



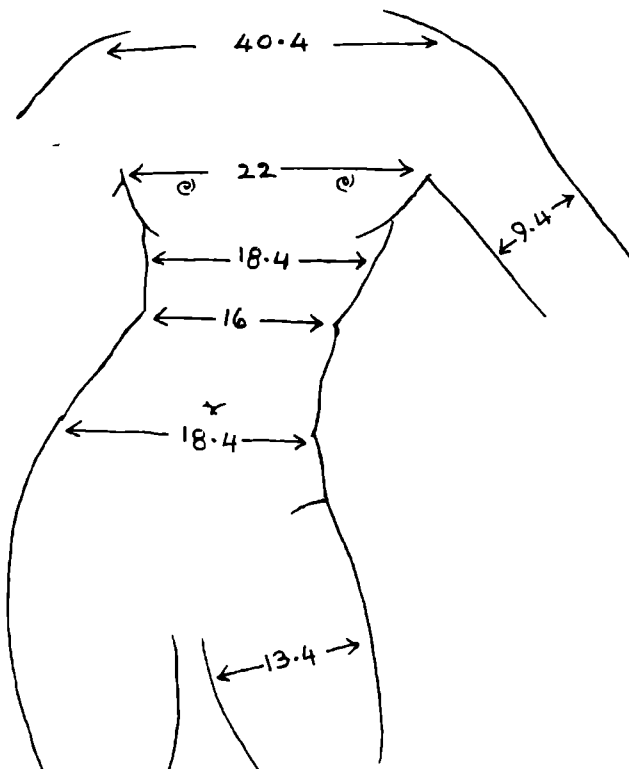
ADHOBHAGA—THE LEGS

- |                                                   |            |
|---------------------------------------------------|------------|
| I. From medhagra to janu                          | 27 angulas |
| II. The height of jenu                            | 4 angulas  |
| III. From janu to gulpha                          | 27 angulas |
| IV. The height of pada (from gulpha to pada-tala) | 4 angulas  |

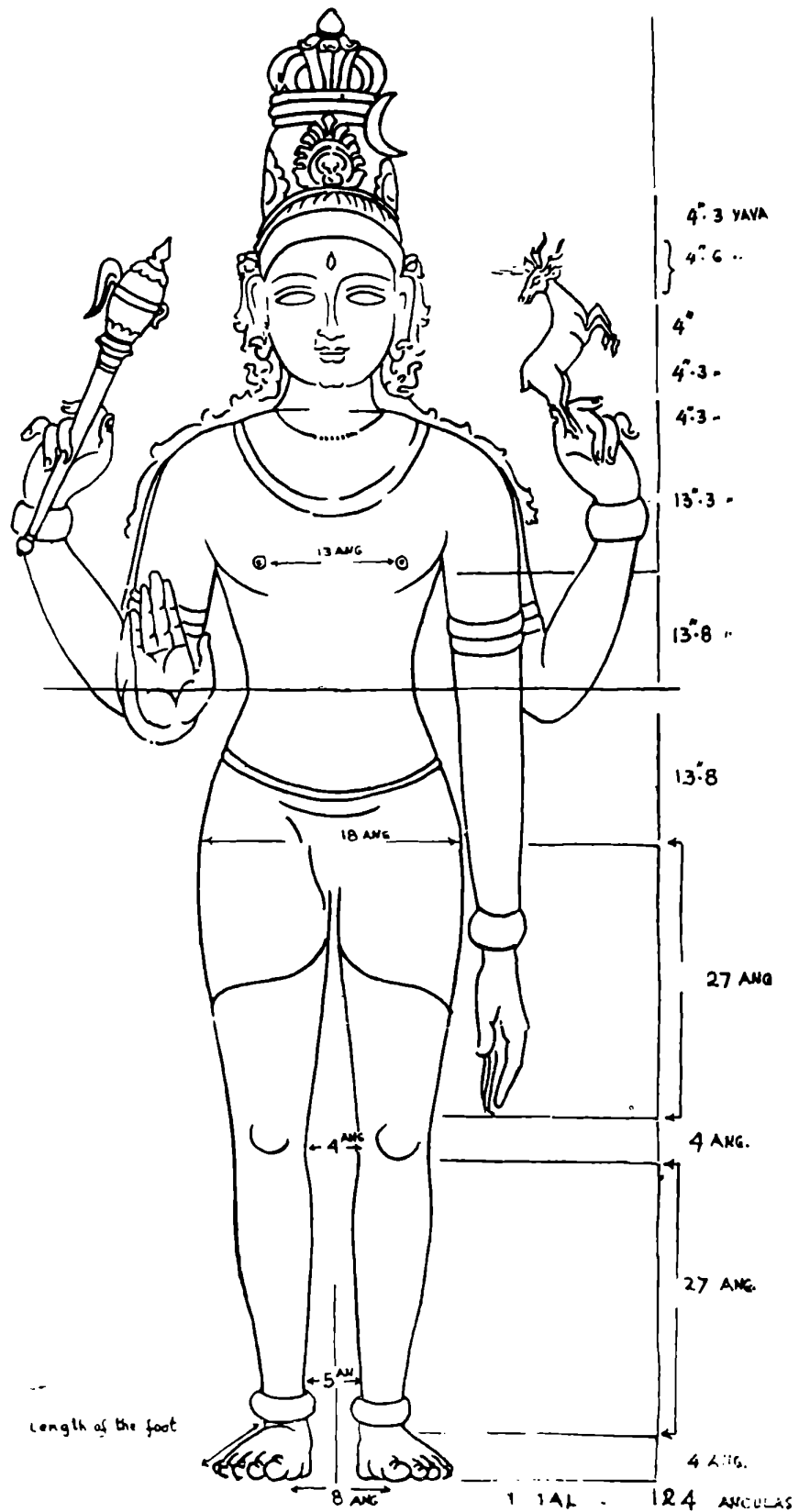
(janu—knee  
gulpha—ankle  
pada-tala—sole of foot)



Width measurements (in angulas and yavas)



Width measurements (in angulas and yavas) →



UTTAMA-DASA-TALA

4  $\frac{3}{8}$   
 4  $\frac{5}{8}$   
 4  $\frac{3}{8}$   
 4  $\frac{3}{8}$   
 4  $\frac{3}{8}$   
 13  $\frac{3}{8}$   
 13  $\frac{3}{8}$   
 13  $\frac{3}{8}$   
 4  
 27  
 4  
 124"  
 60'-0"  
 17"  
 41  $\frac{1}{2}$ "

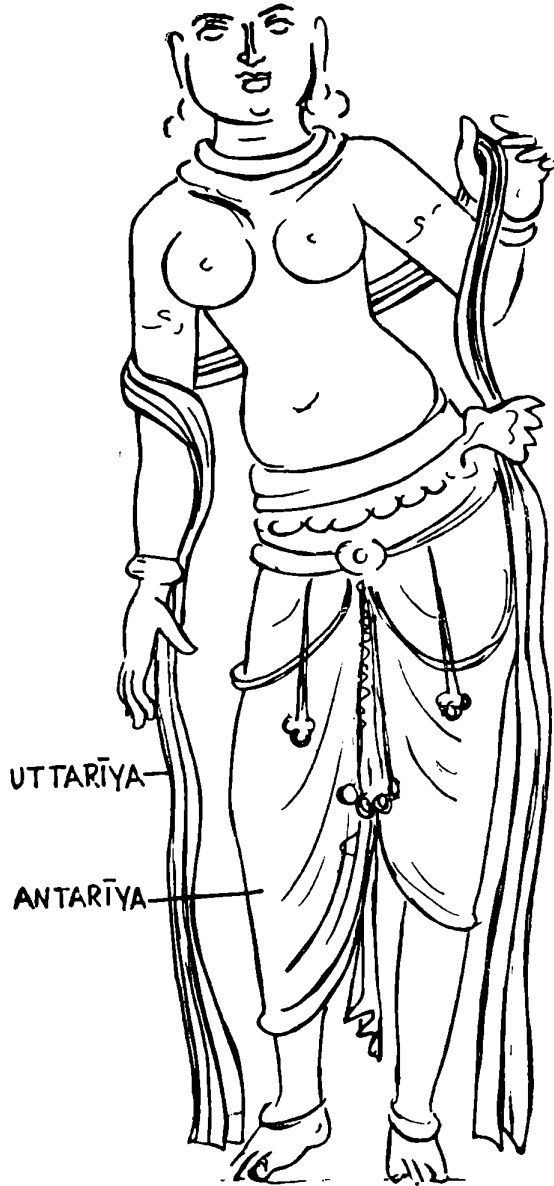
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## UTTARĪYA

Upper-cloth, hanging from the shoulder, either across the chest or straight down.

## UTTĀLĀ

One of the sixty-four yoginis, symbolized by a bull (See YOGINI).



UTTARĪYA

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## UTPALA

Blue lotus (nīla-kamala), which opens at night. It is seen in the hands of pacific deities, especially goddesses.

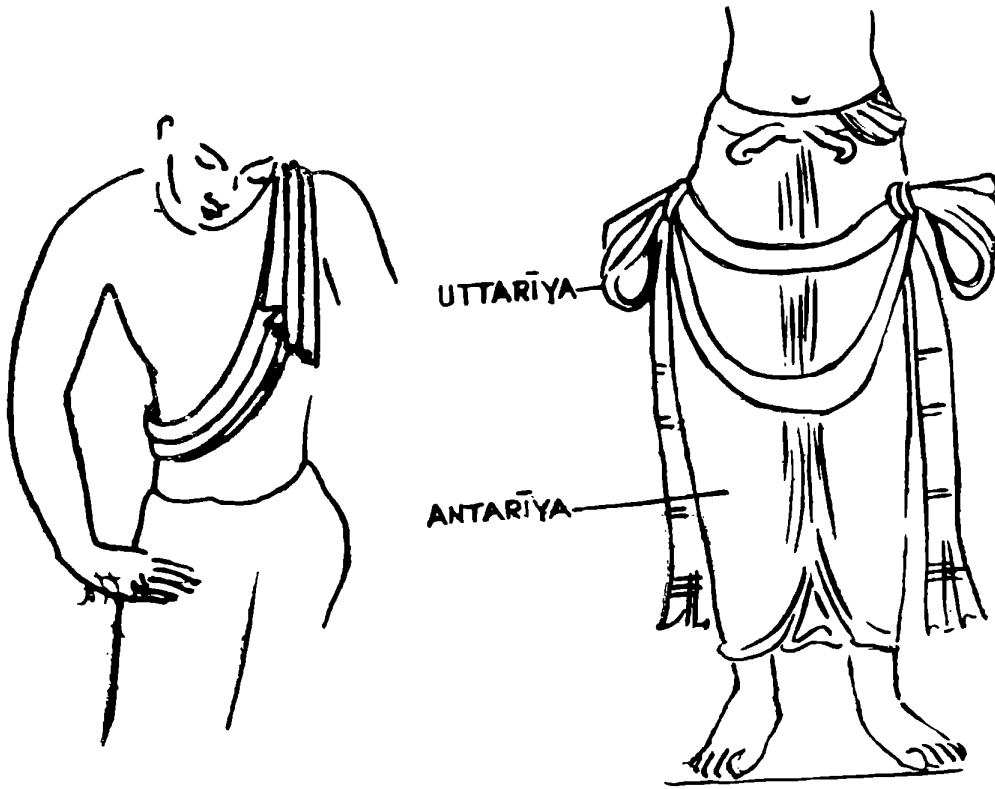
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## UTSAVA

Generally the word means an occasion of elation and merriment and activity conducive to happiness. However, texts provide various meanings, some of them fanciful: 'ut' is superior (utkṛṣṭa) and 'sava' is sacrifice (yajña) (*Purushottama-saṁhitā*, 32, 2; *Nāradya-saṁhitā* 18); 'ut-sava' is elimination (ut, udgata) of possible obstacles (sava-vighna) (*Pādma-saṁhitā*, charyā, 10); overcoming ('uttaranti') the woes of phenomenal life ('savah sāṁsārika-duhkham') (*Pārameśvara-saṁhitā* 16, 2); avoidance (nivartakah) of the inauspicious ('savah tu amaṅgalam') (*Aniruddha-saṁhitā*, 20, 1, and *Vāśiṣṭha-saṁhitā*, 12); productive ('utsūte') of happiness ('harsham') (*Śrī-praśna-saṁhitā*, 31, 8); that from which the welfare of all beings ('savah kalyāṇam sarva-jantu-sukhāvaham') is brought







UTTARIYA

into being ('udbhūtah') (*Ajitāgama*, 27, 1) ; and that which recounts the act of creation ('savah sṛṣṭih, udbhūta-sṛṣṭikaratvāt') (*Pūrva-kāraṇāgama*, 141).

Utsava is said to take the place of the sacrifices (yajña) of olden days : it is intended to secure the well-being of all creatures, to bring about peace and plenty ('śānti-puṣṭi-karam'), to enable the people to get their desires fulfilled, to help eliminate the evil that is incidental to normal living ('pāpaharam'), and to contribute to the growth and progress of the kingdom ('rāṣṭra-vivardhanam') (*Vishvakṣena-saṃhitā*, 27, 1f). It ensures success for the kings in their expedition, long life for the people, and prosperity for the community (*Pūrva-kāraṇāgama*, 141).

In days of yore, the gods, headed by Indra, are said to have celebrated their victory against the asura, Vṛtra, with great excitement, eclat and mirth, to the accompaniment of song and dance. This is recounted by the human beings in the form of utsava (*Pādma-saṃhitā*, charyā, 10, 4 and 5). The temples, as aspects of

collective life, had their own characteristic festivities and procedures.

The temple utsavas are grouped into three classes : (1) 'nitya' or routine festivities, conventionally fixed for the year, month and day ; (2) 'naimittika' or occasional events, prescribed to be gone through in situations like earthquake, eclipse, fire in the quarters, torrential rain, epidemics, unnatural events, spontaneous movement and mutilation of the icons, and conditions of famine, draught and attack by enemy ; and (3) 'kāmya' or festivals conducted to secure the four-fold desires of the devotees (dharma, artha, kāma and moksha). The first is said to be the 'sāttvika' type of utsava, the second 'rājasa' and the third 'tāmasa' (*Śrī-praśna-saṃhitā*, 31, 16).

The utsavas are again five-fold according to the expected benefits : (1) 'Śāntika' (peace), one-day festival ; (2) 'puṣṭika' (nourishment), three-day festival ; (3) 'jayada' (victory), five-day festival ; (4) 'dhanada' (plenty), seven-day festival ; and (5) 'sarva-kāmika' (fulfilment of all desires), nine-day festival

(*Rauravāgama*, kriyā, 18, 8-9). They are named in *Pūrva-kāraṇāgama* (141, 2-3) Śaiva, Sāttvika, Pārthiva, Śrī-kara and Saukhya respectively; or in *Īśvara-saṃhitā* (13) Brāhma, Śaiva, Aindra, Ārsha and Vaiṣṇava. Some texts mention six kinds (as in *Pūrva-kāraṇāgama*, the sixth utsava of twelve days being called Paitṛka), or seven kinds (as in *Chandra-jñāna*, the seventh utsava of fourteen days, being called Sāvitrīya), or nine kinds (as in *Dīptāgama*, 83 and *Ajitāgama*, 27, 2-7, Kaumāra of thirteen days, Sāvitrīya of fourteen days, and Chāndra of fifteen days). There is also an account that the festivals of thirteen days and more are the best (uttama), festivals of seven to twelve days are moderate (madhyama) and festivals of less than five days are the worst (adhama) (*Dīptāgama*, 83).

Texts also describe in great detail the various procedures and festivities to be adopted on different days during the utsava. In general, the utsava involves 'sowing of sprouts' (aṅkurāropa), hoisting of the flag (dhvajārcha), to indicate the commencement of the utsava, beating of the drum (bherikā-ghoṣa), commencement of yāga (yāgādhi-vāsa), fire-ritual (homa), food-offerings (bali-pradāna), processions (mahotsava), travel to the sacred tank for a bath (tīrtha-snāna), flower-worship (pushpa-yāga), and bringing down the flag (dhvajāvarohaṇa) to indicate the completion of the utsava.

The most important among the utsavas is the principal one known as Brahmotsava, which is usually conducted to remember the day of the installation of the icon in the sanctum, or the day which is regarded as the 'birth-asterik' (janma-nakshatra) of the deity in the temple. This may stretch for nine days (in which case it is called 'daivika'), seven (ārsha), five (aindra) or three days (śaiva). It may also be conducted in a single day (Brāhma).

During these days it has become customary to take out the processional image (utsava-bera) on various vehicles (See VAHANA) and go round the village or township in pomp, gaiety and splendour. The expression utsava more popularly refers to these processions of the icons on the streets, for the benefit and enjoyment of the entire community.

## UTSAVA-BERA

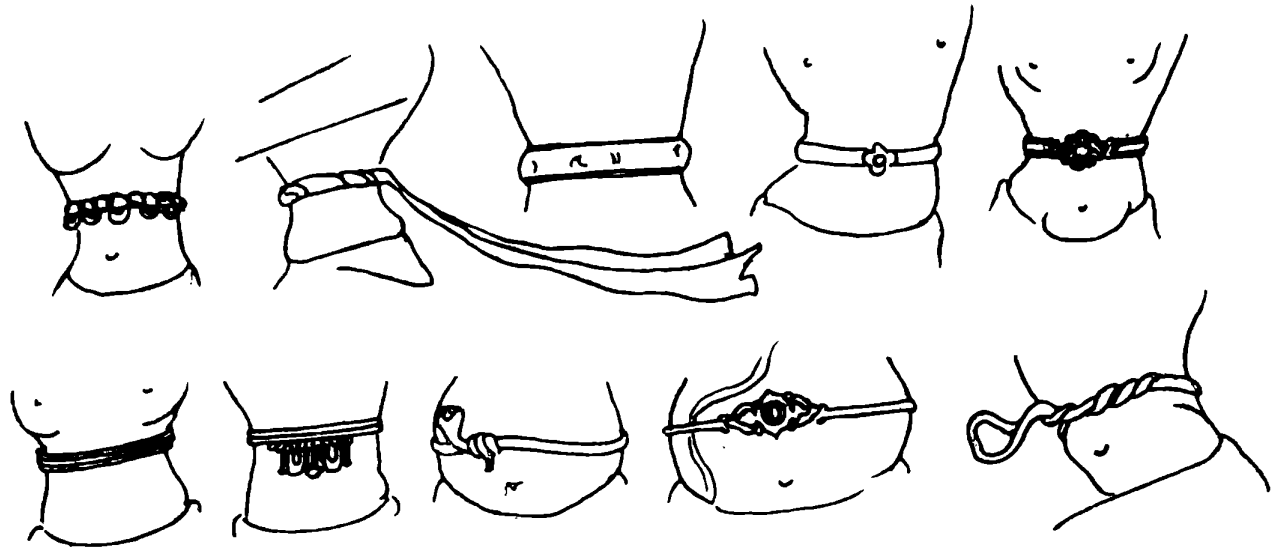
The 'processional image' is one of the many (two to five) movable icons (chala-bera) in the temple, besides the main stationary image (dhruva or achala-bera) inside the sanctum. While the main image is made of stone, the other icons are metallic. The metallic images are used for various ritualistic purposes (like bath, assembly, food-offering etc). The metallic image that is taken out of the temple for processions is known as 'utsava-bera', and it is next in importance to the main image inside the sanctum. It is usual for this image to be an exact replica of the main image (except in the Śiva temples, where the main image is only an aniconic liṅgam).

This image is kept normally inside the sanctum in close proximity to the main image, to which it is connected by a golden thread (saṃbandha-sūtra); or it may be housed in a separate cell in the ardha-maṇḍapa or the mukha-maṇḍapa of the temple. The processional image will be of a size suitable for being richly and elaborately decorated with garments and flower garlands, and for being carried about on vehicle (See VAHANA) or in a palanquin (śibikā) on the streets for people to see and worship.

The processional icon while in procession on the streets receives the worship on behalf of the main image in the sanctum, for which it deputizes. When the processional image has gone out of the temple-premises, no worship is normally offered to the main image in the sanctum, until it returns. The processional images of Viṣṇu are always accompanied by Lakṣmī (Śrī-devī) and Bhū-devī, even when the main image in the sanctum is without them. The processional images are either in the standing (sthānaka), or in the sitting (āsīna) posture, more usually standing, and never in recumbent (śayāna) or mobile (yānaka) posture. Even when the main image is recumbent (as in Śrīrangam), the processional image will be standing, or sitting.

## UTSEDHA

Height of the building or icon.



UDARA-BANDHA

### UDARA-BANDHA

'Belly-band', an ornamental band that encircles the belly, just above the navel; 'udara' is the region of the body between the heart region (hṛdaya) and the navel (nābhi). The belly-band is above the waist-band (kaṭi-bandha).

punisher of evil-doers (which also is meant by the expression 'uddaṇḍa'), and is invoked in magical rites which seek to injure the enemies.

2-10

### UDVARTANA

The act of ceremonial cleaning of icons, with materials that remove dirt and add brilliance.

### UDDAṆḌA-GAṆAPATI

Literally, Gaṇapati 'who holds his staff up', is one of the thirty-two forms derived from *Mudgala-purāṇa*. It is a variety of Śakti-Gaṇapati, viz., accompanied by his consort (Śakti), probably used in Tāntrik rituals. Gaṇapati in this form is twelve-armed, carrying in his hands a kalhāra flower, lotus flower (aṁbuja), pomegranate fruit (bijapūra), mace (gadā), tusk (danta), sugar-cane as bow (ikshu-chāpa), jewelled pot (maṇi-kumbha), stalks of paddy grain (śāli-puñja), lasso (pāśa), elephant-goad (sṛṇi) and water-vessel (kalaśa); with the remaining hand he holds in embrace the consort, who is seated on his left lap and is fair-complexioned (gaurāṅgi). Gaṇapati himself is red in body-colour (śoṇāṅga).

It is, however, uncertain why he is called 'uddaṇḍa'; for the raised staff is not among the details mentioned in dhyāna-śloka. It is possible that he is so named because he is a

2-11

### UDVĀSANA

Literally meaning "thrown out", "banishment", the expression signifies the ceremonial send-off to the divine presence in the icon (viz. the movable icon, chala-bera) after the worship is completed. The icon is a mere figure until the divine presence is again invoked into it by the rite known as 'āvāhana'. This is true only in the case of household deities, and not for the icons (chala or achala) in the temple.

### UNMATTA-GAṆAPATI

'Gaṇapati that is highly elated' (reference to elephant in rut) is one of the major forms of Gaṇapati (See GAṆAPATI). He is four-armed, carrying in his hands lasso (pāśa), elephant-goad (aṅkuśa), bowl of sweet-cakes

(modaka-pātra) and his own tusk (sva-danta). His body-colour is red (rakta-tanu), and he is three eyed (tri-netra). This form is identified with the Ucchishṭa form (See UCCHISHṬA-GANAPATI). 'Unmatta' also refers to the plant called 'dhustūra' (or dattūra, white thorn-apple) which causes and cures insanity. Among its synonyms are unmatta (highly elated), madana (erotic), devatā (godling), śaṭha (obstinate). The plant is not only extensively used in folk medicine, but is worshipped in the countryside. Like arka (Calatropis gigantea), this plant is associated in folklore with Gaṇapati.

### UNMATTĀ-BHAIRAVA

One of the eight Bhairava-forms (See ASHTA-BHAIRAVA and BHAIRAVA). In this form he is shown as nude (digambara), youthful (kumāra), pacific (śānta), boon-bestowing (vara-da), and three-eyed (tri-netra). His body-colour is golden, and he is seen riding a horse or accompanied by a horse (aśva-vāhana-saṁyuta). He carries in his four hands sword (khaḍga), shield (kheṭaka), wooden pestle (musala) and skull-bowl (kapāla). His spouse (śakti) is Vārāhī.

### UNMĪLANA

The act of 'opening', more specifically of the eyes of the icon (netronmīlana). This is a ritual, necessary and important, that is resorted to after the sculpting of the icon in stone (to be worshipped in the sanctum) is completed, and before the final installation (pratishṭhā). The sculptor would have left unfinished only the delineation of the eye-balls and the 'vision' (dṛṣṭi), which is done during this ritual. This is done either by the chief sculptor (sthapati) or by the initiated priest (dikṣhita), within the sanctum, after the icon has been installed in its position and preliminary rites have been gone through. The icon is supposed to acquire 'life' and become worthy of worship only when this is done.

### UPAGRĪVA

An ornament for the neck ; a jewelled clasp going round the neck.

### UPACHĀRA

Sequences in a session of worship ; attendance or service offered to the deity. *Tantra-sāra* (Siddha-Yāmala) enumerates as many as sixty-four upachāras, especially in connection with the worship of Śakti. Some texts prescribe eighteen, some sixteen, some ten, and some eight upachāras. In temple-worship, the usual number of upachāra offerings are sixteen (śoḍaśopachāra) : (1) water for the feet (pādya) ; (2) water of adoration (arghya) ; (3) water for sipping (āchāma) ; (4) bath (snāna) ; (5) garments and ornaments (vasana-bhūṣaṇa) ; (6) sandal-paste (gandha) ; (7) flowers (pushpa) ; (8) fragrant incense (dhūpa) ; (9) light (dīpa) ; (10) food (naivedya) ; (11) water for washing the mouth (punar-āchāma) ; (12) betel-nut and leaves (tāmḃūla), (13) holding the mirror (darpaṇa), fanning (vyajana), etc ; (14) laudatory verses and music (stotra) ; (15) water for satiation (tarpaṇa), and (16) prostrations (namaskriyā). (See ARCHANA).

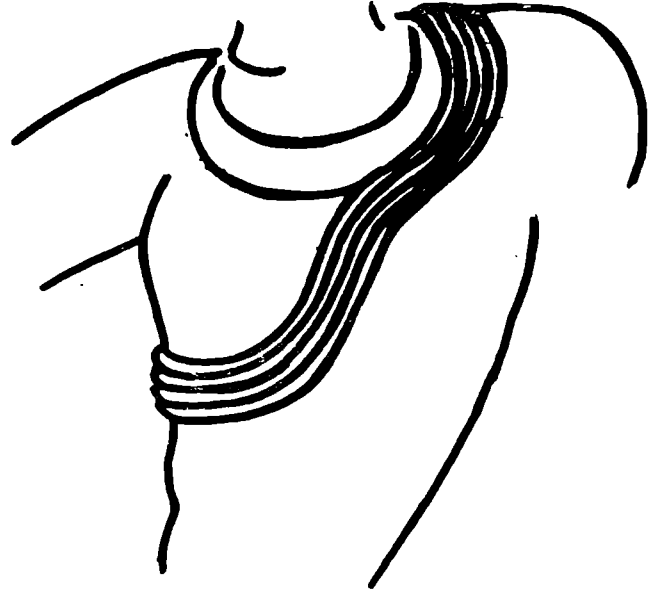
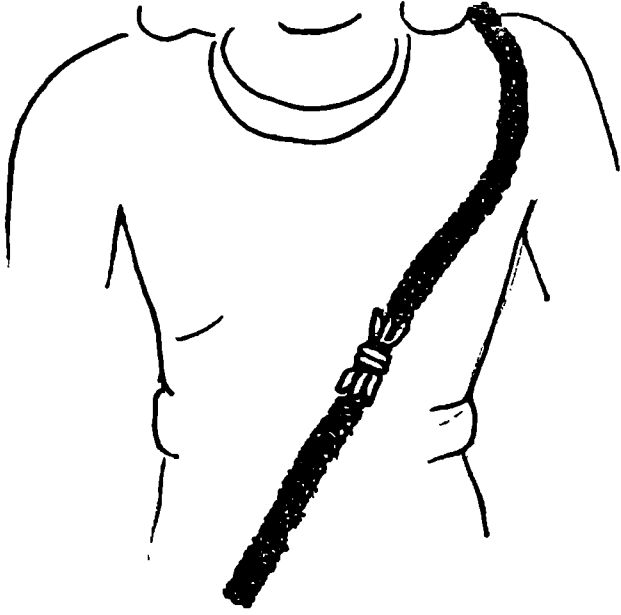
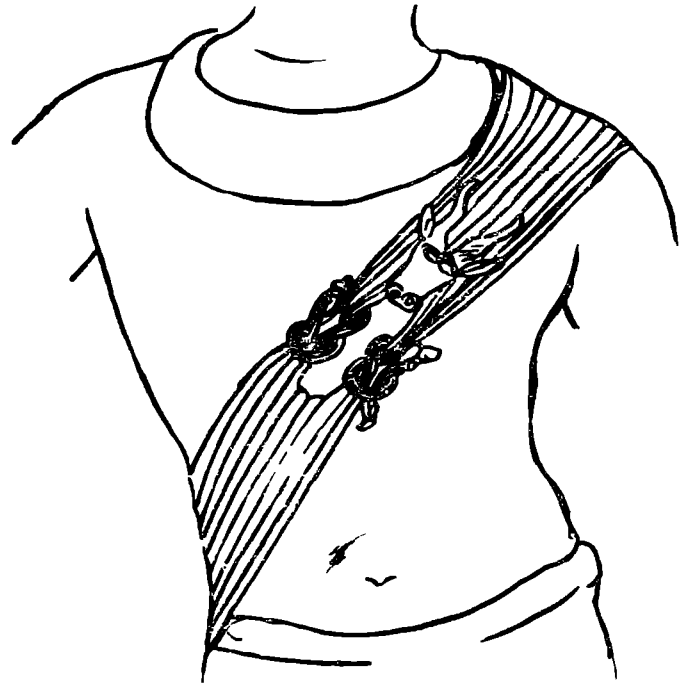
In household iconic worship, the minimum upachāras are regarded as five-fold (pañchopachāra) : (1) sandal-paste and unguents (gandha) ; (2) flowers (pushpa) ; (3) incense-burning (dhūpa) ; (4) waving lights (dīpa) ; and food-offering (naivedya). They are preceded by the rite of invocation and welcome (āvāhana and svāgata including āsana), and followed by normal send-off (visarjana). It can be seen that the deity receiving the upachāras is treated like an honoured guest.

### UPADEVATĀ

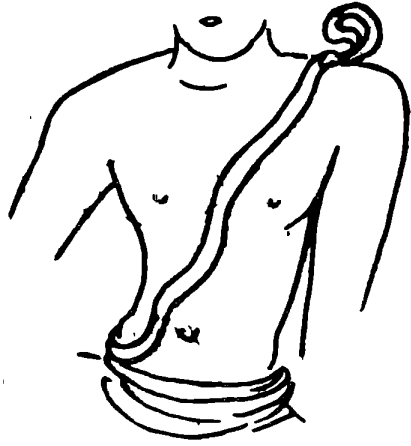
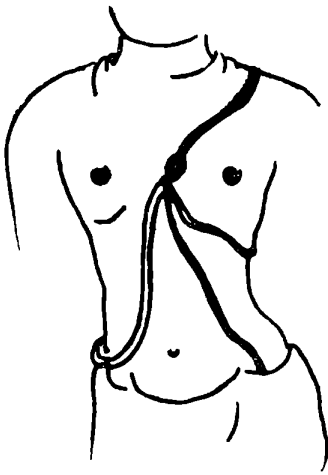
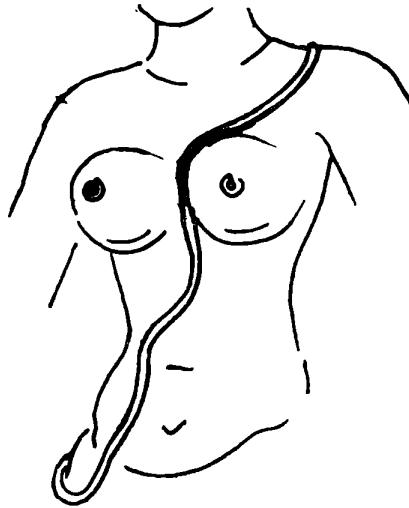
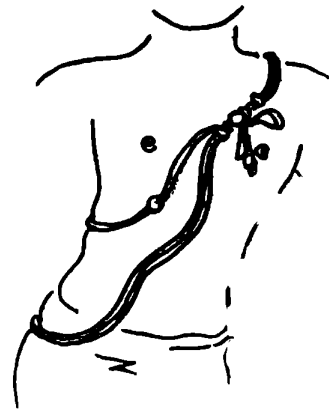
Minor divinities like bhūta, yaksha, nāga and gandharva ; also the attendant divinities (parivāra-devatās).

## UPAVITA

The sacred cord (also called 'sacrificial cord', *yajñopavita*) in three strands that hangs down from the left shoulder, across the chest and goes round the body from under the right arm. In icons, it is shown as plain strands, or is occasionally bejewelled. In early iconography, it is delineated as the skin of the black antelope (*kṛshṇājina*). The *Smṛti* texts prescribe that it must be worn in the absence of the mandatory upper cloth (*uttariya*).



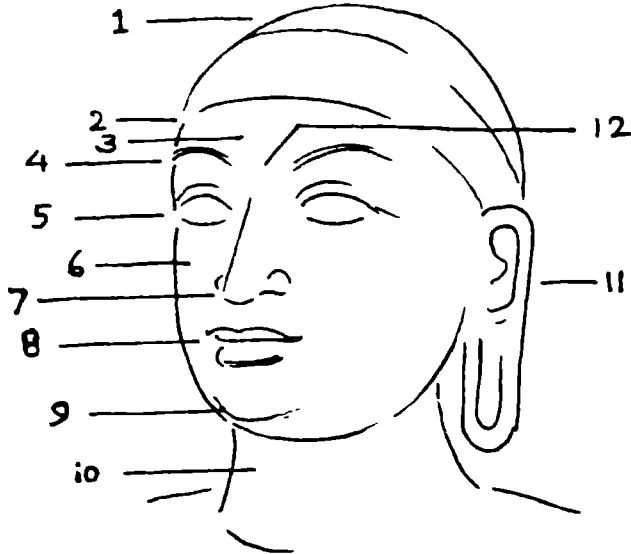
UPAVITA



UPAVITA

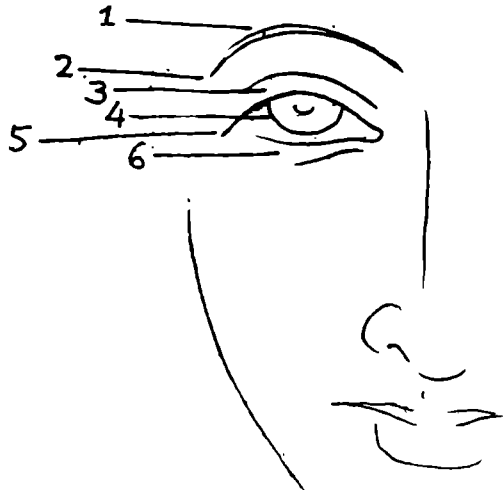
## UPĀṆGA

A minor limb (See ANGA) or part of the body, like the chest (vakshah-sthala), fingers (aṅguli), thighs (jānu).



I SIRAS—THE HEAD

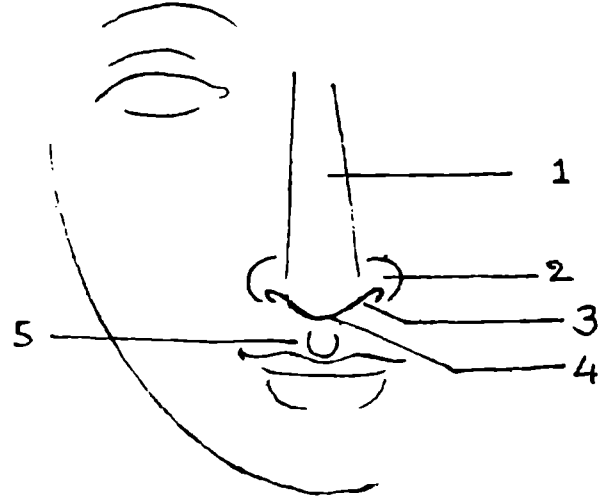
1. murdhanta (upper limit of head)
2. kesanta (hair-line)
3. lalata (forehead)
4. bhru (eye-brow)
5. akshi or netra
6. kapola (cheek)
7. nasa (nose)
8. asya or mukha (mouth)
9. chibuka (chin)
10. kantha or gala (neck)
11. karna (ear)
12. bhru-madhya (space between eye-brows)



II AKSHI—THE EYES

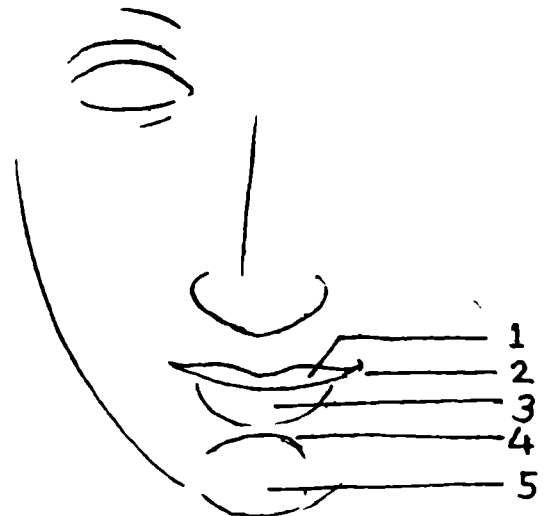
1. bhru (eye-brow)
2. bhru-puccha (end of brow)
3. urdhva-varma (upper eye-lid)
4. kaninika (pupil of eye)
5. netranta (corner of eye)
6. adho-varma (lower eye-lid)

In the Śaiva manuals of worship, upāṅga relates to the embellishment of the Icon (as deity) with garlands, unguents, garments and ornaments, and providing for it seat (āśana) and enclosure (āvaraṇa) (See ANGA-BHAVA).



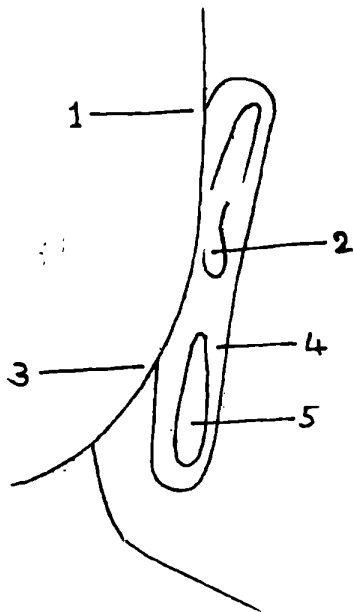
III NASA—THE NOSE

1. ghona or nasika (nose)
2. nasa puta (nose wing)
3. nasa-dvara (nostril)
4. nasagra (nose-tip)
5. goji (depression below the nose-bridge and above the chin)



IV ASYA or MUKHA—THE MOUTH

1. uttaroshtha (upper lip)
2. srkkva (corner of mouth)
3. adharoshtha (lower lip)
4. chibuka (depression above the chin)
5. hanu-sandhi (chin)



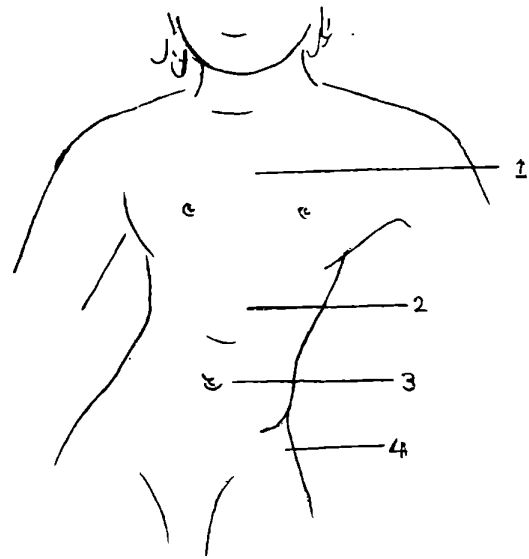
#### V KARNA—THE EAR

1. karna-mula (the upper attachment of ear to head)
2. karna-srotas (ear-hole)
3. karna-vesana (lower attachment of ear to head)
4. karna-nala (pendant lobe of ear)
5. karna-mandala (hole bored in ear)



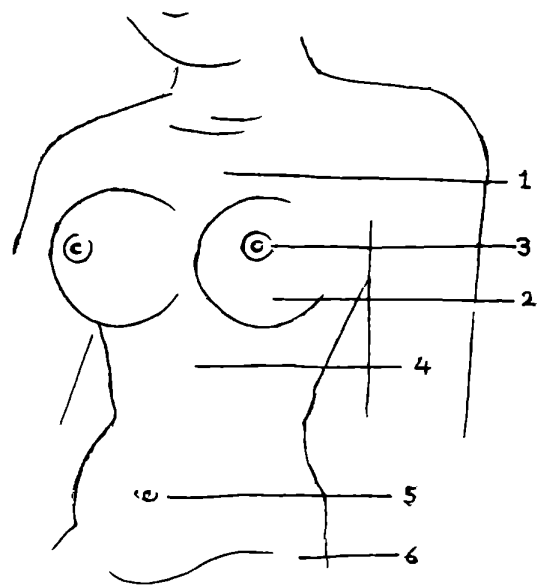
#### VI KANTHA—THE NECK

1. kanthagra or grivagra (top of neck)
2. gala (throat)
3. kantha-mula (bottom of neck)
4. hikṣa (larynx depression)
5. jatru (collar bone)



#### VII MADHYA-DEHA—TORSO (male)

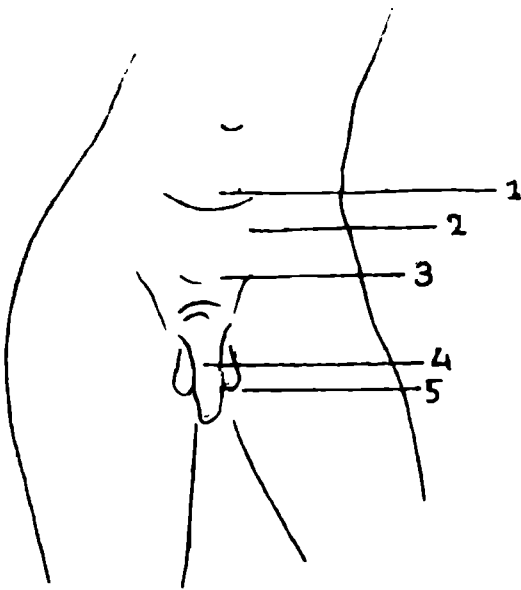
1. uras (chest)
2. madhya (kukshi) (belly)
3. nabhi
4. kati (hip)



#### VIII MADHYA-DEHA—TORSO (Female)

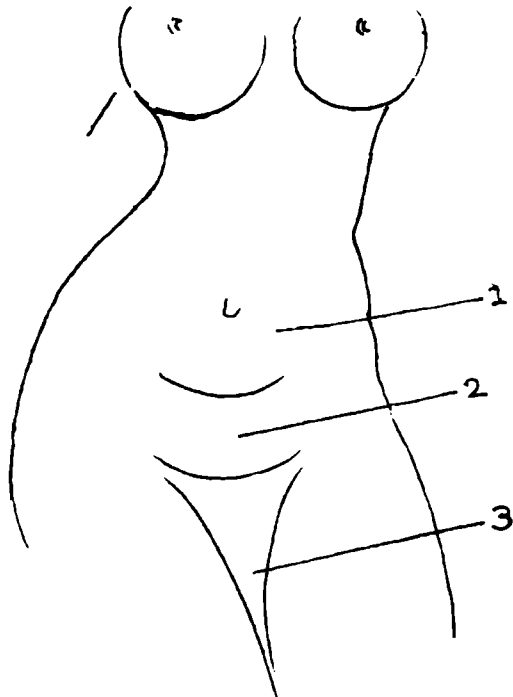
1. uras (chest)
2. stana (breast)
3. chuchuka (nipple of breast)
4. madhya (middle region)
5. nabhi (navel)
6. sroni (waist, loins)





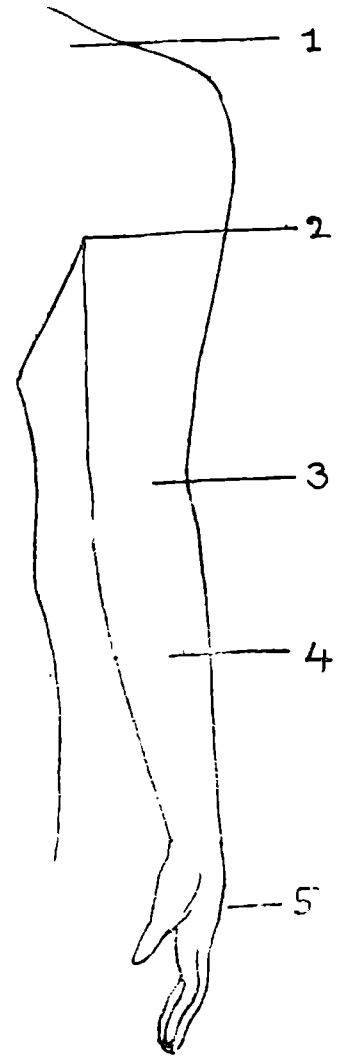
IX ADHOBHAGA—THE LOWER TORSO (Male)

1. kati (hip)
2. kati-bandha (hip formation)
3. guhya (the pubic region)
4. medhra (penis)
5. mushke (testes)



X SRONI-MANDALA—THE LOWER TORSO (Female)

1. kati (hip)
2. guhya (pubic region)
3. yoni (vulva)



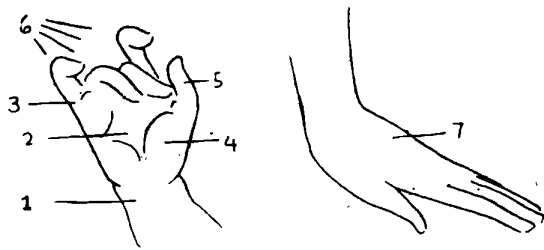
XI BAHU—THE ARM

1. amsa or skandha (shoulder)
2. keksha (arm-pit)
3. kurpara (elbow)
4. prakoshtha (fore-arm)
5. kara (hand)



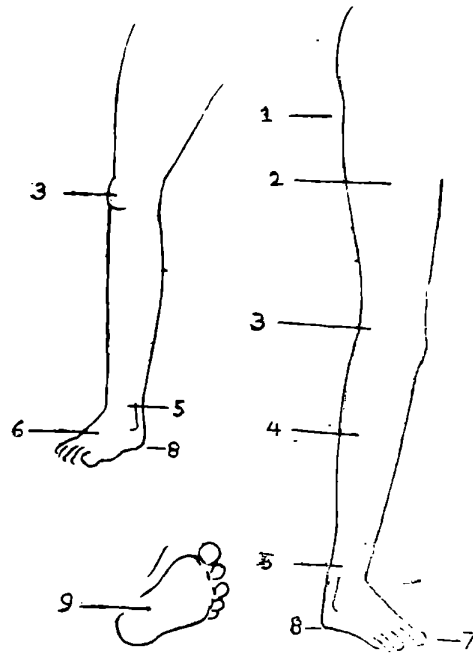
XII BAHU—THE ARM

1. nija-bahu (normal arm)
2. para-bahu (extra arm at the back)



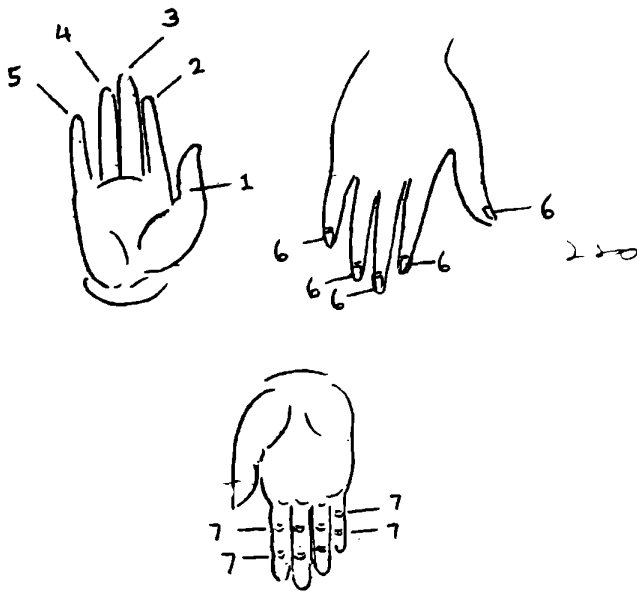
### XIII KARA (HASTA) —THE HAND

1. mani-bandha (wrist)
2. kara-tala (palm)
3. talagra (outer edge of palm)
4. sukodara (fleshy mound between root of thumb and wrist)
5. angushtha (thumb)
6. anguli (finger)
7. parshni-hasta (back of palm)



### XV URUPADHAU—THE THIGHS AND LEGS

1. uru (thigh)
2. uru-madhya (middle of thigh)
3. janu (knee)
4. jangha (shank)
5. gulpha (ankle)
6. pada (foot)
7. padanguli (toes)
8. parshni (heel)
9. pada-tala (sole of foot)



### XIV ANGULI — FINGER

1. angushtha (thumb)
2. tarjani (fore-finger)
3. madhyama (middle-finger)
4. anamika (ring-finger)
5. kanishtha (little-finger)
6. nakha (nail)
7. parva (finger-digit)

## UPĀDĀNA

One of the five periods of worship, each with its appropriate duties (pañcha-kāla-kṛtya), it comes after the initial approach (abhi-gamana) in the early hours of the morning (See ABHIGAMANA), and before the noon-tide worship (ijyā). It is distinguished by collecting the materials (like tulasī leaves, flowers, water etc.), and making the preparations necessary for worship and for the food that is partaken after the worship is over.

## UPENDRA

Name of Viṣṇu, especially in his incarnation for suppression of Bali's might (See AVATARA and VAMANA). He was born to Aditi-

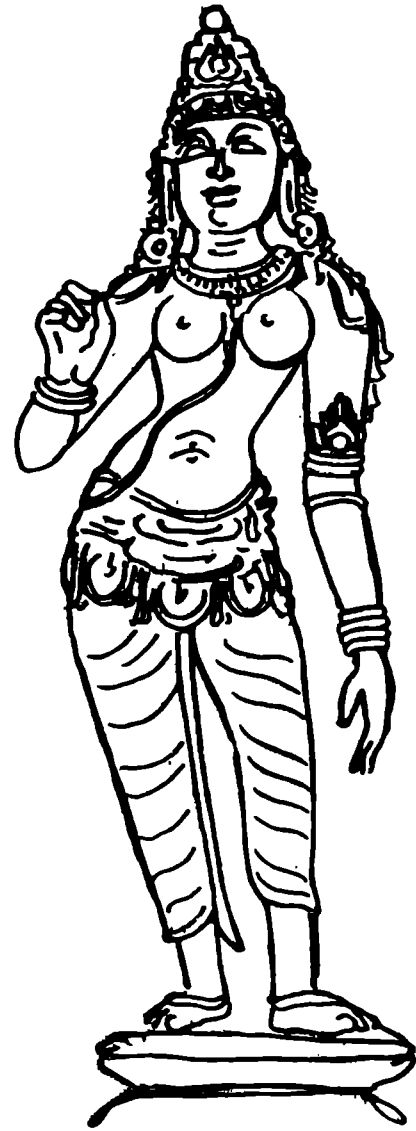
from Kaśyapa, after Indra was born (and hence called Upendra). One of the twenty-four forms of Viṣṇu (See CHATURVIMSATI-MURTI), he is regarded as sky-blue in colour (*nīla-varṇa*), four-armed, carrying (in a circumambulatory manner commencing with the right normal hand) conch-shell (*śaṅkha*), mace (*gadā*), discus (*chakra*) and lotus (*padma*). The form of Lakṣmī consorting with Upendra is named *Sundarī*; the body-colour of Upendra is described as rain-bow (*indra-chāpa*) (See CHATURVIMSATI-MURTI and VIṢṆU).

## UMĀ

Name of Pārvatī, consort of Śiva. The expression is explained in different ways : (1) when she, as the daughter of Menakā, was engaged in severe austerities for gaining the hand of Śiva, her mother pleaded with her not to torture herself so (*u* is "oh", *mā* is "don't") ; (2) the glory (*mā*, *lakṣmih*) of Śiva (*oh*) ; and (3) one who alone can measure (*māti*, *minute*) Śiva (*um*, *Śivam*).

## UMĀ-TĀṆḌAVA

One of the nine forms of Śiva's dance (See NATARAJA). In this form, he has his consort (Umā) by his side, but the form is distinguished from other forms by having six arms and by the white complexion. He carries in his hands the gesture of protection (*abhaya*), kettle-drum (*ḍamaru*), spear (*śūla*), skull-cup (*kapāla*), and the gesture of wonderment (*vismaya*) ; the remaining hand (normal left) is thrown across in the form of an elephant's trunk (*gaja-hastopama*). The left foot is placed on the *Apasmāra-puruṣa* (See APASMARA), and the right leg is raised in a posture corresponding to the left. Śiva in this form is three-eyed ; his hair-tresses are arranged in circular braids (*jaṭā-mukuṭa*) ; there is the iconic representation of the river Gaṅgā on his head ; the body is bedecked with various ornaments ; and he wears tiger-skin as his upper-cloth (*uttariya*). Umā (*viz.* Pārvatī) stands on his left side.



UMA (Kamarasavalli temple)

## UMĀ-MAHEŚVARA

Also called Umā-sahita, it is a seated form of Śiva with Umā (*viz.* Pārvatī) by his side (to the left). The two are seated on *bhadra-pīṭha* (See ASANA), in a relaxed posture (*sukhāsana*), the right-leg dangling down and the left doubled up across, resting on the seat (or the left leg dangling down with the right one tucked on the seat, according to some texts). Śiva is four-armed, carrying in his hands the gesture of protection (*abhaya*), the gesture of boon-bestowal (*varada*, or alternately the hand held in the 'lion-ear' pose, *siṃha-karṇa*, See MUDRA), battle-axe (*paraśu*) and antelope (*mṛga*). He is three-eyed, handsome and

bedecked with ornaments. The two ears are adorned with dissimilar ear-pieces : the crocodile-shaped one (nakra-kuṇḍala) on the right, and leaf-shaped one (patra-kuṇḍala) on the left.

Umā is two-armed, with red-lotus (kamala) or blue-lotus (utpala) in her hand, and her left hand resting on the seat or in the 'lion-ear' pose (See MUDRA). She sits in the same posture as Śiva. She is pretty, bedecked with all auspicious ornaments, wearing a tiered-crown (karaṇḍa-makuṭa), and silken garments. Her body-colour is greenish (harit), and the colour of her garment is red.

This form presents only Umā and Śiva (unlike in Somāskanda, Vighneśa-prasanna, or Chaṇḍeśānugraha forms) (See SIVA).



UMAMAHESVARA at Vittala, S.K.

## UMĀLĪNGANA

The form of Śiva, where he is seen embracing Umā (viz. Pārvati), either in a seated

(āsina) or in a standing (sthānaka) posture, with Umā to his left (See ALINGANA-MURTI).

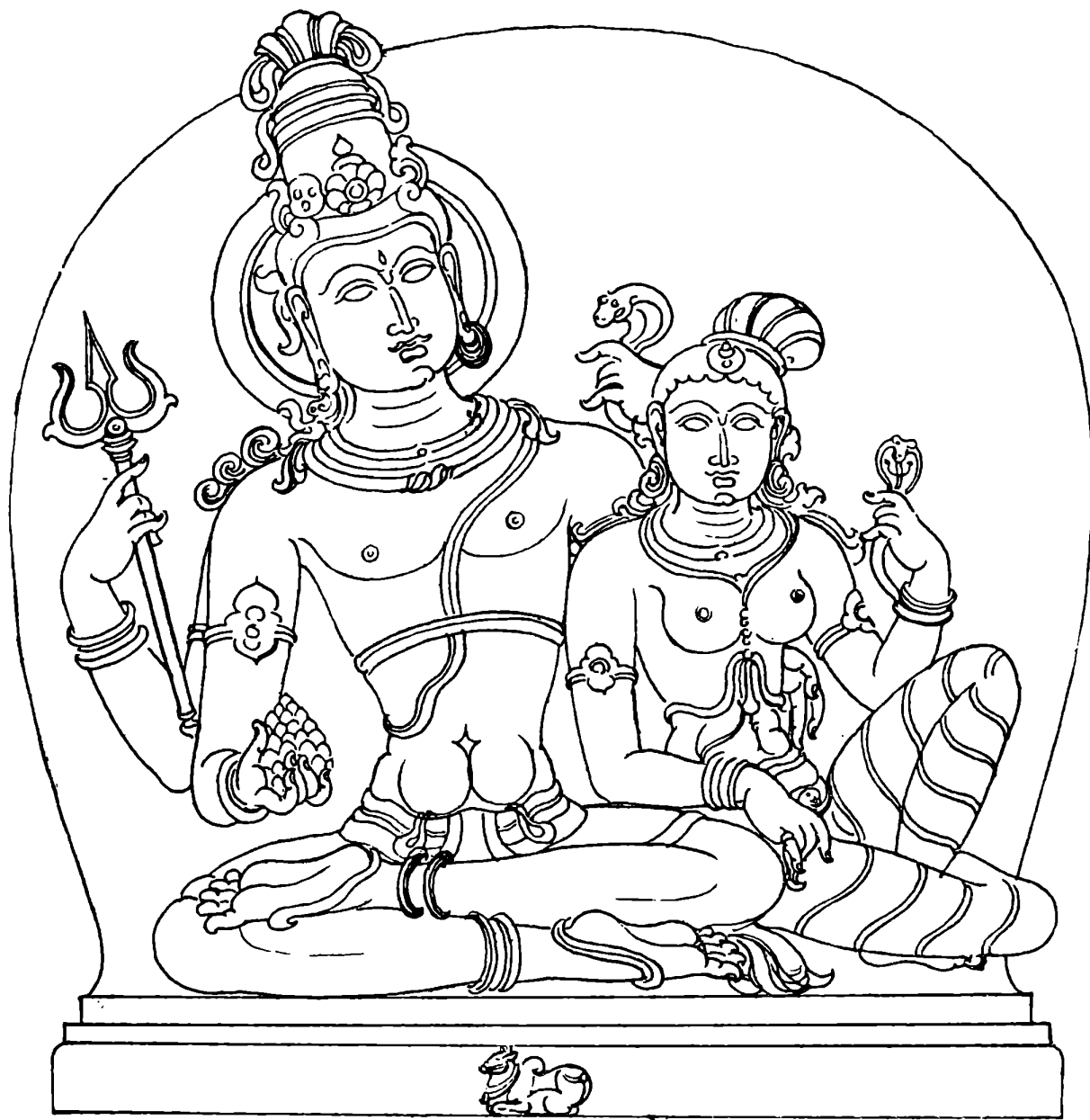
## UMĀ-SAHITA

The form of Śiva seated along with Umā (viz. Pārvati) on the same seat (bhadrā-pīṭha), and under the same 'arc of light' (prabhā-maṇḍala) (See UMA-MAHESVARA).

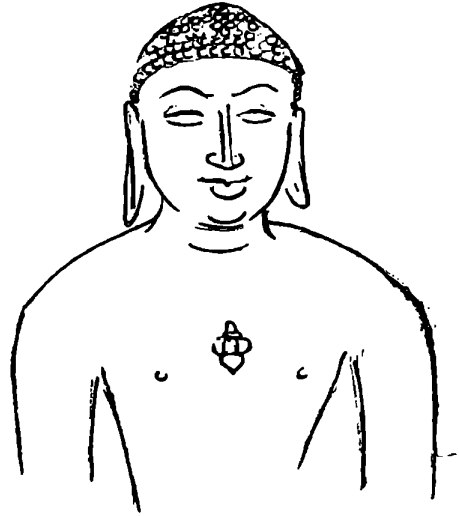
## USHNĪSHA

The head, or more commonly the turban worn on the head; in the icons of Buddha, small protuberance on the head, which is a mark of greatness (mahāpuruṣa-lakṣaṇa). It is stylized as a diadem or crown in many icons.

There is a group of eight minor two-armed divinities in northern Buddhism (especially in Tibet and China) who are called 'Ushnīshas'. They are located in the eight directions (diks): (1) vajroshnīsha ('thunderbolt-ushnīsha') in the East, white in body-complexion, and showing in one hand the gesture of earth-touching (bhūmi-sparśa, See MUDRA); (2) Ratnośhīsha ('gem-ushnīsha') in the southern quarter, blue in colour, and showing gesture of boon-bestowal (varada); (3) Padmośhīsha ('lotus-'), West, red, and contemplative posture (dhyāna-mudrā); (4) Viśvośhīsha ('universal-'), North, green and gesture of protection (abhaya); (5) Tejōśhīsha ('fire-'), South-East, light red (viz. red mixed with white, sita-rakta-mīśra-varṇa), holding solar-disc; (6) Dhvajōśhīsha (banner-'), South-West, reddish blue-black (rakta-mīśra-kṛṣṇa), holding in the two hands the banner or the wish-fulfilling gem (chintāmaṇi); (7) Tikṣhōśhīsha ('sharp-'), North-West, sky-green (nabhah-śyāma), sword (kṛpāṇa), and book (pustaka); and (8) Chhatrośhīsha ('parasol-') North-East, white (śubhra) and holding a parasol (chhatra). It is, however, not clear why these divinities are called 'Ushnīshas'.



UMAMAHESVARA (Stone, Egmore Musuem. Madras)



USNISHA

## USHNĪSHA-VIJAYĀ

A divinity belonging to the pantheon of Mahāyāna Buddhism, especially popular in Nepal. She is an emanation of the dhyāni-Buddha, Vairochana (See VAIROCHANA), and is the guardian-spirit of the sacred chaitya. She is visualized as a well-bedecked young woman (nava-yauvanā), fair-complexioned, three-headed, three-eyed and eight-armed. She is seated in the vajra-paryāṅka attitude (See ASANA). Her face to the right is yellow and the face to the left is blue in colour (the central one being white). She carries in her hands crossed-thunderbolt (viśva-vajra), a lotus on which Buddha is seated (padmastha-Buddha), arrow (bāṇa) and the gesture of boon-bestowal (varada) on the right side; bow (chāpa), lasso with the gesture of warning (tarjanī-pāśa), the gesture of protection (abhaya), and pitcher filled with water (pūrṇa-kumbha) on the left side. She is said to reside in the innermost cell of the chaitya (chaitya-guhā-garbha).



USHNISHA-VIJAYA

## ŪRDHVA-KEŚĪ

One of the sixty-four yoginīs (See YOGINĪ)

## ŪRDHVA-GAṆAPATĪ

One of the major forms of Gaṇapati; obviously a tāntrik form like the Unmatta and Uchchhishṭa forms. The exact significance of the expression 'ūrdhva' is uncertain. It is probable that it relates to the Ūrdhvāmnāya, an extended tradition of the Śākta sect. Gaṇapati is here shown as embracing the spouse (devī), who is seated on his lap. Gaṇapati's body is of the colour of burnished gold ('kanakojjvalāṅga'). He is six-armed, and in his hands are the kalhāra flower, bunch of the ears of paddy (śāli-kaṇīśa), sugar-cane bow (ikshuchāpa), arrow (bāṇa), tusk (danta) and mace (gadā). The devī is two-armed, and greenish-yellow in body colour (haritāṅga-yasṭi). (See GANAPATĪ)

## ŪRDHVA-TĀṆḌAVA

One of the forms of the representation of Śiva as a dancer; the fifth among the nine forms (See NATARAJA), mentioned in *Kaśyapa-śilpa* (65th paṭala, 77-80). This form of dance is so called because the right leg is raised bolt upright, the tip of the foot touching the ear ('karṇāntam uddhṛtam savya-pādam'), while the left leg is slightly bent ('vāmam tu kuñchitam'). The dancer in this form is eight-armed, carrying in his hands on the right side the gesture of protection (abhaya), spear (śūla), lasso (pāśa), and kettle-drum (ḍamaru); and on the left side skull-cup (kapāla), fire-bowl (agni-pātra) and bell (ghaṇṭā); with the remaining arm stretched across to the right side in the shape of the elephant's trunk. Śiva is represented in this form alone, and sometimes the Apasmāra-purusha is seen as being trampled upon under Śiva's left foot.

This form is also described as 'Kālikā-tāṇḍava' (See KALĪKA-TANĀVA for the background story).

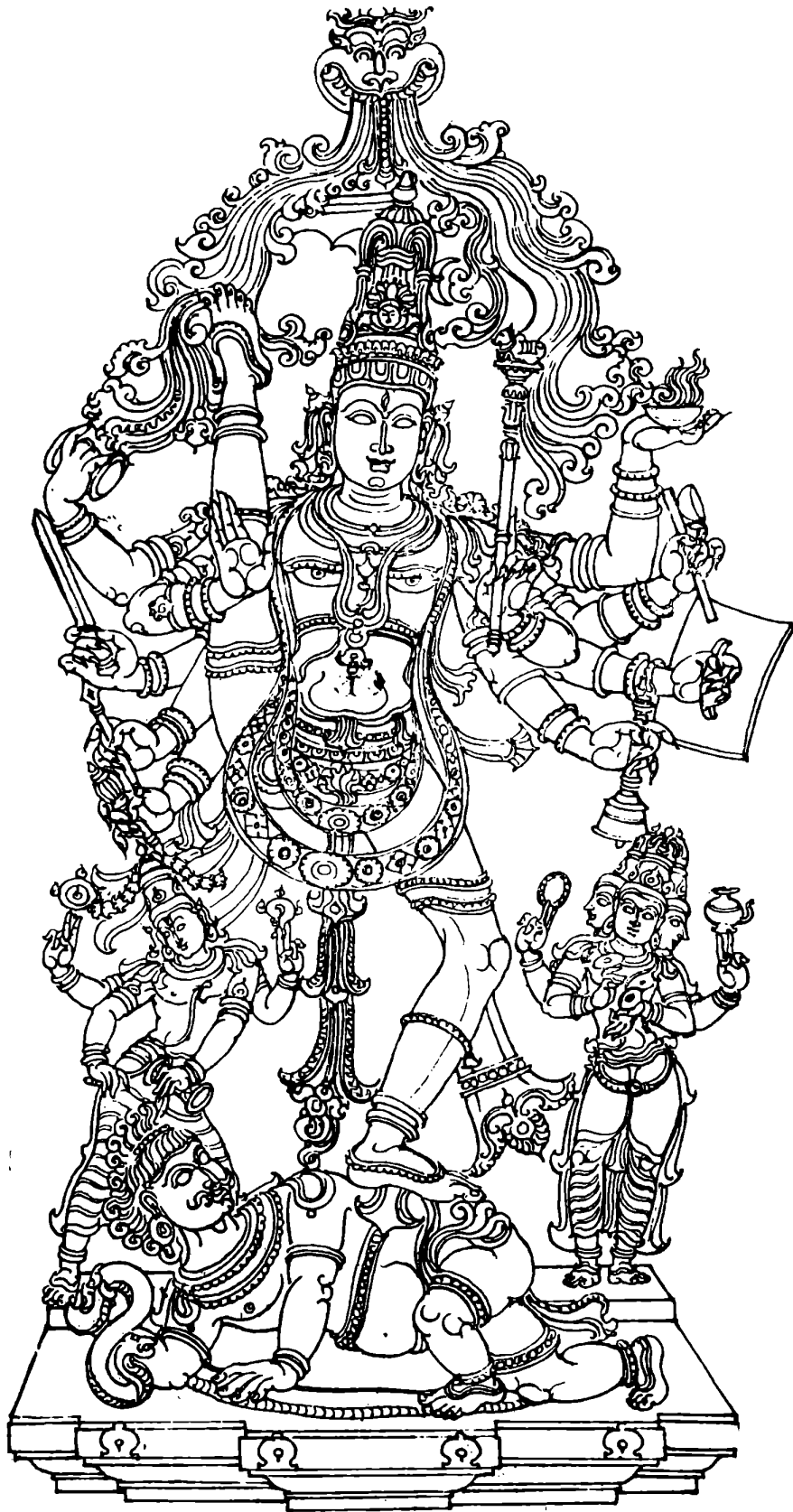
## ŪRDHVA-DR̥SHṬĪ

One of the attitudes of the face, where the eye-balls are rolled up, with gaze on an object above. It is usual for the ascetics (yogins) to be represented thus.



URDHVA-GANAPATI





URDHVA-TANDAVA (Stone, Visvanatha temple, Tenkasi. Tamil Nadu)



URDHVA-TANDAVA

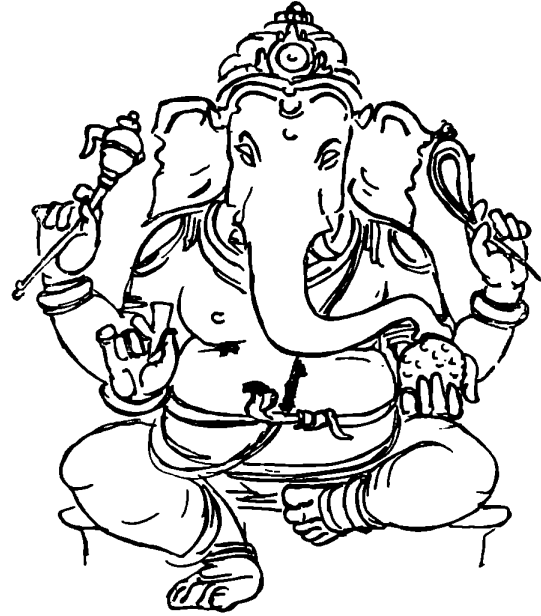
### URDHVA-PUNḌRA

The vertical mark on the forehead of the Vaishṇava icons.

### ṚṆA-MOCHAKA-GAṆAPATI

One of the thirty-two forms of Gaṇapati, mentioned in *Śrī-tattva-nidhī* and other texts, and which is worshipped specially by people who are harassed by debts. The form is said to be four-armed, carrying lasso (pāśa),

elephant-goad (aṅkuśa), his own tusk (danta) and jāmbū-fruit in his hands. He is described as resplendent like crystal-quartz (sphāṭika-prabha) and wearing red garments (raktām-śuka). He is seated in a relaxed posture (sukhāsana).



RNA-MOCHAKA-GANAPATI

### ṚSHABHA

Bull as the vehicle and devotee of Śiva (See NANDI).

### ṚSHABHA-DEVA

An incarnation of Viṣṇu, according to *Bhāgavata* (5, 6, 7) as son of Nābhi-rāja (son of Agnīdhra) and father of Bharata in the Satya-age; and the first of the twenty-four tīrthaṅkaras (See TIRTHANKARA), in the present period of time (kalpa), hence called Ādi-tīrthaṅkara or Ādi-nātha (See ADINATHA).



In the Jaina tradition, he was born as the son of Nābhi-rāja (who was the fourteenth Manu) and Maru-devī in Vinītanagara (Ayodhyā). He is regarded as the progenitor of all cultural details which distinguish the human species from the animal population. Before he took to the forest for severe penance, he was married to Yaśasvinī (also called Sumaṅgalā) and Sunandā. He had a hundred sons, including Bharata and a daughter named Brāhmī from Yaśasvinī; and a son named Bāhubali (See GOMMATA) and a daughter named Sundarī from Sunandā. As a prince enjoying the luxuries of an opulent life he chanced one day to witness the sudden death of a court-dancer (Niraṅjanā), and forthwith lost interest in normal worldly life. He renounced the pleasures of life, his household, his kingdom and even his garments, and became an ascetic. After years of severe penance in the Himālayan region, he attained to the 'kevala-jñāna' and became a jina, a tīrthaṅkara. He shook off his mortal coils on mount Kailāsa after a career of peripetatic preaching which re-established the ageless doctrine which is now known as Jainism.

In iconography, he is represented as seated or standing in contemplation, like other tīrthaṅkaras, but he is distinguished by his matted hair (jaṭā) on the head, by the bull (ṛṣhabha) as his symbol carved in the pedestal, and being flanked by the yaksha and yakshi peculiar to him, viz. Gomukha and Chakreśvarī (See also TIRTHANKARA).



RSHABHA

## ṚSHI

Sage and seer, wise one (from ṛsh, 'to know'), known for his intuitional understanding of the world and beyond, for his honesty of purpose, and for his compassion towards mankind which prompts him to communicate the highest truths. There are several classes ṛshis, like 'maharshis' (Vyāsa and others), 'paramarshis' (like Bhela), 'devarshis' (like Kaṇva), 'brahmarshis' (like Vaśiṣṭha), 'rājārshis' (like Ṛtuparna) and 'kāṇḍārshis' (like Jaimini). In each period of time (manvantara), there is a group of seven sages who are preeminent ('collectively called 'Saptarshis'), and they are sometimes iconographically represented.



RSHI (Stone, Chidambaram temple)

According to *Mārkaṇḍeya-purāṇa* (100. 31), the sages of the present period are Agnīdhra, Agnibāhu, Śuchi, Mukta, Mādhava, Śukra and Ajita. Marīchi, Atri, Aṅgiras, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, and Vaśiṣṭha are reckoned as the seven sages represented by the stellar constellation known as the Great Bear (saptarshi-maṇḍala). Besides the above, there are gotrarshis, who are considered progenitors of clans: Kaśyapa, Atri, Bharadvāja, Viśvāmitra, Gautama, Jamadagni and Vaśiṣṭha.

Iconographically, the sages usually represented are Agastya, Nārada, Gautama, Patañjali, and Vyāghrapada. Texts prescribe that the eight-tāla measure (viz. 96 aṅgulas) (See



RSHI-PATNI

ASHTA-TALA and TALAMANA) must be employed to portray sages. When, however, the seven sages mentioned above (belonging to the Saptarshi group) are portrayed, the inferior ten-tala measure (adhama-daśa-tāla, viz. 116 aṅgulas) is prescribed to be used. The sage is distinguished by the matted hair on the head, often rolled up into a sort of crown, and flowing beard, and also by two hands carrying water-pot (kamandalu) and rosary (akshamālā). The posture may be a standing one (sthānaka) or seated (āsina) in a contemplative mood (yoga-paṭṭa) or relaxed (sukhāsina).

The names of the seven sages are variously given in the iconographic manuals: Agastya, Pulastya, Viśvāmitra, Parāśara, Jamadagni, Vālmiki, and Sanatkumāra (*Pūrva-kāraṇa*). Manu, Agastya, Vaśiṣṭha, Gautama, Aṅgiras, Viśvāmitra and Bharadvāja (*Amśumad-bheda*); Bhṛgu, Vaśiṣṭha, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu,



RSHI (Lepakshi temple)



RSHI (Lepakshi temple)



RSHI (Lepakshi temple)



VASISHTA MAHARISHI CONDUCTING YAGA (Wood, Sri Ramasvami temple, Padmanabhapuram, Tamil Nadu)



Kaśyapa, Kauśika and Aṅgiras (*Suprabheda*, eight names given and described as 'munaya-stvime').

According to *Aṁśumad-bhedāgama* (49th paṭala), the sages must be represented as pale yellow in body-complexion and as wearing garments of different colours. They must be tranquil in aspect, and must wear the sacred cord hanging from the left shoulder. Two armed, they are to carry stick (daṇḍa) in one hand and umbrella (chhatra) in the other; in the absence of these two, the right hand must be shown in the gesture of teaching (jñāna-mudrikā), and the left placed on the thigh. *Pūrva-kāraṇa* (13th paṭala) and *Suprabhedāgama* (48th paṭala) prescribe that the garments worn by the sages must always be white. The former text suggests that they must be shown as carrying the water-pot (kamaṇḍalu) and rosary (aksha).

One of the sages, Bhṛgu, is visualized as wearing the crown called karaṇḍa-makuṭa, bedecked with all ornaments and his two hands showing the gestures of protection (abhaya) and boon-bestowal (varada) (cf. *Aṁśumad-bheda*).

*Suprabhedāgama* provides also details of the wives of the sages (ṛshi-patni) to be iconographically represented: tawny red in body-colour, pretty-eyed, wearing white garments, and with matted hair.

## EKA-JAṬĀ

Name of Ugra-Tārā who made her appearance to free the gods and humans from the terror of the asuras Śumbha and Niśumbha (See UGRA-TARA). She is so called because her braided hair sticking upright on the head was her most distinguishing feature ('ekā mukhyā jaṭā', 'tasyā jaṭādhikā') (cf. *Kālikā-purāṇa*, 61st ch.). *Mantra-mahodadhi* gives a variety of Tārā-mantra which is called Ekajaṭā-mantra, the seer of which is said to be Patañjali, and the benefit of which mantra is the bestowal of 'adamantine flower' (vajra-pushpa). *Sādhana-mālā* contains a worship-procedure concerning Ekajaṭā, and mentions that this was recovered (uddhṛta) by Siddha Nāgārjuna on the Tibetan soil ('bhoṭeshu'). It is obvious that this goddess originally

belonged to the Vajrayāna school of Buddhism, prevalent in Tibet and China and was later brought to India (See TARA).

The Vajrayāna description of this goddess (who is popular and celebrated in Tibet) is that she is exceedingly terrible, hideous and furious in aspect ('raudra', 'mahā-bhīma', 'sa-rosha-karāla-vaktrā') although in fresh youth ('navayauvana-sampannā'), blue-black in body-complexion, wearing tiger-skin on the waist, and dancing. Her hair sticks out upright in a single strand ('piṅgordhva-keśa-mūrdhajā'). She may be two-armed carrying a cutting weapon (kartri) and skull-cup (kapāla); or four-armed, carrying sword (khaḍga), arrow (śara), bow (chāpa) and skull-cup; or eight-armed, carrying sword, arrow, bow, skull-cup, cutting weapon (kartri), thunderbolt (vajra), blue lotus (utpala) and battle-axe (paraśu) (cf. B. Bhattacharya, op. cit.).

The worship of this goddess is said to drive away dangers and obstacles, subdue the enemies and opponents, and bring prosperity.

## EKA-TĀLA

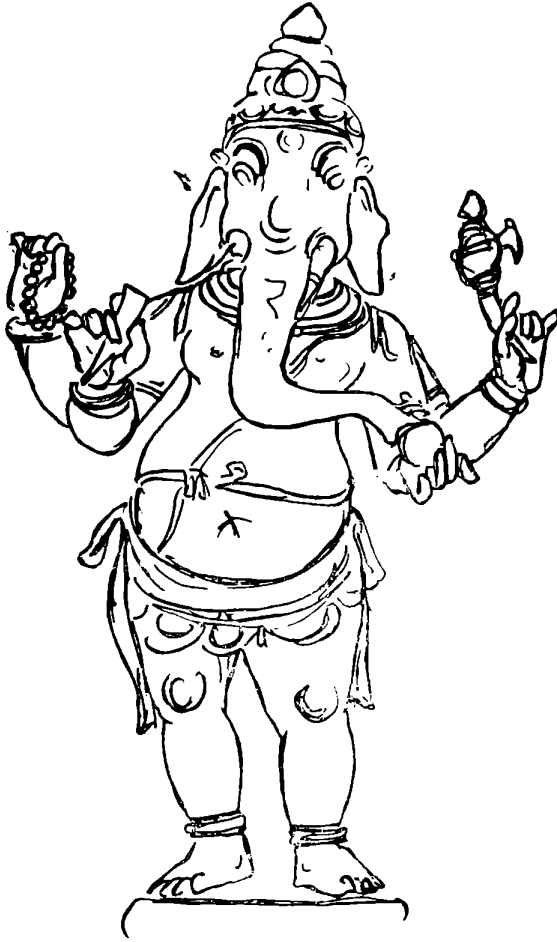
The measure (twelve aṅgulas) in which the lowest class of spirits, headless torsos (kabandhas), are prescribed to be fashioned (See TALAMANA).

## EKA-DANTA-GAṆAPATI

Although all forms of Gaṇapati are usually 'one-tusked' (derived from the legend of his having lost one tusk, when hit by the battle-axe during an encounter with Paraśu-rāma, See GANAPATI), there is one form so described specifically. He is in this form blue-black in body-colour (śyāma-tanu) and is four-armed, carrying in his hands hammer (kuṭhāra), rosary (aksha-sraja), sweet-cakes (laḍḍu) and his own tusk (danta).

## EKA-DEVATĀRCHANA

Worship of one deity (e.g. Śiva, Viṣṇu, or Śakti) as the most important ('eka' in the sense of 'pradhāna') form of Godhead, comprehending all other deities. Even when other



EKADANTA-GANAPATI

deities are worshipped on occasions (like Kṛṣṇa on the Śrāvaṇa-Janmāṣṭamī, Gaṇapati on Bhādrapada-chaturthī, Rāma on Chaitra-pratipat, Śiva on Śivarātri, Durgā during śaran-nava-rātri and so on), they are invoked only as specific manifestations or aspects of the one deity, the constant worship of which has been enjoined by family tradition, by one's own choice, or by the preceptor who gives initiation. It is a form of monotheism, admitting however plurality of manifestations.

### EKA-PĀDA-MŪRTI

An iconographic representation of the Vedic conception of Śiva as Ajaikapāt (See AJAIKAPAT), this form of Śiva is distinguished by having only one leg. This iconic form is frequently met with in the Śiva temples of

South India, and there are textual descriptions also. Śiva here is visualized as luminous like a million suns, three-eyed and four-armed, carrying in his hands the stone-mason's chisel (ṣaṅka), antelope (mṛga), and the gestures of protection (abhaya) and boon-bestowal (varada). On the left side of him is Viṣṇu, having four arms, carrying in his two upper hands conch-shell (śaṅkha) and discus (chakra), and the two normal hands joined in supplication (aṅjali-mudrā), and on the right is Brahmā, also four-armed, and carrying rosary (akṣa-sūtra) and water-pitcher (kalaśa) in the two upper hands, and the two normal hands joined in supplication. Viṣṇu and Brahmā appear to be emanating from the waist of Śiva, and have no legs of their own. The three deities (tri-mūrti) have collectively but a single leg, although there are three distinct bodies above the waist.

'One-leg' (eka-pāda) signifies Godhead as the only support for the entire universe, and the three gods Brahmā, as the creator, Viṣṇu as the preserver and Śiva as the destroyer are unitary in essence. The dhyāna-śloka says that this form abides in the centre of the manifested universe ('brahmāṇḍa-madhye'), during the great dissolution of the universe ('brahmāṇḍa-pralaye'), and with a firm foot-hold ('susaṁsthita-padam'). Śiva as the principle of destruction actually supports both creation and preservation; it is from this principle that the two other principles emerge, and by this principle alone are they sustained (See SIVA).



EKA-PADA-MURTI



## EKA-BERA

The expression 'solitary icon' refers to the installation and worship of the immovable (sthāvara) standing or seated image of Viṣṇu (recumbent image being precluded) in the 'brahma'-quarter (brāhmya-pāda) of the sanctum (cf. *Nāradya-saṃhitā*, 13, 40-41). The image of Viṣṇu in this case is not accompanied by his consorts Śrī-devī and Bhū-devī; nor is the metallic proxy-icon (kautaka-bera) installed in this or any other quarter of the sanctum (daiva, mānusha, or paśācha) (See GARBHA-GRHA). All the worship details (snapana etc.) both daily and occasional, are presented to the immovable stone icon only, unlike in the 'multiple-icon' (bahu-bera) temples (where along with the immovable stone icon, a metallic proxy-icon will also be installed and consecrated in the 'brahma'-quarter, for receiving the daily and occasional worship details).

The expression does not, however, refer to the attendant deities (parivāra-devatās) which may be installed in the enclosures (āvaraṇa) or in the vimāna above the sanctum.

## EKA-MŪRTI-ĀLAYA

The temple where worship is accorded only to one Viṣṇu image in the sanctum, although there may be the representations of the vyūha-forms and of Brahmā and Śiva along with those of the sages like Mārkaṇḍeya and Bhṛṅgu, either inside the sanctum or in the enclosures (āvaraṇa). This is distinguished from the tri-mūrti-ālaya, where worship is accorded to the three deities, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva equally in the sanctum. The expression 'eka-mūrti-ālaya' refers also the architectural detail of the vimāna covering only the sanctum, and not extending to the hall in front of it (ardha-maṇḍapa) or the corridors around the sanctum (antar-maṇḍala). There may, however, be multiple enclosures (āvaraṇas, usually three) and all the vyūha-forms and many attendant-deities may be installed in them. But they will not be accorded separate worship.

## EKA-MŪRTI-PRADHĀNA

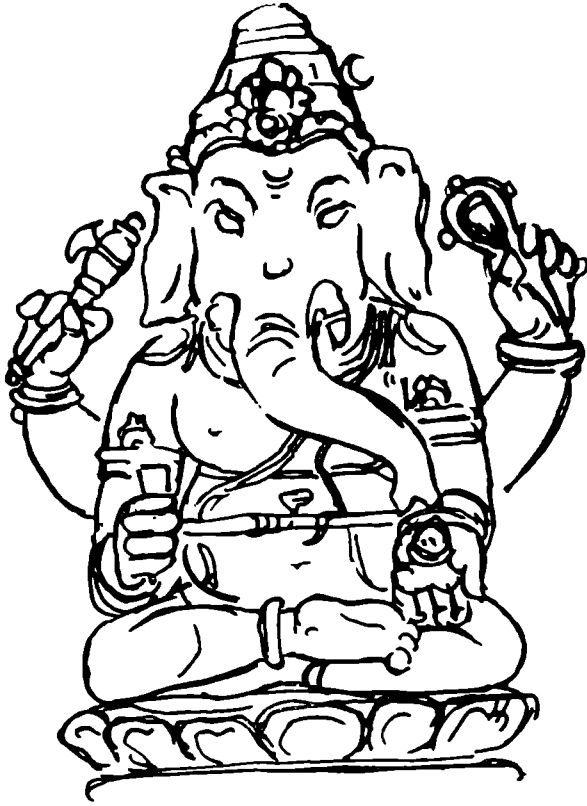
An ideology of the Mantra-siddhānta division of Pāñcharātra (See PANCHARATRA) which prescribes that when several icons are installed on the same yoga-pīṭha, one of them must be worshipped as preeminent, the others being regarded as attendant divinities ('ekaiva mūrtir ārādhyā prādhānyena', 'itarah punah... .. sāmpujyā parivāravat') (cf. *Pādma-saṃhitā*, charyā, 19, 113 ff). The multiple deities on the same pedestal may be the vyūha forms (Vāsudeva etc.), the Vyūhāntara-forms (Purusha etc.), the prādurbhāva-forms (i.e. the avatāras, Matsya etc.), or the prādurbhāvāntara-forms (Nṛsiṃha, Vāmana, Trivikrama etc.). Or, the deities may constitute a group like Rāma, Lakshmaṇa, and Sita; or it may even be a form like Lakshmi-nṛsiṃha or Bhū-varāha. In each of these cases, only one is regarded as the principal icon (eka-mūrti-pradhāna), like Rāma in the group (Sita and Lakshmaṇa being regarded as attendants), or Narasiṃha in the Lakshmi-nṛsiṃha form (Lakshmi being regarded as an attendant deity).

## EKĀKSHARA-GAṆAPATI

One of the major forms of Gaṇapati, symbolizing the one syllable 'gam' or 'Om' (praṇava). He is, in this form, stout and dwarfish (tundila), short-limbed (vāmana) red-complexioned (rakta), besmeared by red unguent (raktāṅgarāga) seated in lotus-posture (padmāsanastha), and adorned by the moon on the head (chandra-mauli) and by serpents on the body (ahibhūsha). He is four-armed and carries in his hands pomegranate (bija-pūra), lasso (pāśa), elephant-goad (aṅkuśa), and gesture of boon-bestowal (varada). The worship of this form is meant to bring happiness (sukhakara).

## EKĀDAŚA-RUDRA

The origin of Rudra as the fierce god is ascribed in legend to the anger of Brahmā, the creator, when the four sages (Sanaka, Sanātana, Sanandana and Sanatkumāra) whom he had initially brought into being for furthering the human species, were disinclined to do



EKAKSHARA-GANAPATI

so. Brahmā's fury took shape as Rudra (the howler), half of whose body was masculine and half feminine. At Brahmā's behest, the masculine half of the body was divided into eleven parts, each of which became a Rudra. Thus there were eleven (ekādaśa) Rudras.

The names of these Rudras are differently given. According to *Vishṇu-purāṇa*, they are Aja-Ekapāt, Ahirbadhnya, Virūpāksha, Sureśvara, Jayaṇṭa, Bahurūpa, Tryāmbaka, Aparājita, Vaivasvata, Sāvitra and Hara. An

alternate list of names has : Manyu, Manu, Mahināsa, Mahān, Śiva, Rtu-dhvaja, Ugraretas, Bhava, Kāma, Vāmadeva and Dhṛta-vrata. The eleven Rudras symbolize the ten organs (indriyas) (five of cognition and five of action) and the mind (manas) as the organ common to all of them (See RUDRA).

Corresponding to the eleven Rudras (masculine emanations) there were eleven consorts for them (Rudrāṇis, emanations from the feminine half of Rudra's body) : Dhī, Vṛttī, Uśanā, Umā, Niyutā, Sarpī, Ilā, Āmbikā, Irāvati, Sudhā and Dikshā (cf. *Vishṇu-purāṇa*, 1, 7) (See RUDRANI).

The iconographical details of the eleven Rudras are given in *Aṁśumad-bhedāgama* (49th paṭala), according to which the Rudras are Mahādeva, Śiva, Rudra, Śāmkara, Nīla-lohita, Īśāna, Vijaya, Bhīma, Deva-deva, Bhava and Kapāli. They are to be represented as standing in a perfectly balanced posture (samapāda-sthānaka) on a lotus-pedestal (padma-pīthopari), bedecked with all ornaments and flowers ; four-armed and three-eyed ; wearing matted hair done up as crown. They are shown as fair-complexioned, draped in white garments. They carry in their upper hands battle-axe (paraśu) on the right side and black antelope (kṛshṇa) on the other ; their right lower hand shows the gesture of protection (abhaya) and the left hand that of boon-bestowal (varada).

*Viśvakarma-sāstra*, however, has different prescriptions for each of the eleven Rudras, all of whom have sixteen arms (bāhu-shoḍaśa-kāṇvitān) :

| <i>Name of Rudra</i> | <i>Right Arms</i>                                                                                                                                        | <i>Left Arms</i>                                                                                                                                 |
|----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Aja               | pike (śūla)<br>goad (aṅkuśa)<br>skull (kapāla)<br>kettle-drum (ḍamaru)<br>snake (sarpa)<br>mallet (mudgara)<br>discus (sudarśana)<br>rosary (akshasūtra) | warning gesture (tarjanī)<br>khaṭvāṅga<br>mace (gadā)<br>spear (paṭṭīśa)<br>bell (ghaṇṭa)<br>śakti<br>battle-axe (paraśu)<br>water-pot (kuṇḍika) |
| 2. Ekapāda           | arrow (śara)<br>discus (chakra)<br>kettle-drum (ḍamaruka)                                                                                                | bow (dhanus)<br>bell (ghaṇṭā)<br>skull (kapāla)                                                                                                  |

| <i>Name of Rudra</i> | <i>Right Arms</i>                                                                  | <i>Left Arms</i>                                                                                               |
|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                      | pike (śūla)<br>mallet (mudgara)<br>snake (kshveḍāda)<br>khaṭvāṅga<br>upraised arm  | kaumudi (?)<br>warning gesture (tarjani)<br>water-pot (ghaṭa)<br>battle-axe (paraśu)<br>discus (chakra)        |
| 3. Ahirbudhnya       | mace<br>discus<br>sword (asi)<br>kettle-drum<br>mallet<br>pike<br>goad<br>rosary   | iron club (tomara)<br>spear<br>shield (charma)<br>skull<br>warning gesture<br>water-pot<br>śakti<br>battle-axe |
| 4. Virūpāksha        | sword (khaḍga)<br>pike<br>kettle-drum<br>goad<br>snake<br>discus<br>mace<br>rosary | shield<br>khaṭvāṅga<br>śakti<br>battle-axe<br>warning gesture<br>water-pot<br>bell<br>skull                    |
| 5. Revata            | arrow<br>sword<br>pike<br>mace<br>discus<br>goad<br>rosary                         | bow<br>shield<br>khaṭvāṅga<br>bell<br>warning gesture<br>battle-axe<br>spear<br>bowl (pātra)                   |
| 6. Hara              | mallet<br>kettle-drum<br>pike<br>goad<br>mace<br>snake<br>rosary<br>?              | spear<br>iron-club<br>śakti<br>battle-axe<br>warning gesture<br>water-pot<br>khaṭvāṅga<br>slab (paṭṭika)       |
| 7. Bahurupa          | kettle-drum<br>discus<br>snake<br>pike<br>goad<br>kaumudi (?)<br>rosary<br>bell    | skull<br>khaṭvāṅga<br>warning gesture<br>water-pot<br>bow<br>battle-axe<br>spear<br>?                          |

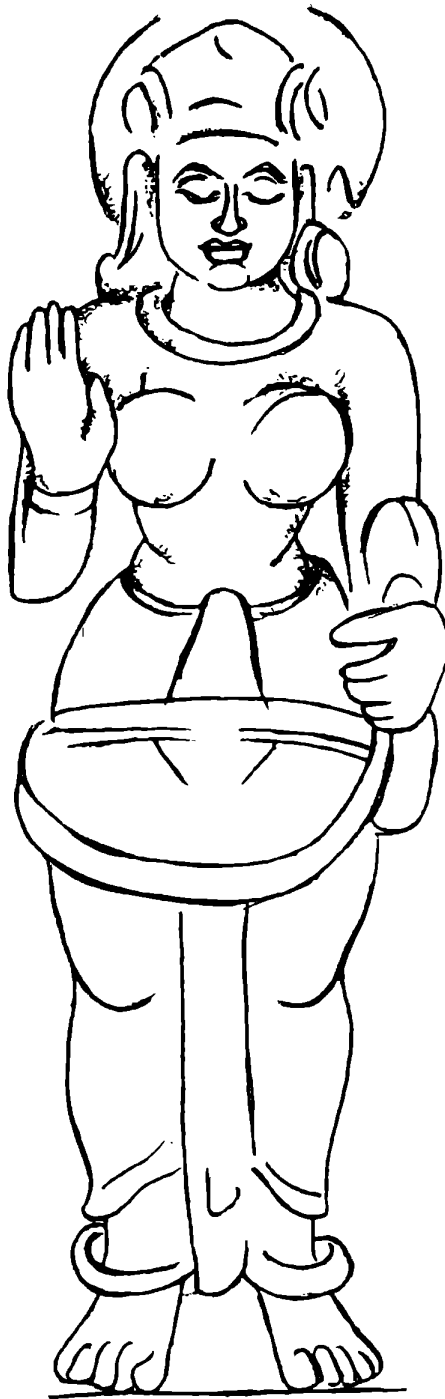
| <i>Name of Rudra</i> | <i>Right Arms</i>                                                              | <i>Left Arms</i>                                                                                        |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 8. Tryambaka         | discus<br>kettle-drum<br>mallet<br>arrow<br>pike<br>goad<br>snake<br>rosary    | mace<br>khaṭvāṅga<br>bowl<br>bow<br>warning gesture<br>water-pot<br>battle-axe<br>spear                 |
| 9. Sureśvara         | kettle-drum<br>discus<br>pike<br>goad<br>arrow<br>mallet<br>bow (chāpa?)<br>?  | lotus (pañkaja)<br>battle-axe<br>bell<br>spear<br>warning gesture<br>bow (dhanus?)<br>khaṭvāṅga<br>bowl |
| 10. Jayanta          | goad<br>discus<br>mallet<br>pike<br>snake<br>kettle-drum<br>arrow<br>rosary    | mace<br>khaṭvāṅga<br>battle-axe<br>skull<br>śakti<br>warning gesture<br>bow<br>water-pot                |
| 11. Aparājita        | iron-club<br>sword<br>goad<br>pike<br>snake<br>discus<br>kettle-drum<br>rosary | śakti<br>shield<br>mace<br>bowl<br>warning gesture<br>spear<br>lotus<br>bell                            |

(The weapons are held in the order given above, beginning with the top-most hand and ending with the bottom-most on each side)

## EKĀNAMŚĀ

A folk goddess of considerable antiquity. According to *Harivaṁśa* (59, 14, 47), she was an incarnation of Pārvatī, born as a child of Nanda (hence also called Nandā) and Yaśodā, the foster-mother of Kṛṣṇa (son of Devakī), purpose of the incarnation being to protect Kṛṣṇa from harm. She is also described as an incarnation of Viṣṇu's power of illusory projection or sleep (yogamāyā or yoga-nidrā). The black goddess, also known as Ekādaśā,

she was the tribal divinity of the Vṛṣṇi clan, adored as the sister of the heroes, Vāsudeva (Kṛṣṇa) and Balabhadra, and as one who preserved the former from harm at the hands of his cruel uncle Kāṁsa (*cf. Harivaṁśa*, 2, 2, 34-46). *Brahmāṇḍa-purāṇa* (3, 71, 220) and *Vāyu-purāṇa* (2, 34, 203) mention her as the goddess worshipped by the Vṛṣṇi clan; and *Lalita-vistara* calls her Ekādaśā and describes her as a goddess in the western quarter along with seven other goddesses Alambushā, Kṛṣṇā, Draupadī etc.



EKANAMSA (Figure in Patna Musuem)

She is identified with Bhadrā (or Subhadrā) and Kuhū (the dark goddess of the new-moon, amāvāsyā) (*Mahābhārata*, 3, 208, 8). *Ghaṭa-jātaka* (Fausboll, no. 454) calls her Añjanādevī

('the black goddess'), and describes her as the elder sister of Baladeva (Balarāma) and Vāsudeva (Kṛṣṇa). The early texts suggest that the three (Ekānamśā, Balabhadra and Kṛṣṇa) were worshipped together in places like Puri-Jagannātha in Orissa. Even now, she receives worship in Puri as Subhadrā, whose icon is flanked by Kṛṣṇa's on the left and Balabhadra's on the right.

*Bṛhatsamhitā* (58, 37) prescribes that the icon of Ekānamśā must be installed between Baladeva and Kṛṣṇa, and that she must be represented as two-armed, one hand resting on the loins (kaṭi-saṁsthita) and the other holding a lotus (sarojam udvahatī). *Skāndapurāṇa* (Purushottama-māhātmya) calls her Kātyāyanī, Bhadrakālī and Durgā. *Nārada-pāñcharātra* identifies Durgā with Viṣṇu himself ('paramā-śaktir mahā-viṣṇu-svarūpiṇī'), and *Gautamiya-kalpa* states that there is no difference between Kṛṣṇa and Durgā ('yah Kṛṣṇah saiva Durgā syād, yā Durgā Kṛṣṇa eva sah') (See DURGĀ).

It is probable that the widespread cult of Ekānamśā led in course of time to the worship of Durgā. According to *Harivaṁśa* (2, 2 and 3), Ekānamśā has many forms (bahurūpā), and is worshipped by wild tribal folk like Śabara, Barbara and Pulinda on hill-tops, river-banks, jungles and caves. The precise meaning of the expression 'ekānamśā' is uncertain. *Śabda-kalpa-druma* (1, p. 196) suggests "eko na amśah yasyāh" the significance of which etymological explanation, however, remains obscure.

249

## EKĀVALĪ

Necklace with a single strand.

250

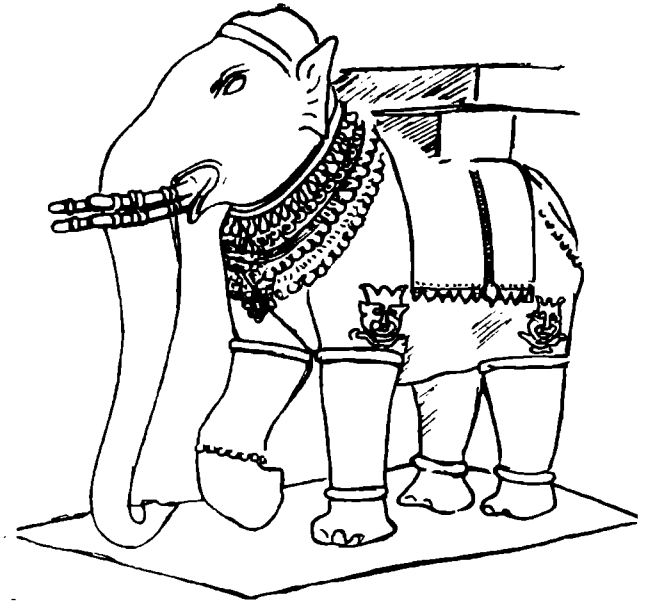
## AINDRA MANTRA

A magical formula, the full name of which is 'Aindra-triṣṭubh-chintāmaṇi', involves an iconographic conception of Indra, to whom the formula is dedicated. Indra here is regarded as the god who bestows on the devotee wealth and plenty. He is visualized as seated on the elephant in the celestial garden known as Nandana, filled with trees like kalpa-vṛksha, pārijāta, mandāra, harichandana and so on.



He holds in his hand a golden pot (sarpa-kumbha), from which a steady stream of jewels is flowing out. He is in a benevolent aspect (suprasanna) and is about to fulfil whatever the devotee desires (vāñchhitārtha-prada). Indra is imagined as accompanied by Śachī, his wife (Puloma-nandanā), to his left and by Mātali (the mahout of the elephant Airāvata) to his right. He is surrounded by Viśve-devas, the hosts of Maruts, the eight Vasus, the two Aśvins, the eleven Rudras and the Prajāpatīs.

Indra is here seated in a 'lotus-seat' and is four-armed, carrying in his hands the gesture of boon-bestowal ('kāmam', normal right hand), gesture of protection ('abhīti-mudrā', normal left hand), lasso (pāśa) and elephant-goad (aṅkuśa) in his upper hands, or alternately the weapons Śakti and Vajra in these hands. He wears red garments and fine unguents (cf. Dhyāna-śloka, *Prapañcha-sāra-sāra-saṁgraha*, 18, pp. 555-556).



AIRAVATA AS VAHANA

## AIRĀVATA

The mythical and mighty elephant, white in body-colour and four-tusked that emerged from the ocean when it was churned by gods and asuras; one of the eight elephants that support the world from the different directions (diggajas) (See ASHTA-DIGGAJA), and the vehicle (vāhana) of Indra, the guardian of the eastern quarter (See ASHTA-DIKPALA). Airāvata is described as the offspring of Irāvati, daughter of Bhādrāmātā, one of the ten daughters born to Kaśyapa (son of Brahma) from Krodhavaśā (daughter of Dakṣa-Prajāpati).

## AIŚVARYA-LAKSHMĪ

One of the eight forms of Lakṣmī (See ASHTA-LAKSHMI and LAKSHMI), bestower of prosperity and power to her devotee. She is four-armed, the two normal hands showing the gestures of protection (abhaya) and boon-bestowal (varada), and the two upper hands holding lotus-flowers (padma). She is seated on a lotus in the sukhāsana-posture (See ASANA), and her insignia is given as a caparisoned horse.



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