

**A Study of Semi-Divine Beings of Hindu Origin
as Represented in the Buddhist Sculptures of Gandhara**



**By
Gulzar Hakim**

**Taxila Institute of Asian Civilizations
Quaid-i-Azam University
Islamabad, Pakistan.
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A Study of Semi-Divine Beings of Hindu Origin as Represented in the Buddhist Sculpture of Gandhara



**The thesis is submitted in the partial fulfillment of requirements for
the degree of**

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in

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By

Gulzar Hakim

**Taxila Institute of Asian Civilizations
Quaid-i-Azam University
Islamabad, Pakistan
2022**

Dedication

My whole work is dedicated to all family members and the special memory of my (late) mother.

DECLARATION

The research work presented in this thesis was carried out by me in the Taxila Institute of Asian Civilizations, Quaid-i-Azam University Islamabad. The findings and conclusions are of my own investigation with discussion of my supervisor Dr. Ghani-ur-Rahman. No part of this work has been presented for any other degree.

Gulzar Hakim

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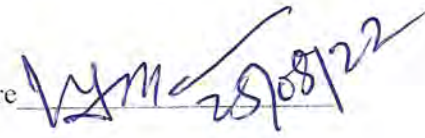
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Student's Name: Mr. Gulzar Hakim

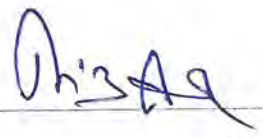
Signature: 

a) Examination Committee:

External Examiner 1: Dr. Muhammad Farooq Swati
House No 11-B, Street No 04,
Rahatabad Near Forest Institute
Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

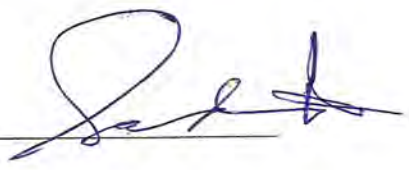
Signature: 

External Examiner 2: Dr. Riaz Ahmed
Ex. Director, NIHCR
M- 1856 Iqbal Pura Rawalpindi


Signature: 

b) Internal Examiner:


Dr. Sadeed Arif
Assistant Professor
Taxila Institute of Asian Civilizations
Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad.

Signature: 

Supervisor: Dr. Ghani-ur-Rahman
Director/Supervisor
Taxila Institute of Asian Civilizations
Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad.

Signature: 

Prof. Dr. Muhammad Idrees
Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences
Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad.

Signature: 

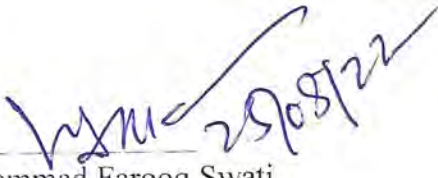
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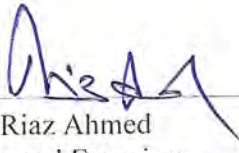
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Dated: 25-08-2022

Subject: **Viva-Voce Examination of PhD Scholar Mr. Gulzar Hakim "A Study of Semi-Divine Beings of Hindu Origin as Represented in the Buddhist Sculptures of Gandhara"**

We conducted the Viva-Voce examination of Mr. Gulzar Hakim on 25 August, 2022. We declared him passed and recommend awarding him Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Asian Studies.


Dr. Muhammad Farooq Swati
External Examiner


Dr. Riaz Ahmed
External Examiner


Prof. Dr. Ghani-ur-Rahman
Director/Supervisor

Controller of Examinations

"A Study of Semi-Divine Beings of Hindu Origin as Represented in the Buddhist Sculptures of Gandhara"

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Abstract

Gandhara art is the expression of mythology, belief and culture on diverse nature of materials in the artistic form. This artwork has solved many academic issues in the reconstruction of ancient history, mainly focusing classical period. Here, Gandhara art is utilized to reconstruct the mythologies of Semi-divine Beings related to Hinduism expressed in the Buddhist narrations of Philosophies in artistic form. This work establishes the connection between Hinduism and Buddhism as sharing the Semi-divine Beings around the central figures of veneration. Thus, this research reveals the deep connections of Buddhism with Hinduism as the philosophies of Semi-Devine Beings have been originated from the earlier ages pre-Vedic period and continues until now. Therefore, the Indian mythologies related to semi- divine beings, in Hindu text are visibly expressed in the Buddhist art of Gandhara with its consistent development.

The semi-divine beings selected here for this research includes yakshas and yakshinis, gandharavas and apsaras, and nagas andnaginis. These are the most prominent semi-divine beings which have been depicted in gandhara art besides its narration in the religious texts. Yakshas and yakshinis are mostly described in Hindu mythologies, as Semi-divine beings, heavenly beings, protector deities, lower class of beings and demons. They are mentioned in connection with major gods as a witness of the important events. Gandharvas and apsaras are the heavenly musicians, entertainers and helpers of the gods. And the nagas were the oldest venerated beings known to Indian mythologies before the Aryan's emergence and they made their way into Vedic cultures.

This thesis focuses on these three privileged classes of semi-divine beings which are depicted sub-servient to gods as their assistants and entertainers. The researcher has not only looked for the religious texts and myths to trace the origin and elaborate the development and importance of these semi-divine beings but has also identified and described them from the perspective of Buddhist art of Gandhara. This thesis has been presented in seven parts i.e., The Buddhist Art of Gandhara, yakshas and yakshinis, gandharvas and apsaras, nagas andnaginis and the last three parts consist of a catalogue where these semi-divine beings are identified in Gandharan Buddhist art.

All the three classes of Semi-divine Beings have also been adopted into Buddhism from Hinduism with little changes in their functions as depicted in the Buddhist Art at different occasion with Lord Buddha.

DRSML QAU

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This day, I remember my beloved (late) mother; her memories always compelled me to get this work. I dedicate this humble work to her as a token of love and commemoration. I owe a deep sense of gratitude and love for my father whose prayers are always with me.

Gulzar Hakim

Introduction

In the material world, all human beings instinctively carry a strong emotional predisposition to admire and credit things with strange secrets and intriguing surprises. This feeling of awing interest instantaneously belittles their stature against hidden latent energy of the unknown, subjugates them and terrorizes them to its best potential.

In pursuit of reality, man is consuming his intellect to understand the dichotomy of intangibles and tangibles constantly regulating his life cycle since his emergence on earth. He tries to translate the intangibles into a tangible material culture so that he could easily look forward to something seen to the world around to testify the existence of his explored divine power. Whether it is the Oracle of Delphi or the Primitive Cave Paintings, man has tried to establish a religious authority over humanity through one or the other matter since his coming into being. In this regard, religion is a soothing agent administered by human genius in which a common man seeks refuge from his everyday sufferings and for a divine guidance for a viable future strategy. The essence of the divine still remains in the unknown, and all the religions dogmatically establish its supremacy since their initiation as the vital source of their existence. In Egypt, Greece, Rome, Persia, Mesopotamia, Asia and the Far East, there had been a clear-cut religious practice through antiquity. All with their gods, semi-gods, deities and demons had some or the other supernatural mythology or doctrine to codify and regulate everyday human life. In Asia the Indian subcontinent is not different in this respect where there we find an interesting religious historical background. Over two centuries, the scholars did not find any satisfactory solution to Aryan's problem. The concerned scholars were divided into two groups: the first comprising mostly of western scholars and few Indians, back the hypothesis that Vedic Aryans came to India from outside and they composed the *Rig-Veda* around 1200-1000 B.C. While the second group of scholars, mostly comprising of Indian and a few western scholars, hold the view that Aryans were native to India and they spread to the outer world from this land to which *Rig-Veda* is assigned, about 3000 B.C. Thus, *Rig-Veda* is swinging in a chronological vacuum due to the considerable gap between the dates assigned to it by the above-mentioned groups of scholars, though a few scholars now assign it to 1900 B.C. On the other hand, the archaeological

evidences of iron and horse show that it might be between 2000-1500 B.C (Dhavalikar 2006: 1-3).

Dravidians are assumed to have their dwellings in towns near the river Indus possibly as evident from the archaeological discoveries of the twentieth century, where their well-planned cities were found, having houses, underground drainage systems and different refinements of a created urban populace. The full nature of their religious philosophy is still obscure, but some figurines appearing to express a concern with human fertility and nature spirits, and the discovery of large water tank/pool is like the pools of Hindu temples using for religious purposes and ritual baths. While the Aryans believed their gods and deities as the natural power of earth and heaven. From the Vedic literature it appears that the Aryans used to please their deities and gods by sacrificing animals and sharing their meals with gods. They sent the gods' share through smoke rising from the sacrificial fire and the worshipers ate their own share. As these Aryans blended with the local groups of people, each contributed, and each got; they shared traditions, customs, ceremonies, images, and legends. The oldest hymns of Hinduism show worship that contained numerous Aryan practices. Although researchers cannot state precisely when Hinduism was started, they trust that it was created during the early time of association among Aryans and Dravidians. Amid this period, groups and strata of Hindu society started to form (Matthews 2012: 73-4).

Shruti refers to the body of the most authoritative ancient religious text of Hinduism. *Shruti* contains four *Vedas*, *Brahmanas*, *Aranyakas* and the early *Upanishads* (Doniger 1988:2-3). *Vedas* are the oldest part of *Shruti*, comprises of four scriptures, i.e., the *Rig-Veda*, the *Sama-Veda*, the *Yajur-Veda* and the *Atharva-Veda*. *Rig-Veda* contains the oldest Indian collection of Sanskrit hymns and its commentaries about religious ceremonies, rituals, and supernatural explanations. *Rig-Veda Samhita*/collection consists of 1028 hymns which has 10600 verses arranged in ten books (De Nicolás 2003:273). The philological and linguistic evidences show that *Rig-Veda Samhita* was initially organized during the early Kuru kingdom (1200-900 B.C.), but in wider approximation, it is composed in the north-western region of Indian subcontinent around 1700-1100 B.C. (Johnston 2014:179).

The origin of Hinduism¹ could be found in the blend of the Vedic divine beings and the Dravidian divinities that occurred under the priests of the Brahmins. A portion of the thoughts and practices of the Dravidians could be found in the Vedic religion and the Puranic Hinduism (Ferm 1945: 461). Researchers are of the opinion that Hinduism has its origin in the Indus, as different cult objects have been recovered from the Indus (Blurton 1993: 20).

There are numerous divine and semi-divine beings in the Vedic and later religious texts. Many of the divinities were absorbed in Buddhism as this doctrine and the later philosophy actually arose from the Hindu religious body. Gandhara being one of the holy lands of Buddhism not only have the early Hindu traces but mostly it has the remains of the Buddhist art and architecture.

Gandharan Buddhism expresses the depiction of Indra, Brahma and others in their artistic activities. The term “Buddhism” accurately shows that the religion is described by a dedication to the “Buddha,” “Buddhas” or “Buddhahood” (Harvey 2000: 3). Buddhism started in India more than 2,500 years back, and albeit nearly wiped out in India, it remains the predominant world religion in the East (Wangu 2009: 8). The name of the Buddha was Siddhartha Gotama, the prince of India, who lived around fifth century B.C. As mentioned by Buddhist customs that the youthful ruler carried on with a wealthy and isolated life until he faced an adventure, where he saw a weak and aged person, a debilitated man, a poor man, and a dead body. Therefore, he spent the following 45 years of his life showing the way to freedom from misery (Nelson 2008: 15). The two fundamental conventions of Buddhism are Theravada and Mahayana. The Hinayana stresses the achievement of enlightenment for oneself alone, while the Mahayana believe that one must delay their enlightenment and initially must become the Boddhisatva, also to show the others the path of enlightenment (Harvey 2000: 3).

Siddhartha was the original name of the historical Buddha both in Pali and Sanskrit texts, and Gotama was his title and family name. As indicated by the Buddhist customs, he was born in the clan of Śākya, a main political family of the time, therefore, he is also known as Śākyamuni which means the wise or astute man of the Śākyas (Laumakis 2008: 4). The Buddha Śākyamuni lived and was educated in the north of India nearly 2,500 years back. He was born in the

¹ ‘Hindu’ in the title represents the complete philosophical development from Vedism, continued through Brahmanic phase, working as a base for the emergence of Hinduism in medieval Asian Subcontinent.

Gautama family to the King Suddhodana and Queen Mayadevi of the Shakya family, who named him Siddhartha. 'Buddha' is not a name yet a title showing his fulfillment of awakening. From the most punctual Pali writings, Śākyamuni is one of the various Buddhas who have shown up on the planet to preach the everlasting Dharma (Usha *n.d.*: 6).

The Buddhist texts and iconographic evidence of Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism are agreed on the significant occasions of Buddha's life. The Buddhist record pursues these in concentrating on the important occasions of the Buddha's life. The four great events of Buddha's life are his Birth, Great Departure, his Enlightenment and *Mahaparinirvana*.

According to Buddhist philosophy, all beings are bound to the cycle of birth(s) and rebirth(s). Thus, gods are treated in this sense as common men and both bound to the cycle of births and rebirths. Every human being has been a god, spirit, hell's fire and an animal in his/her previous life, and it will probably happen again. They believe gods as an unseen force which have stake with the people on planet earth. As we have references from the Vinaya, which mentions the names of many gods dwelling in trees and health-giving plants (Harvey 2000:29, 152). The same source further says that the gods curse the destructor of their houses, means damaging trees and herbs.

As opposed to the Brahmanic divine creatures, the Buddha was a person that by then transformed into a Buddha (Usha *n.d.* 144, 154-55). We have references from Pali literature about some events where Sura and Asura were mentioned in the sense of gods and non-gods. The idea of Sura and Asura undoubtedly came into Buddhist beliefs from the Vedic literature, where Asuras were the local people portrayed as the enemies of the Vedic god and the Aryans as the Sura. God Indra, with some modification, was transmitted to Buddhism as the lord of heaven (Sang and Hewamanage 2015: 23). The Buddhist divinities no longer appear to have a higher divine role. Actually, they were believed as the mortal beings nearer to the human world. Spirithood is believed in the Buddhist pantheon as not a mortal thing. Hence, divine beings also share attributes differently from other creatures. Divine beings are considered as predicNagas as common men, but their birth and end may be better than common men. The goal of their life is to achieve the *Nirvana* through the way taught by Buddhist teachings. According to Sinhalese Buddhist tradition, each supreme god wishes to be a Buddha in the next life and does not want to be anything other than Buddha (Samarasinghe 1996: 140).

Semi-divine beings

Semi-Divine beings are those characters that are more than mortal but not fully divine (Lamonte 2002: 21). Some of the Greek heroes were born with divine qualities like ingenuity, intelligence and charisma are called Semi-divine beings because one of their parents was a god or goddess. However mortal heroes are also respected as Semi-gods and those heroes even exceeded Semi-gods in terms of bravery, reputation and by accomplishing the impossible tasks. The Semi-divine are the beings favored by god and helping humanity to progress. Hinduism and its earlier phase, Vedism consists of gods, men and beasts, and a whole array of semi-divine beings. The Semi-divine beings, most importantly appear in Vedic, Epic, Puranic and Kāvya literature. There is no apparent hierarchy among the different groups, whose natures range from benevolent to frankly evil with the flux of ample time. Some classes are more prominent than others, but each has its own mythical history and their origin is repeatedly traced back to certain demiurges as exhibits in Puranic genealogies. In Hinduism, these beings are though powerful but usually not immortal and are subject to rebirth according to the nature of their deeds. They are supposed to live in a different realms, on earth and also in heavenly abodes in the vicinity of gods. But they frequently assemble together to witness important events and then registers in their copulative compounds such as gandharvas, fairies, sages, ghosts, demons, serpents and genies. These lists exhibit sizeable variation, but the most prominent among them, which the present study will examines, are the yakshas and yakshinis, gandharvas and apsaras, and nagas andnaginis .

Scope of the study

The present research studied the Hindu texts to understand the Semi-divine beings and how those can be related in the Buddhist art of Gandhara, Pakistan. The most important Semi-divine beings were focused in this research due to research limitations. While more detailed work on the major and minor semi-divine beings was left for the future investigations.

The above mentioned semi-divine beings are described with almost all the major gods during different events. These Semi-divine beings are frequently found in Gandharan Buddhist art, where these are shown present at different occasions with Lord Buddha or sometimes alone.

Major part of this research consists of answering the following questions which have been addressed in the chapters on all the three groups of Semi-divine beings and the Buddhist Art of Gandhara as a catalogue.

1. Is the origin of these Semi-divine beings traced from Hinduism and how did they incorporate into Buddhism?
2. Through how many stages these Semi-divine beings passed and what was their status through ages?
3. Were they depicted in the same way in Gandhara art with the Buddha, as mentioned in Hindu literature with their gods?

Objectives

1. To trace the origin of the concerned semi-divine beings and to explore how they became part of the Gandharan religious art.
2. To explore the semi-divine beings in the legends as mentioned in the Hindu literary sources.
3. To investigate the status of these Semi-divine beings through their representation in Gandhara art.

Methodology

The collected pieces in the catalogue have been photographed from museums such as Peshawar, Taxila and Lahore Museums as primary sources. While some published catalogues, books, unpublished thesis, journals, and articles have been consulted and utilized as secondary sources.

To understand and explore the significance of this data, we received help from the religious texts of Hinduism and Buddhism. Beside this, previous contributions on the topic were considered, helping and elaborating the original sources.

The collected data is analysed, based on qualitative approaches. The data of semi-divine beings, depicted on Gandharan art is analysed with the help of the literary sources of primary and secondary value. Thus, the typology of semi-divinities in Gandhara are explored and their religious significance expressing the continuity of previous models in Vedism and Brahmanism.

This research is presented in seven chapters in historical context. Chapter one deals with the Buddhist art of ancient Gandhara which has tried to give the with brief environmental history and geography of ancient Gandhara. As Gandhara remained under different peoples/dynasties they influenced the local culture(s). This chapter, thus, not only includes the history, geography and art but also foreign influences on the art of Gandhara. Gandhara art mainly focuses on the life stories of the Buddha and a little attention was given to the *Jataka* stories. This chapter contains only one *Jataka* story which is relevant to the present research. Chapter two deals with yakshas and yakshinis as the first group of Semi-divine beings focused in this research. Yakshas and yakshinis are mentioned in ancient Indian religious texts and in later sacred texts. Yakshas and yakshinis are discussed in this chapter in special reference to the religious texts. The texts contain many legends about yakshas and yakshinis, thus, some of the prominent yakshas and yakshinis are discussed in this chapter. Chapter three contains a discussion on the second important class of Semi-divine beings of this research that is gandharvas and apsaras. Gandharvas and apsaras were the dancers and musicians of the heavens that mentioned in different legends of religious texts with reference to the gods. Thus, I have tried to discuss them in reference to religious records and also includes some prominent gandharvas and apsaras. Chapter four elaborates nagas and naginis as the third important group of Semi-divine beings of the present research. The origin and development of some prominent nagas and naginis have been included at the end as mentioned in the legends from religious texts. The following three chapters i.e., 5, 6 and 7 are the core chapters that present work devoted to catalogues of these Semi-divine beings now housed in different museums or in different catalogues and books. The conclusion has addressed the objectives specified in the introduction which are to trace the origin of the concerned semi-divine beings and to explore how they became the part of Gandharan religious art; to explore the semi-divine beings in the legends as mentioned in the Hindu literary sources; to investigate the status of these Semi-divine beings through their representation in Gandhara art.

Chapter 1 The Buddhist Art of Gandhara

Gandhara is the land located at North-west part of India, modern day Pakistan. The Term Gandhara for the first time mentioned in one of the hymns of Rigveda (1.126.7), the sacred and oldest religious text of South Asia (Ingholt 1957: 1).

1.1 The land and history of Gandhara

Peshawar valley was known as Gandhara (the land of fragrance) in old days and in present days Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and some part of Punjab, Pakistan. It is situated between the Suleiman mountains bordering Afghanistan in the west and extended to river Indus in the east. However, the term often used in a broader sense to refer to the greater Gandhara (Rosenfield 1967: 10). Beside the proper Gandhara, the greater Gandhara comprising the adjacent regions of Swat. Other rivers' valleys to the north, Taxila and some regions of present-day Afghanistan. Later on, other distant regions came under the sway of the cultural influence of Gandhara during the few centuries before and after the beginning of Christian era. Gandhara proper remained the capital city of several invaders like Indo-Greek, Indo-Scythian, Indo-Parthian, and Kuṣhāṇa empires. The character of Gandharan culture of these regions is clearly proved by their adaptation of distinguishing heterogenous style of Gandharan art and by their Gandhari language (Samad 2012:1).

Gandhara became under Achaemenid Empire during 6th Century B.C. and remained under their rule till the conquest of Alexander the great of Macedonia. It was one of their Satrapies as mentioned in the Behistun rock inscription of Darius-I dated 528-519 B.C. After the departure of Macedonian army, the Mauryans took the hold of Gandhara region. They ruled this region for several centuries. During the long rule of the Mauryans, the Gandharan cultures got most distinctive features. Under Ashoka, three early stupas of Indian style were built and two rock inscriptions in Kharoshti script were carved, at Shahbaz Garhi and Mansehra (Falk 2006: 127-129, 132-135). The stupas that belonged to the Mauryan period were built at Dharmarājika at Taxila, Jamalgarhi, Mardan and Butkara-I, Swat that shows their rule was not confined only to the proper Gandhara but also to the greater Gandhara. After the Mauryan rule came to an end in this region, the Bactrian Greeks came to power and then the Scythians and Parthians in the first century B.C. This period particularly and the following centuries were the period when the

Gandharan Buddhist art reached to its climax. During the Kushanas and especially under the reign of Kanishka from 127 A.D. onwards the two most important schools of art were developed i.e., Gandharan school of art and Mathura school of art (Samad 2012:2, Zwalf 1996, Sharma 1993).

Then Gandhara was invaded by the Persian rulers, but Buddhism still continued to flourish until the region was captured by the white Huns about 460 A.D. They destroyed most of the religious buildings of the regions they occupied. Buddhism had such firm roots in Gandhara that despite of several invasions and destructions in the last many centuries, majority of the people remained Buddhists (Cheema 2007: 75-76).

1.2 Gandharan art

The Gandharan art appeared in this region from 1st century B.C. and was continued till 4th/5th century A.D. It was the means of communication to the followers of Buddhism. After the first ever Buddha's probable image on the coins of Kanishka the trend of carving the Buddha's images was initiated (Sehrai 1991:5). Gandharan Buddhist art is sort of solely religious art dedicated to Buddhism. The Buddhist stupas built in large number within the Peshawar basin, Swat and Taxila attest to the enthusiastic Buddhist faith of the time. In Gandhara the remarkable stupas erected to enshrine the relics of the Buddha had been generously ornamented. Large panels were carved out and fixed to the stupas which were depicted with the Buddha images, Buddha's life stories, *Jataka* stories and decorative motifs. These panels were attached to the stupas' cornice mouldings, base mouldings, lower and sometimes upper drum, and on the stair-risers of the flight of steps. The harmikas at the top of the stupa were also decorated with images. The votive stupas that were erected around the main stupas by the donors were also adorned in the similar manner as the main stupas. The votive/minor stupas also contain the scenes from the life of the buddha, *Jataka* stories, garland bearers, atlants and other ornamental motifs (Ali and Qazi 2008:11).

The individual images of the Buddha were enshrined in monastic cells and sometimes these images were kept in the niches of the stupas. The Buddha images were depicted either in sitting or standing position with different hand-gestures: meditation, preaching, earth touching and reassurance. His dress is consisting of simple monastic robe and has a halo behind his head. Apart from those of the Buddha images the future Buddha Maitreya were also carved in a large

number. He is shown almost next to the historic Buddha holding water flask. The Maitreya's hairs are carved in a flowing lock with a large loop above his head (Sehrai 1991:5).

Bodhisattvas' images are also depicted in a large number in Gandharan Buddhist sculptural art. To become a Buddha, one must practice the six virtues: compassion, morality, patience, energy, meditation, and knowledge. Gautama Buddha is also regarded as Bodhisattva before his enlightenment. There are superhuman Bodhisattvas too which are considered near to attain the enlightenment. In Buddhist art these superhuman Bodhisattvas have halo behind their head like Gautama Buddha. The Gandharan sculptures also represented the superhuman Bodhisattvas like Avalokitesvara, Manjusri and Padmapani. And these are shown in Gandharan sculptures clad in drapery and scarp, elaborate ornaments and having moustaches and sometimes turbans. A large variety of turbans and jewelry are shown in sculptural art (Usha *n.d*:6). Apart from these images rectangular friezes are fixed on the bases of the stupas and these friezes were fixed as stair-risers. Curved panels were carved out for the circular drums of the stupas, some of these panels were of several compartments separated by Corinthian or persepopolitan pilasters. (Behrendt 2007: 27). Apart from *Jatakas* and other scenes, Gandhara art presents all the major events of the life of the Buddha like a complete film. The Buddha is represented as the central figure almost accompanied by Vajrapani as his constant companion.

It is significant to elaborate that the subject matter of Gandhara Art is generally focused on Buddha's life story, additionally, the related tales in which a variety of figurative portrayal may be also observed creating aesthetic coordination in the entire figural composition. The material used in Gandhara art for making the sculpture was mainly schist stone in different colors because it was locally available from the surrounding mountains. The sacred and esthetic aspects have been thoroughly produced within the range of the sculptural art. The monumental representation and the large variety of sculptures reveals the wealth and prosperity of the land and its inhabitants. The golden age of the Gandharan school of art was during the Kushan reign, from 1st-2nd centuries A.D (Ali and Qazi 2008: 13).

1.3 Foreign Influences on Gandhara Art

Gandhara art is cosmopolitan in nature because this piece of land remained a way gate to Central Asia. This land witnesses many invasions and immigration and the inhabitants of it had diplomatic and trade links with other developed countries of the time. Therefore, Gandharan art is a synthesis of various stylistic traditions taken from the Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Persians, Central Asians, Chinese and primarily the Indians. It is obvious that the cultural interactions with foreign world since long ago, influenced the local traditions. The land of Gandhara is witnessed of the invasions from Achaemenians in 6th 5th and 4th century B.C, followed by the invasion of the Greek (327-26 B.C) and the Indo Greeks (190 to 90 B.C.). During this long period the local traditions has absorbed many things from the foreign cultures. Then the Indus-Scythians and the Indo-Parthians invaded the land and ruled from 90 B.C. till the mid-1st century A.D. They left their cultural imprints on the local traditions. They are followed by the Greater Kushans rule (1st century A.D. till 458 A.D). The local cultural traditions of Gandhara once again absorbed Central Asian traits. Gandhara art reached to its climax during the reign of Kanishka-I. These invaders not only established their suzerainty over this land but also patronized the cultural values of the region (Ali and Qazi :14).

According to Alfred Foucher the Hellenistic influence was earliest source that improved the local style of Gandhara art. The view of Mediterranean influence on Gandhara art is also supported by the French Mission of Afghanistan where they found Greek sculptures most probably made by the local artisans under the Greek masters, from the site of Ai-Khanum. What the local artisans learnt from the Greek masters were incorporated into their own style and the style subsequently influenced the traditions of art during the Buddhist period. Marshall and Foucher also claimed that the Hellenistic influence on art further spread up to Iran where the Greco-Iranian style was developed. Foucher suggested that those Greco-Syrian sculptors who founded the Greco Iranian art style, it is most probable that they subsequently also influenced the Greco-Buddhist art of Gandhara (Marshall 1960-08: 39-40).

In contrast to the already invented terms, “Greco-Bactrian” or “Greco-Buddhist,” James Fergusson declared “Romano-Buddhist” for the art of this region in 1876. He is followed by Vincent Smith who declared in 1889 that the Art is developed by the local artisans which is “Roman in style, Greco-Roman in its models and not pure Greek”. The well-known continuous

phases of Roman art style were incorporated in Gandhara art and even the iconography is believed to have been copied from them (Zwalf: 1996: 67-68). According to Sehrai those who used the term "Greco-Buddhist" and "Romano-Buddhist" for the Gandharan Buddhist art, focus only on the workmanship of Greek and Roman in it. And even some have gone to the extreme by claiming that the Greek and Roman sculptors were brought for creating this art. While Dani and Sehrai are of the opinion that from the time of Bactrian Greeks there was already an art style present in this region. And from them the greater Kushan inherited the art's traditions. Sehrai further states that Gandhara art shows the artistic developments and technology existing in the region during their rule and the contemporary taste and life of the region (Sehrai 1991: 7, Ali and Qazi 2008:15).

As there are strong evidences of Hellenistic imprints on the art of Gandhara that display greater skills for resolving technical complications in creating the art and also introduce new and foreign themes in it. The subject matter of Gandhara art is local while the form of art is Hellenistic where many local motifs are virtually changed in Hellenistic framework. Thus, large number of foreign themes and motifs were regularly incorporated into the local art. These motifs consist of Atlants, caryatids, Corinthian, Persepolitan, Doric and Ionic pilasters, dresses, drinking scenes, wine scrolls, acanthus leaves, the god of Olympus, Marine deities and many other foreign themes and ideas. The trade relations between Romans and Kushans are evident from the Ara inscription which depicted the title of the king as Maharaj *Devaputra* and *Kaisara* where the last title is the reminiscent of title, Caesar. Apart from Greeks and Romans influences, Gandhara art also influenced by Chines and Persian art. Thus, the Gandhara art be considered as the blend of different cultures, grouped at the region of Gandhara due to its prosperous lands, royal patronage to the art and Buddhism. Through various evolutionary phases these multiple influences grew into a uniform school of art (Ali and Qazi 2008: 15-16).

1.4 Jataka stories

Jataka or previous birth stories of the historic Buddha are the popular subject in all the Buddhist sacred literature. These stories contain the account of the virtuous deeds and achievements of the Buddha in his previous lives as Boddhisattva both in non-living and human forms which consequently led him to enlightenment (Rahman 2021:38). These stories told by the historic Buddha himself to his disciples because he had the memory of past lives (Appleton

2007:109). The Pali texts mentions five hundred and fifty *Jataka* stories (Khan et.al 2005:44). In other accounts the number varies; some said that these were five hundred and forty and according to the other these are five hundred and fifty-five. While only twelve *Jakas* stories are identified in Gandharan stone sculpture up till now. These *Jakas* are (1) Depankara, (2) Syama, (3) Visvantara, (4) Amara, (5) Maitrakanyaka, (6) Sibi, (7) Varya Bala, (8) Mucch Maliha, (9) Maha Mahaga, (10) Sadanta, (11) Chandakinara, (12) Ksantivadin (Humphreys 2005:100). However, in the present work only Maitrakanyaka *Jataka* shall be discussed because the other *Jakas* are not present in artwork of this dissertation.

1.4.1 Maitrakanyaka

The Buddha was born as a Maitrakayaka in one of his previous births. His father was a ship owner who had died at sea. Maitrakanyaka was a hardworking son and was earning a good amount of money. He supported his mother generously. His mother was afraid of his life thus she advised her son not to go to the sea because his father already had died at the sea, but Maitrakanyaka did not pay any heed to mother's words and kicked her in the head. When he went to the sea where he lost his ship like his father and experienced many hardships. As he was generous to his mother and he used to give a good amount of money to mother, therefore, as a reward he was received by four and finally by thirty-two nymphs wherever he stopped. Finally, he was brought to that hell where the sons were punished for hitting their mothers (Sehrai 1991: 19).

In Gandharan Buddhist art the episodes of the story are depicted almost in a single relief panel. Where a nymph with garland in her hands, receives Maitrakanyaka. In the second episode he is entering the palace where Gandharva and apsara are shown with flute and singing respectively. In the same relief the episode of the hell is represented by a nude man with burning wheel above his head is shown.

1.5 Buddha life stories

Gandhara art represents almost all the events of the life of the Buddha from the dream of his mother to his *Mahaparinirvana*.

1.5.1 Dream of Maya

According to the Buddhist texts, the Buddha was living with gods in Tusita heaven before his worldly birth take place. When the time arrived, he appointed Maitreya, the future Buddha as his successor to instruct them the law. He asked them that in what form to descend into the mother's womb. Majority of them replied in Human form while one among them suggest in the form of elephant. After the winter, he come down from heaven to right side of mother's womb in the form of white elephant having six tusks. Maha Maya was sleeping on her couch when she dreamed this dream that: like snow and silver, with six tusks, beautiful legs, a fine trunk and a red head, a magnificent elephant has entered my womb, graceful of motion and with limbs strong as diamonds". (Sehrai: 1991 :22-3).

The Art of Gandhara represents the event where Maya is sleeping on a couch in the palace, between the Corinthians pilasters. Female guards are present there guarding her. The elephant within a halo is depicted as if it is descending from heaven to enter the womb of the queen for worldly birth.

1.5.2 The Interpretation of the Dream

She informed her husband, king Saddhodahana about the dream. He called the prominent Brahmans for interpretation of this marvelous dream. They told the king about the dream that a child has just planted himself in the womb of Maya. And the child would either become a universal monarch or Buddha (Rahman 2021:46). The Brahmans said that the child would become a universal monarch if he continued to household life. But if he leaves household life and retire from the worldly affairs, he will become a Buddha (Matthews 1986: 43).

The scenes of Maya's dreams are carved beautifully, in large number and indifferent modes in Gnadhara art. She is often depicted as laying down on her left side; head facing frontal and an elephant carved inside a halo entering her right womb. The another most depicted dream scene shows laying head on the left with the right side upward where elephant entering from the right side. In this scene, she is shown from the back side. Another mode of the dream of Maya shown in Gandhara stone sculptures as, the future Buddha is represented inside a halo with head down and near to the body of his mother. In some scenes, the elephant is shown without halo. Apart from them Maya is shown sleeping, surrounded by heavenly or worldly attendants. The

chamber where Maya is sleeping is almost shown with two yakshas outside the chamber, standing on both the extreme above the Urn and grasping the branch of tree above their heads. The Yaks Urn indicates as if these are guarding the treasure, represented by the Urn. A female guard with stick is also often visible outside the chamber.

1.5.3 The Birth of the Śākyamuni

During the last month of pregnancy, Māyā wanted to visit her father's house. She travelled in a golden cart accompanied by servants. When she reached Lumbini, was attracted by a beautiful flowers and groove of Śāla trees, thus she desired to spend a little time there. She was fascinated by the beauty of a flowers loaded bough (Sehrai 1991:24). The bough bent down itself and at the meantime when she was grasping the branch, she gave birth to the child without any pain and pollution (Foucher 2003:30). His birth was not the usual birth because he emerged from the right side of the mother and received by the two gods: Indra and Brahma (Rahman 2021:58). Gandhara art is overwhelmed with birth scene of Śākyamuni.

1.5.4 Bath of Siddhartha

After the prodigious birth of Śākyamuni the next unusual event has taken place was bath of the child. Foucher describes the events thus: “the Bodhisattva rapidly left the hands that received him, and we soon find him with a parasol and fly whisk over his head, both emblems of royalty, standing on a lotus that miraculously emerged from the earth to protect him from a coarser contact. We are puzzled to find out that our sources two immediate activities. One is the unusual bath and “the seven steps” which the infant Buddha is said to have taken “right after birth”. We must not forget that he knew both how to walk and how to talk spontaneously. The Gandhara school showed the letter to be first, while later steles from the Ganges valley combined, as best they could, they two episodes in the same framework (Foucher 2003:34).

The *Jataka* mentioned the Bath of Śākyamuni in these words: “now other mortals on issuing from the maternal womb are smeared with disagreeable, impure matter; but not so for the future Buddha. He emerged from his mother's womb like a preacher descending from his preaching-seat, or a man coming down a stair, stretching out both hands and both feet, unsmearred by any impurity from his mother's womb, a flashing pure and spotless, like a jewel thrown upon a vesture of Benares cloth. Notwithstanding this, for the sake of honoring the future

Buddha and his mother, there came two streams of water from the sky, and refreshed the future Buddha and his mother (Rahman 2021 :71). Aśvaghosa also relates the story about the Bath of the Buddha as: “Two streams of water, clear as the rays of the moon and having the virtue, one of heat, one of cold, poured forth from the sky and fell on his gracious head to give his body refreshment by their contact” (Aśvaghosa 1936:34). There are different versions about the bath of the Siddhartha, in first example we found that there were two streams which miraculously appeared and poured water upon him. While, according to second version Indra and Brahma poured water on him and the third version mentions the two celestial Naga kings poured water on him to perform the ritual of the bath.

The bath scene is one amongst the popular depictions in Gandhara art, where prince is depicted on a stool sometimes with Ushnisa and halo behind his head, surrounded by Brahma and Indra, sometimes under a parasol in the shape of multi-headed Naga. The panels where bath scenes are shown almost have other scenes too like the scenes of return from Kapilavastu and seven steps etc. In some cases, the heavenly beings are depicted in different poses as if they are celebrating this prodigious occasion. Apart from Brahma and Indra there are other heavenly gods are shown in different instances of this scene. Two female attendants are shown frequently helping the bath of the prince.

1.5.5 Buddha's Palace Life

Buddha was a prince, and he spent his life in a palace where he was given all kind of luxuries. In childhood good teachers of the time were hired to teach and make him highly trained in different disciplines. He was trained in archery and wrestling along with other traditional disciplines of the time. In Gandhara art almost all the scenes related to palace life are depicted where Buddha is shown in different modes, along with his wife, his son, servants, musicians, dancers and other related figures.

One can observe the architectural pattern of the palace from most of the Gandharan reliefs where a variety of system is found. The roofing systems shown in Gandharan reliefs, mostly, consist of an arcuate or vaulted tunnel and trapezoidal. A reverse pattern in a few examples can also be seen as flanking chambers are with arcuate and taller roofs while the main hall reveals a flat one. Besides this, balconies and elaborate balustrades rendered with human busts form a significant feature of the roofing systems. Mostly, in such cases, Persepolitan pillars

with adorned bull capitals are preferred. The sculptors embellished the palace buildings with a variety of decorative motifs including laurel wreaths saw-tooth design, friezes of chequer board pattern, bead-and-reel borders and acanthus leaf patterns. The figures of birds like fluttering peacocks are sometimes depicted perhaps to animate lifeless and somber events or scenes (Ahmad, et al 2015:42).

1.5.6 Departure from Kapilavastu

Prince Siddharatha was living a normal life at his palace until he did not see the four signs (old man, diseased man, dead and the monk) that led him disappointed and thus, he decided to leave for forest and ascetic's life. There are different versions regarding the four signs. According to one of the Buddhist texts he saw all these four events happened on the same day while the other relates it to the different four days and some other texts like Mahavatsu does not mention any story related to it.

The Mahavatsu mentions that Buddha linked the story of his renunciation to the monks. He told his monks that "it occurred to him that the holy life cannot be lived at home where there are hindrances while the religious life is like an open air" (Jones (The Mahavatsu) 1952:114). The prince was of an insightful and thoughtful mind and was deeply impressed with the misery and vanity of life (Bautze-Picron 2010: 67). As the prince was given with all kinds of comforts and enjoyment but he was fed up with all these things. At the night he was leaving the palace, a crowd of fair damsels were appointed to dance and divert his thoughts, but he took no pleasure in the spectacle and fell asleep. The damsels' disappointed and lay down to sleep. When the prince awoke and looking around and saw the loathsome appearance of the sleeping women. He felt more and more disgusted and desired to accomplish renunciation (abhiniskaramana) arose in him with double force. He arose and called his charioteer Chandaka to saddle his horse Kanthaka (Kern 1989:17). The prince along with Chandaka and Kanthaka left the palace. On the way he was restrained by the devil Mara but in vain (Tanweer 2012:152). When prince reached at the river Anona he gave his ornaments to Chandaka and ordered him to go back with salutation to his parents (Kern 1989:17). Chandaka obeyed the order of the master while Kanthaka was unable to bear the grief and died of a broken heart. After 10 years of married life, at the age of 29 he renounced the worldly life. He abandoned his royal garments and cut his long hair and went to the forest (Bautze-Picron 2010: 67) where he spent next six years as a wandering ascetic (*muni*).

He studied different philosophies and theologies of the time, and severe ascetic practices but did not find any solution for getting freedom from the bondages of life (Casanovicz 1921:292).

Gandhara art exhibited the renunciation scene very beautifully and as mentioned in the Buddhist texts. In Gandharan Buddhist Art the scene of the prince entering the palace with great splendor laying on his couch, damsels in a rich dress with their musical instruments and dancing and servants etc. are shown, that were employed for diversion of the of the prince's thought. The scene of awakening from the slumber of the prince is also shown. He is shown crossed legged on the couch, perceiving the sleeping musicians and dancers along with their musical instruments scattered here and there on the ground (Rahman 2021:84-5).

The next scene that is exhibited the episode of the calling of Chandaka and preparation of Kantaka for leaving the palace. The last scene of this episode which is extensively depicted in Gandhara art is the retirement from the palace. This scene depicts the city gates, opening by the divinity inhabited the gates, and Kantaka's feet are shown in the palm of yaksha-s in order to resolve its noise.

1.5.7 Exchange of Clothes

After renouncing the worldly life, the Boddhisattva Proceeded onward where he met with a shepherd named Sramana and exchanged his royal dress with him. Boddhisattva reached the river Niranjana and continued his journey until he met five ascetics, with whom he entered the Sanga of two great teachers. Thus, his religious activities begin with a focus on how to attain nirvana. The Gandharan Buddhist art witnessed the event of exchange of the clothes.

1.5.8 Hymn of the Naga Kalika and his wife Suvernaprabhasha

According to the legend after crossing the river Nirinjana, Siddhartha proceeded further and went to the home of Naga Kalika. Naga Kalika observed the presence of Siddhartha. He and his wife sang hymns. The hymns of the Naga and his wife honor the Siddhartha saying, "You are closer to the event of enlightenment". Then Boddhisattva proceeded further towards Gaya where he eventually sat beneath a Bodhi tree and meditated there until he got enlightenment (Ali and Qazi 2008:103).

This event is depicted in Gandhara Buddhist sculptures, where Naga Kalika and his wife are depicted standing in a pond of waters in *Anjali Mudra*, facing towards the Buddha. Vajrapani is also present there. The Naga Kalika and his wife have serpent hoods above their heads. In some friezes Padmapani is also shown behind the nagas with lotus and Kamandalu in hands according to Ali and Qazi (2008:108). However, in my opinion the possible Padmapani holds a lotus flower in his right hand while in his left hand he is holding hem of the cloth instead of Kamandalu. Some other figures are also shown in this episode behind the Naga and Nagini and in one scene a Naga is shown seated on a knee before the Bodhisatva.

1.5.9 Attack and Subjugation of Mara scenes

The enemy of religion, Mara Devraga, the lord of desires and skilled in all arts of warfare and the enemy of those who seeks delivrence. Siddhartha was also tried by the Mara and his evil forces on different occasions to distract him from his nobel mission. Each of the evil forces of Mara has their own peculiar form, some holding swords, spears, diamond maces and armed with all kind of weapons (Tanweer 2012:157).

In Gandhara art the scene is very beautifully carved out where Mara and his evil forces are shown in different poses and holding different weapons at differnet occasions. The first among different scenes that depicted the Mara, is temptation. Mara dissuading him through offering him worldly pleasure where his daughters are shown trying to provoke him sensually. While second scene represented Mara's army and the third scene showing both the scenes of temptation and terrifyin the Buddha.

1.5.10 Offering of the four bowls

After attainment of the enlightenment, Buddha was pondering and enjoying the great knowled for seven weeks. During these seven week natural hurdles like rain and wind came and pass. During the rain and storm Naga king spread his hood above Buddha's head to protect him. During the seventh week of wandering two passerby merchants came to know that Buddha did not eat anything from seven weeks. Thus they offered honey rice ball but there was no bowl to receive the offering from them. At the meantime the Lokapala-s appeared and offered a bowl made of gold which was rejected by the Buddha saying that it does not suit a monk. Then they offerd a bowl with seven jewels which was also rejected by the Buddha. Now he was offerd with

a stone bowl but one bowl by each of them. It would not be fair to accept one bowl and reject the other so he accepted all the bowls and piling each of them on top of the other miraculously made them one. When he ate his food the bowl was taken to heaven by Brahma and was enshrined there like his turban and hairs at the time of renunciation of the world (Kurita 2003).

In Gandhara art the episode is depicted extensively in relief panels. Buddha is shown mostly at center in seated position flanked by the guardian kings, two on each side, and other heavenly beings and Vajrapani along his Vajra are also shown there in the background. The bowls are shown in the hands of the Lokapalas where Buddha is empty handed. These guardian kings are shown in joined hands requesting the Buddha to accept their presents. Sometimes the Yakshas are shown on the enclosing pillars.

1.5.11 First sermon

After attaining the enlightenment the Buddha accepted the request of Brahma and other gods to preach the dharma to the people. Buddha saw with his vision that the various living beings, on, above and below the earth are in trouble. He observed the beings dwelling on, below and above earth for twenty seven days. Then Buddha decided that "I now should open the door of the law of sweet dew". He decided to teach the dharma first to the Bhagava sage who are intelligent and easy to awaken and they were the first to come forth wanting me. Buddha was thinking about the Bhagava sages when a voice from the sky spoke "the Bhagava sages died last night". The Buddha replied the voice that "I also know they died last night". Then the Buddha thought to himself that "the sage Kalama is fundamentally enlightened, he should be among the first to hear (the sermon). Again the voice from the sky spoke "Kalama died last night". The Buddha replied to the voice that "I also know that he died last night". Then the Buddha again thought to himself that "the five men who were dispatched by the king, his advisors, and ministers all look up to me. They are intelligent and in the past informed me that they desired to (be the) first to hear the law. I know should preach the law to these five men". He thought to himself that the place where all the past Buddha turned the wheel of the law was in the deer park of Benares. He knew that Benares is the place where sages and the five men are living. The Buddha decided that he will go there to turn the wheel of the law and thus he got up from his seat and went to Benares (Karetzky 1995:129).

Finally the Buddha reached to the garden where he intended to turn the wheel of law. There the five men saw him coming towards them and first they woved that we will not stand up for him as he has begun to eat and left the austerities. But when Buddha reached them they all got up from their seats, make obeisance and welcomed him. One among them offered to hold his cloths and begging bowl, another offered water for rinsing his mouth while the third one had some water for washing his feet. After conversation with these five men Buddha was succeeded in convincing them. Thus the Buddha preached the four nobel truths and the twelve practices. According to a tradition the turning of the wheel was seen by the one million devas and the earth spirit saw that the wheel of the law was turned he sang happily in the loud voice “(he has) turned the miracolous wheel of law”. The gods in the heavens heard the song of the earth spirit and they were very happy, and they also sang out the Brahmaloкас heaven in reply to them that “it was today in the deer park of Benares where the sages live, that the wheel of the law was turned”. No one in the whole universe even gods, men, Maras, Brahmas, Shamen and pala guardian of the gates could turn it. The earth shook eighteen times and the heavenly nagas of the eight quarters made music in the sky. A large number of miracolous flowers were scattered, the drums of the heaven beat by itself and there was singing and chantings. A great light was shone by itself in the whole world. Ajanta Kaundinya was the first among the five men to awaken (Usha *n.d* 130-32).

The early Buddhist school of art symbolically depicts the different event related to Buddha’s life (Kinnard 2006: 46). The spots, where the great Buddha was born, the place of his enlightenment, the place of his first sermon and the spot of his death were of great concern for the Buddhists (Basham 1954: 263). These holy places were symbolically depicted by this school of art, i.e. lotus represents his birthplace, the Bodhi tree represents his enlightenment at Bodhgaya, the wheel represents his first sermon and stupa represents his death (Sehrai 1991: 7).

The story of the first sermon is represnted in Gandharan Buddhist art in a large number of panels. Buddha is almost shown seated on a throne under an arboreal canopy above his head. His right hand turns the wheel of the law, and sometimes he is depicted in dharma chakra and abhaya mudhras. Shaven headed monks are shown around him. Vajrapani with his Vajra in right hand is also depicted. Among other figures: winged deva-s, flower throwers and deers on the seat are shown.

1.5.12 Buddha and Kashyapa

According to the Buddhist texts, Buddha have prepared sixty disciples and sent them to different direction for preaching the Dharma while he himself proceeded to Gaya. There were three influential Brahmana brothers. They were the worshippers and protectors of Agni (the fire god) in the temple of Uruvila. The temple was under the possession of a black serpent. Buddha visited them with divine powers, performed miracles in order to convert the Kashyapa brothers along with their thousand disciples to his doctrine (Rahman 2021:108).

According to Foucher, “legend admits that the contest between two became very severe and that the Buddha was forced to make use of all his ability. His triumph over the obstinate pride of his old adversary was achieved only by recourse to miracles-thirty-five hundreds of them, said the Pali text: five hundred. Said the Mahavatsu, more conservative than usual (Foucher 2003:159). The famous miracle that was performed by the Buddha was the “victory over the Naga/black dragon, the possessor of the fire temple. After insistence of the Buddha, the elder Kashyapa allowed him to stay in the temple. Buddha prepared grass seat for himself and sit on it. The dragon attacked the Buddha with fire flames which he returned with flame. Buddha has emitted a huge fire and thus he defeated the Naga. The defeated dragon entered his alms bowl to protect himself from the fire. The Kashyapa brothers and their disciples were watching the scene from a distance and on one occasion they thought if the temple had caught fire. They rushed and poured water on the fire to save the Buddha. But they were surprised to see that the Buddha had subdued the dragon with his supernatural power and presented it to the Kashyapa. After seeing the miracles of the Buddha, they recognized his superiority over them and along with their thousand disciples they accepted the Buddha as their Guru and entered the fold of his doctrine (Rahman 2021:109).

In Gandhara Buddhist stone sculptures, the episode of the subjugation of Mara is found. The episode is depicted in three phases in Gandhara Buddhist art: in first phase Buddha is shown asking permission to pass a night inside the fire temple from the Kashyapa who is shown in his hut, in the second phase Buddha is shown inside the temple where a danger black dragon resides and the temple is shown engulfed by flames, and in the third phase Buddha is shown, presenting the serpent to Kashyapa. Gandhara sculptures almost have all the episodes of this miracles as mentioned above (Usha *n.d*:133).

1.5.13 Buddha in Rajagrha

An another episode of subjugation a poisonous snake of Rajagrha by the Buddha also represented in Gandhara sculptures. According to the legend there was a rich but a greedy man in Rajagrha who has buried their treasure in his yard. He was born as a black serpent in his next life and appeared in his yard to protect his treasure. He used to haunt the people, thus king Bimbisara of Magadha requested Buddha for help. Here, like the above mentioned episode, the Buddha defeated the serpent (Usha *n.d*:134).

In Gandhara sculpture this episode is also depicted in different panels. These includes Buddha's arrival to Rajagrha, Vajrapani, subjugation of the serpent, serpent inside the bowl, its representation to the king and the gathered people watching the event.

1.5.14 Invitation of Shri Gupta to Buddha for a meal

According to the legend there was a wealthy man named Srigupta, who was the follower of jaina while his wife was Buddhist. His wife disliked the Jaina teacher of her husband, thus once she poured soup around the doorway of her house where the teacher was slipped and wounded. Srigupta and other Jaina followers became furious on this act of her and to take his teacher's revenge they invited the Buddha for a meal. They dug a ditch at the doorway of Srigupta's house, filled it with burning charcoal and hid it. When the Buddha reached the ditch and stepped over to ditch, it is miraculously turned into a lotus pond (Rahman 2021:115).

In Gandhara sculptures this event is depicted in two main phases. In the first phase the Buddha's arrival and growing lotuses under his feet are shown while the second phase consists of eating the meal. In the first phase the Buddha along with his companions is shown while Srigupta is shown prostrating in front of him. Behind the Srigupta other followers of jaina are shown and also two naked Jaina monks are depicted.

1.5.15 Miracle of Śravasti

The miracle of Śravasti is also known as the twin Miracles performed by the Buddha seven years after enlightenment, at Kapilavastu (Majid *et al* 2020:40). In Kapilavastu he converted his father and many others. Then the Buddha proceeded towards Śravasti where he

met the king Prasenajit and after a long conversation the king was converted to his doctrine and became a strong supporter of the Buddhist Sanga (Rahman 2021:118).

The story has two major versions, and both the version are agreed on that the miracle was performed during the contest between Buddha and the six heretical teachers (Brown 1984:86). According to the Pali version of the story, narrated in “Dhammapaddattakatha”, the story begins with the city named Rajagaha (probably the Rajagrha?). It is mentioned that the treasurer of the city found a sandalwood bowl in river Ganges and hung it in the air. He announced that only the true master would be able to catch it. The six great teachers asked the treasurer to give it to them, but he refused. On the six day another ascetic, Nathaputta tried his best to get the bowl but in vain. On the seventh day the great teachers Mogallana and Pindolabharadvaja came to know about this story. Pindolabharadvaja was persuaded by Mogallana to show his power to people of the city and to the treasurer (Khan A. N., 1976). He grabbed the bowl through his magical power and the treasurer filled with four sweet dishes and presented to the teacher. When the six great teachers heard of it, they announced that they will perform miracle in the city. After hearing the announcement of the six heretics, the Buddha also announced that he will also perform the miracle under the mango tree. The news spread like wildfire and all the mango tree of the city of Śravasti were uprooted by the six heretics. According to this version, the Buddha planted a seed that immediately grew into a mango tree with ripe mangoes (Brown 1984:79). After performing this miracle, another miracle of multiplying himself in images, appeared in all directions and in four consecrated poses-standing, walking, sitting, and laying down- filled the firmament and covered all surfaces (Rahman 2021:119). After this the great miracle of fire and water was performed. Where steams of water are said to came out from his feet and fire flames from his shoulders then water from his shoulders and fire from his feet (Majid at al 2020:44).

According to the Sanskrit version of the story the Buddha was residing in bamboo grove of kalindaka-nivapa, Rajagrha. All the wealthy merchants, ministers were honoring him with generous offerings. The devil Mara became jealous of him and made a great plan. Mara went to the six heretic teachers led by Purnakasyapa and convinced them to challenge the Buddha for a display of miracle (Rahman and Younas 2018:203).

1.5.15.1 Representation in Gandhara sculptures

Gandharan sculptures represented the three miracles that were performed at Śravasti. The first one is “growing of a Mango tree” the second is “emanating flames and water streams” and the third is “multiplying himself into images”.

1.5.15.1.1 Growing mango tree

In the scene of growing mango tree, Buddha image-s are shown in teaching pose, seated under the mango tree/sometimes only leaves and fruits are shown, on a seat/ grass-strewn throne and on lotus flower. Buddha is depicted almost flanked by two Bodhisattvas one on each side and in some scenes the two Bodhisattvas seems like Avalokitesvara and Maitriya. In some cases, yaksha-s or other heavenly being holding garlands and probably gods Shakra and Brahma are also shown. The king Prasenajit is shown, seated on low seat with clasped hands in adoration. Another king is shown sitting in European fashion near the Buddha. This episode also contains some other individuals, kneeling on the ground with joined hands. The great teachers and other figures shown as if they are surprised and listening the words of the master (Rahman 2021:120).

1.5.15.1.2 The Twin Miracles

The miracles where Buddha is emitting fire from his shoulder and water from his feet is known as the “Twin miracle”. Both the versions are agreed on this that it was performed in front of the six teachers and public. In Gandhara sculptures, the twin miracle is one of the widely shown episode. Buddha is shown in assurance pose/Abhaya Mudra with Ushnisa and halo behind his head. Water streams are shown emanating from his feet and flames from his shoulders. Buddha is looks like floating in the air. The scenes of the great miracle of Śravasti collectively contains Bodhisattva-s, the kings (Prasenajit and Bimbisara), turbaned and bearded figures/teachers, individual with joined hands, kneeling monk, Vajrapani with his Vajra, and prostrating figures. A female is also shown in some scenes with holding something in her right hand while left is resting the thigh.

1.5.15.1.3 The miracle of multiplying himself into images

This great miracle of Śravasti is the popular theme of the Gandharan Buddhist art. In this episode Buddha is shown in different poses and positions along with issuing several other images

of him that are varies in number. In some scenes Indra and Brahma, bodhisattva-s, other heavenly beings, and tree spirit with garland are shown. In some scene the enclosing pillars are depicted with yaksha-s images. This episode contains almost the same flora and fauna that is mentioned in the Buddhist texts.

1.5.16 Devadatta's attempt of assassination on Buddha

Devadatta was the cousin of the Buddha, who was jealous of him since childhood. Devadatta became his disciple at Kapilavastu, but he is almost mentioned as hazardous to the Buddha and the dharma. The Buddha made unsuccessful all the plan of Devadatta with his supernatural power. Devadatta's plans includes murdering Buddha from behind the wall by the hirelings of him, attacking the Buddha by intoxicated elephant and rolling stone on the Buddha (Rahman 2021:137).

According to Foucher the event held after the Buddha descended from the Trayatrimsa heaven. When the Buddha came to Rajagrha, he found that his old friend Bimbisara has been killed by his own son Ajatasatru. Due to this act Ajatasatru turned enemy of the Buddha (Usha *n.d.*, Foucher 2003:211-12). On the other hand, Devadatta offered to take Buddha's place as head of the order because Buddha was getting old. After rejecting his request, Devadatta became furious and wanted to kill the Master with plots. Thus, Devadatta provoked the Ajatasatru to kill his father who was the follower of the Buddha's order. He did so in the hope that after becoming the king, Ajatasatru would help him in dethroning the Buddha (Usha *n.d.*:213-14).

First Devadatta hired three killers and hide them behind the wall of the palace waiting the Buddha to come. They found the chance of killing the Buddha but failed in their plan and converted to the master's order. Then Devadatta made another plot for killing the Gautama Buddha by rolling a rock over him from mount Grdharakuta. He set a rock rolling with force from the mount; but it did not fall on the Master and divided into pieces. Finally with royal approval he attempted to crush the Buddha by a mad elephant, Nalagiri. The elephant was turned loose on the royal street from where Buddha was coming. All the people in the street ran away, some tried their best to avert the elephant, but the intoxicated elephant was much violent that it did not stop and went in the direction of the Buddha. Seeing the elephant, the Buddha did not take any fear and advance straight towards elephant. When the elephant observed the presence of

the great being, stopped, and bowed his head down. The Buddha came and touched his head with compassion and taught him the doctrine of peace in his ear (Rahman 2021: 138-39). Ajatasatru was looking this event from his palace while other people also seen this and entered the fold of Buddha's doctrine (Johanston 1936: 62).

All the three events of Devadatta are depicted in Gandharan Buddhist art. The scene of three assassins of Devadatta is depicted with both the episodes. In first episode the Buddha is shown with companion-s and Vajrapani with his Vajra and the three assassins behind the wall while in the second episode the assassins are shown kneeling with joined hand begging pardon. Some panels depicting yaksha figures at the extreme ends on the pillars enclosing the scenes.

The episode of the stone throwing attempt is also represented in Gandhara stone sculptures. In the only example of this episode, a person is shown pushing the stone, below another figure is depicted, and bellow some other damaged and unrecognizable figures may be Buddha and his companions on whom the stone to be thrown (Rahman 2021:140).

The event of the Buddha and mad elephant is represented in Gandharan Buddhist art, where Buddha is shown before the elephant, touching the head of the elephant, Vajrapani with Vajra, flying being, and shaven headed monks. In some panels figures are shown trying to push the elephant with ling stick to harm Buddha, two figures might be Ajatasatru and Devadatta visible from the terrace of the palace and Yakshini on the scene dividing space/pillar.

1.5.17 Submission of Naga Apalala

According to the legend there was Naga, living in the mountain spring who was the source of water for river Swat (Carter 1992:70). He was the reincarnation of a magician named Gangi who held the dragons obedient to him through spells. He used to receive his yearly tribute from the local populace for his service. But after some years the people forgot this skillful snake charmer. He became malevolent and vowed to be reborn as a Naga to cause flood and storm on the ungrateful inhabitants of the area. His wish was fulfilled and reborn as a great Nagaraja who used to cause the river *Swastu*/Swat violent and destroyed all the crops (Bloss 1973:43). At that time Buddha appeared for the help of the people and hit the mountain where Apalal was residing with the Vajra of Vajrapani. The Apalala emerged terrified and converted to the teaching of the master. He promised the Buddha that he will not do that again but also made a complaint to him

that if he refrained from flooding, he would have no sustenance. Thus, he was allowed to flood the river once in twelve years (Carter 1992:70).

The sculptures of Gandhara represent the episode of converting the Naga Apalala where Buddha is depicted both in standing and sitting position under royal canopy or acanthus leaf canopy. He is sometimes flanked by worshipers on either side and Ichthyocentaurs are also depicted in this episode. Apalala and his wife are shown both in standing and kneeling before Buddha in *Anjali* mudhra. A flying yaksha is shown smashing the mountain with his thunderbolt. Vajrapani with his vajra is also the part of this episode. Other figures belong to this scene-s are worshipers with shaven heads, naked worshipers, garland bearers, Bodhisattva is seated in abhaya mudhra and Two kneeling figures in the namashkara mudhra.

1.5.18 Conversion of yaksha Atavika

According to traditions Atavika was an evil yaksha who used to eat human beings. The king provided the yaksha with his own subjects to eat but at the end the youngest son of the king was demanded by the Atavika. Thus, the king requested the Buddha about the cruelties of the yaksha. The Buddha came and ordained the yaksha, and he returned the prince to the Buddha (Ali and Qazi 2008:11).

The episode of conversion of yaksha Atavika is shown in Gandhara art where Buddha is shown both in sitting and standing position, sometimes along with worshippers. The bearded yaksha Atavika is shown presenting the child to the master. Another yaksha is also shown in some scenes.

1.5.19 Visit of Indra to IndraŚala Cave

According to Buddhist text, buddha was meditating in IndraŚala cave in the Vidya Mountain of a Brahmin village called Ambasanda in Magadha. It is said that the mountain was resplendent with presence of the heavenly beings and even the village of Abasanda is said to have become radiant. But the Buddha was deep in meditation in the cave and flames were emanating from his body. Indra wishing to ask questions from the Buddha but sensing it hard to approach him. Indra asked his harpist, Panchasika if he would first inform the Buddha about my arrival, then I might approach him. Panchasika was his faithful attendant, he took his lute and approached the InraŚala cave and stood on adequate distant from where his song to be heard

clearly without disturbing his hearer. He played his lute and sang a song; Indra's arrival was announced and then Indra came and asked the questions from the Buddha (Carter 1993:138).

In Gandhara art the event is shown in different panels where Buddha is depicted in meditation pose inside and other figures are shown outside the cave. Gods are shown in namshkara mudra and in kneeling pose with clasp hands. Panchsika, the harpist of the Indra is shown holding his harp as if he is playing. Behind him Indra is shown standing in *Anjali* mudra facing towards the Buddha. Some panels depicting this event also shown worshippers. Animals, trees, and rocks are shown in the background which represent the mountainous locale of Indra's Sala cave.

1.6 Mahaparinirvan of the Buddha

Mahaparinirvana is release from the Samsara, Karma and the cycle of births and rebirths. Gautama Buddha after preaching his doctrine for a long time, he died at the age of 80 in 483 B.C. According to traditions, he, his followers, and Ananda went to the country of Kushinagara, where he chose the mango grove at Pava, for their stay. According to A. Smith, The Buddha was offered there with meat with which he suffered with calcinatory attack. His illness worsened to the level that he was no more able to move anywhere. Finally, he understood that the final phase of his life had arrived. He summoned and informed Ananda about his nirvana and he desired to be brought to the Malla's Sal tree grooves. But before his nirvana, three very important events took place. These events were: the conversion of Subhadra, Chunda's food offering and the last sermon. In his last sermon stressed was given on Tri-Ratna: Buddha, Dharma and Sanga. According to the master's desire, under two Sal trees a wooden bed was prepared for him where he laid down on his right side and his soul was departed at the last hour of the night. When the followers came to know about this happening, they assembled there in hundreds to mark the event. Ananda was already informed by the master about how to treat his deceased body. According to traditions, his body was cremated but soon after, a war was erupted between the Rajas of the adjacent states for the relics of the Buddha. A Brahman name Drona has resolved this war, divided the relics into eight equal parts and everyone was given with his own share of the relics (Ali and Qazi 2008:253-54).

In Gandhara art, the episode of Mahaparinirvana has been depicted in different panels. The event of Nirvana is symbolized with mango tree branches and mango grove where Buddha's

dead body is shown laying on his right. Subhadra and three monks standing to his head and two to his feet with grief. The next episode of the event is depicted where monks' bier at the coffin of the Buddha. Some panels depicted with the next episodes of cremations, distribution of the relics among the eight princes. In some panels Buddha is represented by stupa model with one or more worshippers in adoration pose. Another episode of the event that is depicted in Gandhara art is worship of the relics of the Buddha.

1.7 Non-Buddhist deities

The reliefs of Gandhara are depicted with various episodes of the life of the Buddha where the other non-Buddhist gods and goddesses are present depending on the concern events. These are consisting of Hindu gods like Indra, Brahma, Panchika and Hariti, Mara, yakshas and yakshinis and nagas etc. Besides Hindu gods and goddesses there are found Greek and Roman deities like Athena, Harpocrates, and Satyr.

Indra and Brahma were the superior gods of Hindu religion. Indra is shown as a crown prince wearing *Paridhana* and elaborate cap, ear pendants, neckbands and urna. While Brahma is represented with long hair with chignon at the top. Both gods are shown in the narrative panels of Buddhist art, symbolizing the subordination to the Buddha of the cast they represent. Hariti and Panchika are the popular deities depicted in Gandharan Buddhist art. They are shown with children, cup, purse, and cornucopia full of fruits, clad in classical, Iranian, and Indian dresses. Nagas and naginis are depicted in Gandharan Buddhist art with Naga-hood as their attribute. There are also representations of the Naga musicians and dancers in Gandhara art. Yakshas and yakshinis are depicted on the pillars, pilasters, columns, and entrances of the religious buildings. Gandharvas and apsaras were the heavenly musicians and dancers are also found in the depictions Gandhara art (Khan at al 2005:57-59).

Chapter 2 Yaksha and Yakshini in Indian religious texts

In the ancient texts of Hinduism like *Rig-Veda* and Atharva Veda, the yakshas are identified as heavenly and extraordinary beings that emit with light. The yakshas were believed to have taken control of human beings; therefore, the people of ancient India had a fear of them in their hearts, and to appease the yakshas they worshipped them. In different times and places, they were manifested in different forms and shapes, sometimes in demonic and sometimes in divine form and features (Shaw 2006: 63). The word yaksha occurs in almost all the Indian scripts like Tamil, Hindi, Sinhalese, Pali, and Sanskrit. The Sanskrit variation of the word is yaksha and Yakshini (Coomaraswamy 1993: 118). When the word yaksha is used in a plural form, then it means yaksha and Yakshini both.

In the earliest text, are mentioned as wonderful or awful creature and has not been clearly defined. According to Hillebrand, the earliest meaning of yakshas is “magician, uncivilized being, and invisible spiritual beings of exalted character.” Professor A.B Keith regarded the word yaksha as obviously connected with the root “Yaj,” which means “to worship.” According to many scholars, the word derives from the root “Yaks,” which means to move quickly towards or glisten or flash-upon. This was indeed the true root of the word; the word Yaks would connote the fleeting appearance of light that flares upon one’s vision. This derivative would therefore suggest that the yaksha is a short-lived, phantom-like being. Professor Keith, however, believes that the word originates from the word “Yaj,” which means to worship with offerings (Coomaraswamy 1993:119-20). In ancient Sanskrit and Pali text, the signification of yaksha would be consistent. Sometimes in these texts, yaksha is equal to Sanskrit word deity (deva or devata). On some occasions they are considered in a lordly and heavenly sense, while in others, they are considered the lower class of being such as a demon or terrifying ghost. Whether yaksha was at its any status, it was and is regarded as a deity. The content of its name itself suggests it as a celestial being that must be worshipped (Usha *n.d*: 118-21).

Two of the four authorized divine texts of Hinduism, the *Rig-Veda* and the Atharva Veda, which date to the 2nd millennium BCE, contain numerous writings on this supernatural spirit. They mention the yakshas that reside and manifest themselves in the Tree of Life (Shaw. 2006: 122). Yaksha is introduced in the Atharva Veda in absolutely a supernatural and detailed manner. The (10.7) of Atharva Veda elucidates the perception of the *Skambha* or stauros as the trunk of life's tree and heaven and earth as the axis of the universe (Usha *n.d.*: 123). Atharva Veda (10.38) mentioned that a great yaksha is radiating on the back of the ocean in the center of the universe; this confirms it as the deity of the universe. The hymn is basically about the pillar that inhere the deities of the universe like a tree-trunk to the branches in the similar way the relationship of a yaksha and branches of life's tree is established. The concept of the tree cult was originated from the belief that yakshas are residing in the trees. The veneration of the tree is similar to the veneration of the dweller of the trees or yaksha. (Shaw 2006:125).

In the fifth century BC, the grammarian Panini mentioned that yakshas are the tree spirits, and its worship is associated with the ancient cult of tree worship. The Mahabharata (3, 83. 23) mentions that the yakshinis shrines were well-known, where Yakshini was believed as the ambivalent protectors like the modern goddess of disease venerated in Sitala village (Coomaraswamy 1971: 9). On the other hand, the villagers adopted the principle of Brahmanic Hinduism, and cult images became progressively Hinduized and anthropomorphized. To acquire spiritual merit and protect their family against misfortune, the offering and promises of gifts became conventional, especially among the women of the villages. The fear and belief of yakshas, *Bhutas*/ghosts and supernatural beings of the lower class of the spirit world were in the villagers, and they believed that these spirits could haunt the forest and their villages. There is a confidence in an unpretentious chain of command of divine beings, spirits, men and creatures, with no definite division between them (Elgood 2004: 327-8). The Mahabharata (3, 84, 105) also mentions the early shrines associated with yaksha and goddess Hariti/Yakshini (Coomaraswamy 1971: 9-10), and an altar or stone slab almost place below a tree sacred to the yaksha and also placed at the shrine of the goddess/yakshini (Elgood 2004: 331).

Yakshas and yakshinis are considered in Indian mythologies as an extensive class of nature-spirits commonly caring and sometimes unreliable custodians of the natural treasures hidden inside the earth and tree roots. Yakshas and yakshinis are depicted in Indian art as a

caretaker deity. The word yaksha mentioned numerous times in the *Rig-Veda*, *Brahmanas* and *Upanishads*. Yakshas were represented mostly as a dvarapala or guardian of the gates of shrines. It might be accepted that practically, every building must be secured by a spirit protector. That people have been sacrificed and laid in the foundation of a building, has an informative early precedent is found that “An incredible gate (dvara) is protected by extraordinary spirits (devata) (Coomaraswamy 1931: 8).

The worship of yaksha's idol and religious ceremonies of yakshas was non-Aryan characters, which show that yakshas were originally non-Aryan deities because the Vedic Aryans were not idol-worshippers and their god did not have an anthropomorphic presence while the other Vedic section were idolaters. The yaksha images are the first anthropomorphic representation of any divinity in stone with an unvarying standard monograph, where the iconographic features were adopted from the non-Aryan institution. There were idolatrous classes mentioned by *Vedas* as Sisnadeva and Muradevas. The later literature and art both confirm that the iconic features of the yakshas had originated from Vedic non-Aryan institution. The association of sex with yakshas and a reference of Sisnadeva in *Rig-Veda* also show that there might have been existed some sensible yaksha images in the Vedic society for the common folk to fulfill the religious needs of non-Aryans who also worshiped the Muras and Sisnas. To please the yakshas, they used to offer human flesh and blood, and used to hold festivals at yakshas' locales. This manner of their worship also indicates that it was different from the cult associated typically to the Vedic deities. The Vedic writings present a short period of faith in the yaksha with a high-god concept. With the passage of time, they were unequipped to satisfy the higher goal of human presence, for example, *Moksha* (liberation), for which they were themselves struggling and venerated the Brahmanical divine beings or supplicated to the Buddha or Mahavira (Misra 1981:87).

During the Mauryan period, the adoration of the yaksha image was probably a separate cult. The six-foot free standing yaksha image at Noh is considered as the earliest image of the yaksha in Northern India. The Images of yakshas and yakshinis were incorporated in Buddhist iconography from third to second centuries BC (Harle 1994: 64). In the art of the Kushana period, the depiction of yakshas along with Shiva in the images of Shiva-lingams shows that the yaksha cult has also been without restrictions incorporated in Brahmanical traditions. In the later

Gupta period, the yakshha image transformed into classical Hindu iconographic traditions as semi-god and protectors. And Kubera was depicted as the god of wealth, the regent of the northern direction and the chief of the yakshas. The yakshas and yakshinis were incorporated in Jaina's iconographic traditions as divine attendants (Hooja 2004: 375).

Yakshas, vegetation spirits or demigods, who symbolize the life-giving sap of trees, were first occurred as examples of the association of Makara with celestials. Out of the mouth of the Makara comes the stem of birth to which the yakshas are linked. With the relation of branches of Vishnu's tree of life, they lived in trees as tree gods and goddesses. These playful creatures float around in the dark and assist in childbirth. Next, the Makara was used as the *vahana* or pedestal for Nadi-devatas (River goddesses). The Hindu shrines (Varuna, Soma, Kubera and Indra) where Vedic gods have been taken with Makara's association. Varuna, the god of living waters, represents the source of all creation, the root of the tree of life and also known as yaksha. He later became the god of the ocean, and the Makara became his *Vahana*, as one of the chief Vedic gods. As the moon god, The Makara performs the same duty for Soma. Nine treasures of Kubera, the Makara is one of it (the Vedic god, god of wealth and chief of the evil spirits or yakshas) (Robins & bussabarger 1970: 41-2).

2.1 Yakshas and yakshinis in Vedic text

An investigation of the idea of yakshas brings them closer to the nature-spirits, demoniacal, or beneficent. Yakshas mentioned in a good sense in many passages of *Rig-Veda* are as under:

Rig-Veda (2. 5.1) mentioned the yakshas as the guardians of the natural treasures. The word yaksha is compounded as yakshadru and Yakshliabhrish in some other Vedic text, where scholars have different opinions about its meaning. According to Coomaraswamy, in *Rig-Veda* (1.190-4), the name yakshadru occurs which merely means that the one who offers sacrificial worship while "yakshadrish" is appearing as yaksha. According to many scholars' explanations of the *Rig-Veda* (7. 56-1 6) means "yaksha-aspect while Hillebrandt said about it that "Maruts are spiers out of yaksha." And Bailey says that the wonder of Brihaspati spreads in devaloka and on earth, like droves of creature (steed) conveying a yaksha. Yakshliabhrit is here, horse that one may see a richly clad chieftain in it (Bailey 1932:154-55). In this manner, in perspective of such

repercussions of the word yaksha it might be stated, in concurrence with Coomaraswamy, that the entire substance of the word yaksha incorporates the thought of sudden iridescence, great or 'amazing indication of something typically imperceptible and puzzling force legitimately to be adored. Despite varieties in the importance of the word, this view extensively holds great (Coomaraswamy 1931:236).

The yakshas were declared as a beautiful being in the literary sources of *Rig-Veda* (7.56.16) and Ghobhila Grihya sutra (Agrawala 1970: 169-70). It is, therefore necessary to look into the essence of a yaksha. A good description of the nature of the yaksha was given by Coomaraswamy (1971, 5-12). The yakshas are considered nothing more than "a wondrous thing," according to Jaiminiya Brahmana (3, 203, and 272). According to Satapatha Brahmana, Kubera (the king of the yakshas) is a Rakshasa and lord of robbers and evildoers. In marriage custom, in the Sutras, he conjures with Isana for husband. In Grihya Sutras yakshas, are conjured together with hosts of major and minor deities, all declared as bhutas. The same text says that his host haunts children. So a yaksha can be some being with extraordinary power, a demon, lord of criminals, and donor of fertility and cause of child mortality (Chakraborty 1998: 156).

A standout amongst the most essential semantic highlights of the word in the later Vedic period is yaksha's development as a "nebulous vision." Indeed, in something like one entry in the *Rig-Veda* (7. 61.5), yaksha is viewed as an "imperceptible enemy." In some other passages, the Brahma- yaksha is plainly a "ghostly being." A comparative thought is communicated in the Maya philosophy, where Indra portrays to the Rishis what the Brahma- yaksha resembles. Eventually, this idea of "apparition" may have prompted the idea of yaksha as a "poorly omened sign" or animal in the Kama Sutra (9. 3. 3). Yaksha was along these lines being contributed with his later garb. This improvement obviously, proclaimed the change of yaksha into a satanic being. However, it is obvious from Vedic text that in the sense of a deity, he decidedly remained there, even though in contrast with his later form, he is less material, less apparent, spiritual and, as the greater part of the Vedic gods' representative. Thus, this ill-defined yaksha was considered as a Deva or god (Lochtefeld 2001:430).

The beginnings of the yaksha cult are found in the *Rig-Veda*. To make the Vedic yaksha justifiable, the examination of the references in the *Rig-Veda* is vital. The word yaksha in the Vedic text is mentioned in the following sequence. Yakshas are mentioned in Vedic

mythologies both in a benevolent and malevolent sense. In *Rig-Veda* (X. 85 .5), yakshas are mentioned in a virtuous sense while in *Rig-Veda* (5.70.4) and *Rig-Veda* (7.61.5) mentioned as dreadful and not somebody to be partnered with, in *Rig-Veda* (7. 56.16) mentioned as a beautiful being, in *Rig-Veda* (7. 88.6) yaksha is honorific of Varuna. In another verse yaksha is mentioned as a primitive deity inhabiting the underworld and, in some verses defined as god, either by obvious proclamation or by suggestion. In these texts, a striking point is an undecided approach towards the yakshas, viz., the mentality of high regard as in the *Rig-Veda*, (7. 56. 16 and 7. 88. 6) and the state of mind of doubt and defamation as mentioned by the *Rig-Veda*, (4. 3 .13 and 5. 70 .4). Later, this inward clash ended up being strikingly separate in the twin parts of the idea of yakshas viz, benevolent and malevolent. Yaksha is all over fix, as in the *Rig-Veda* (10. 88.13), Coomaraswamy has said that in the *Rig-Veda*, (4. 3.13 and 5.70.4) Yhkj/ia/n will be 'god' if pay no attention to its malevolent character. Though, his material identity is still especially missing. Only *Rig-Veda* (7.56.16) stated about yaksha's beautiful form and no further details are available about its look/features. It appears that in the *Rig-Veda*, despite the fact that yaksha had come to be acknowledged as a divine being, he too was immaterial like the various Vedic divinities. Yaksha, in his interpretation, has later clarified the physical part of the Vedic divine beings (Coomaraswamy 1993:235).

Atharva Veda, (10. 7, 38) stated that "An incredible yaksa amidst the universe, resting in concentrated-energy (tapas) on the back of the waters, in that are set whatever divine beings there be, similar to the parts of a tree about a trunk" with reference to Varuna (is a Vedic deity associated initially with the sky, later also with the seas as well as Rta (justice) and Satya/truth), *Brahman* or Prajapati as the highest and extreme source of life. Importance is to be connected to this idea of the tree of life springing from a navel. Yakshas are basically vegetation spirits, protectors of the vegetative source of life and hence firmly associated with the waters. This concept of the origin of life in the waters are put forward in the later "decorative" art, specialty of the water-cosmology by the always repeating procedure of a lotus rhizome bearing leaves and flowers, frequently supporting or confining winged creatures and animals and ordinarily springing from the mouth or navel of a Yaksha, or the more clear water symbols, the filled vessel (punna-ghata) or open jaws of a makara or a fish-tailed elephant (Lazarus 1896: 37). Atharva Veda (5, 3, 10, 28" accepts yakshas in their familiar sense where Kubera and his son were called

as Panyajana and yakshas are summoned with the various divine beings referenced in a similar section of AV. 9, 6, 10 (Usha *n.d.*: 86).

2.2 Yakshas and yakshinis in *Brahmanas* and *Upanishads*

Brahmana and *Upanishads* effectively mentioned the yaksha as great divinity with great power. In Brahmana, *Brahman* says “by concentrated energy (tapas) I became the primal yaksha”; in the Brhadaranyaka Upanishad, 5, 4 we have “He who realizes that extraordinary yaksha as the primal-born, that will be, that Brahma is the Real, he subdues these universes”; in Kena Upanishad (3, 15) and Jaininiya Upanishad Brahmana (4, 20) where *Brahman* indicates himself to the divine beings, who know him not, they ask “What yaksha is this”?, and come finally to know through “*Uma*/divine power” that it is *Brahman*. All the text indicates the yakshas as a wonderful being, as already mentioned that the concept of the yakshas was obviously clear in Atharva Veda and it is clearer in *Upanishads*. In fact the *Brahman*- yaksha of *Upanishads* signifies the same idea as back in the *Rig-Veda*, where it is basically applicable to Varuna and the transitional stage was mentioned by Atharva Veda where the inhabiting soul or self of man is called *atmanvat* yaksha. (Coomaraswamy 1931: 2-3).

The Hindu stories, and Jain and Buddhist writings, give authentic proof in portrayals of non-Vedic cult worship demonstrating ceremonial practices and offerings which are missing from the remedies of the *Vedas*. The cult of offering and gift giving can be believed to have its source in the traditions related with the offerings to yakshas as early as first-second century A.D. Terracottas from the second century BC point to a built up collection of *mudras* (hand signals) and images, for example, the pot, the trident, the lance, the lotus, the regal umbrella, palm-prints, the offering of flowers and the giving of bounty as the showering of coins. Further related characteristics are; the axe, trident, mace, cakra, lance, and mangalas, for example, the lotus, palm-print, paired fish and the pot-proceed up to the present to be related with the love of the town goddess. The Mahabharata (3, 84, and 105) likewise gives textual proof of the type of early shrines related with the worship of yaksha and goddess sanctuaries related with Hariti, basically a stone nagas or altar set underneath a tree sacrosanct to the yaksha or at a shrine to the goddess (Coomaraswamy 1971: 9-10, 18).

The Mahabharata also speak about the worship of yakshas. According to (6, 41.4) of Mahabharata the sattvik class of people worship the gods (devas), the rajasik class worship the yakshas and rakshasas, and the tamasik class worship the pretas and bhutas. Thus, a yaksha is adored for wealth. Kubera (Vaishravana, Vaisramana, Vissavana, Janbhala, Panchika etc.) is the guardian or *Lokapala* of the Northern direction. He was specially worshipped for material gain and was a god of power and productivity. A good significant style is the muscular form of Kubera with fruit in his hand or holding a bag. The cult of the Lokapalas as being prominent at Khotan, where they are shown riding a demon as seen at Bharhut too, in connection with the north (Coomarswamy 1971: 6). The flower bud and parrot associated with yakshas and that aspect of the yakshas are express to be loving and benevolent. According to Manu Smriti, Meat and wine are food of yakshas, rakshasas and pisacas. The images with wine cup belong to yakshas, rakshasa and pisacas. The yakshas and yakshinis are both associated with fertility. As mentioned earlier, the Sutras also testify it that yaksha is prayed at the time of marriage. The Jaina text Antagada Dasao also mentions that the yakshini, Harinegamesi is worshipped for fertility. About the offering to the yaksha, the Kathasritsagara of 11th century A.D. mentions that wine and meat among other things to be offered to a yaksha during marriage and their abode is at the gate of the city. A Tibetan source says that there was a yaksha at Vaishali with a bell hung round the neck to alarm the people against danger while the Jaina literature called it as Sashana devata. The one “with the bell in their hands” may be manifest the feature of guardian angel. According to Mahabharata the Bhadra, “lucky” or Rddhi, “success” was the wife of Kubera (Chakraborty. 1998: 157). Any reference is not available about the home worship of yakshas. Mahabharata refers to caitya-vrkshas as habitat of devas, yakshas and rakshasas (Coomarswamy 1971: 17-8).

Their residence is said to be mostly on the mountains, on the banks of rivers, on city gates, in groves, in caityas outside the city, in water tanks and even within the palaces. They were mostly said to be residing in caityas outside the city. These *yakshayatanas*/ yaksha-residences are often described as earliest, glorious and well-known palaces. The acceptance of their residence in palaces of higher echelons of the society of that time and the magnificence of their shrines proposes that all of them were not horrific in nature. But most of the texts recommend that the people use to maintain distance from yakshas (Chakraborty 1998: 158).

The early settlement that recovered during the partial excavation at Rairh and Nagar sites which belongs to Malava people have provided the important information about the yakshas, built of bricks and dated back to second century BC to third century AD. A number of terracotta hand-made and mould-made figurines and clay tablets were found that consists “mother-goddesses’ having red pigment and decorative motifs, Hindu divine beings such as Shive/Mahesvara and Parvati/Uma, yakshini figurines of Kushana era and early Gupta periods and animal figurines (Hooja. 2004: 366). The religious art of Rajasthan also has noticeable collection of Buddhist and Brahmanical sculptures like Shiva-lingam, yakshas and terracotta figurines and plaques which are dated back to 1st century B.C to 1st century A.D. (Usha *n.d*: 369).

2.3 Worship of yaksha and yakshini

The epics, Puranas and early Buddhist texts, mentioned the yakshas and nagas as the objects of worship and they were very popular in ancient India. Almost all the objects of veneration/deities have been mentioned by the sacred texts with their proper names. These literary sources were of great importance for the contemporary sculptors to understand their correct form and features. Several sculptures at the railing of Bharhut’s stupa have the names of yakshas with their images. The earliest example is of yaksha Kubera mentioned during the second century B.C. by the name of Kupiro Yakho. Other yakshas that have mentioned by their names on their sculptures are; Suchiloma (Suchilomo), Ajakalaka (AjaKalako), Supravasa (Supavasa), Chakravaka (Chakavako), Virudhaka (Virudako), Gangita (Gangito) Nandi and Vardhana. The yakshinis that have mention mentioned by their names consists of; Yakshini Sudarsana (Yakhini Sudasana) and Chanda Yakshini (Chada Yakhi) (Sivaramamurti 1957: 35). The worship of yakshas and nagas was not only popular in northern India, but these were also commonly worshipped in the south as clearly mentioned in an inscription from Amravati, Andhra Pradesh. The script of the inscription was of 2nd century B.C. that also mentioned the name of the yaksha, and its sculptures was incised with the sculptures of initial/early period. The inscription runs “Yakho chadamukho baku (la) nivasi.” The inscription mentions the name of the yaksha and his shrine “Vriksha” or tree. Near the tree, the shrine of this yaksha should have been erected (Usha *n.d*: 36).

The symbols of earlier sacred traditions like Naga, yaksha, yakshini, and Surya etc. were prevailed there in the earliest sites of Buddhist art. In early Pali sacred texts, this trend is

simultaneously reflected. During the early transitional phase of the evolution of Buddhism, these traditions incorporated in it. During the Mauryan period the worship of yaksha image was that much popular that seems like a separate cult. During this period/3rd century B.C. a lofty free standing and earliest yaksha figure was carved out in northern India which shed light on the importance of yaksha cult. During this period yakshas and yakshinis had begun to be adapted into Buddhist religious art (Chaturvedi 2012: 155). The early sites have provided proof of interconnectedness and contact between folk cults, as in the depiction of the yakshas and early Hinduism (Usha *n.d.*: 161).

The worship of yakshas and yakshinis is most likely returns to a more established rural background between the third century BC and second century A.D. They occur in the urban scene and cannot be portrayed or rejected as the focal point of minor, only urban, 'folk' cults. The impressive stone images from the Mathura, Sanchi, Bharhut and Gandhara were the results of urban workshops, financed by wealthy urban supporters. They portrayed the presence of iconographic traditions, distinctive skills, and infer network venerate in the places of worship. The money bag that the yaksha, some of the time holds in his left-hand associates him with wealth. The yaksha himself progressively takes on an urbane look, and it is hard to recognize a portion of the yaksha figures and pictures of complex and wealthy worldly men of substance (Singh 2004:383).

During the Mauryan period, the worship of the yaksha image was perhaps shown as an isolated cult. A very much portrayed, almost 6-feet-high, isolated stone yaksha image found at Noh, close to Bharatpur, is viewed as one of the oldest stone depictions in northern India. By second-third century BC, yakshas, and yakshinis, had started to be adopted into Buddhist depiction (Harle 1994: 64). The yaksha cult seems to have been incorporated freely to the Brahmanical Hindu traditions in Kushana period. The late Gupta period saw the yaksha figure adopted as the guardian figure or semi-god. In the conventional Hindu iconographical custom, with Kubera, the head of the yaksha is seen as lord of wealth and protector of the northern direction. In the tenth and eleventh centuries A.D, yakshas and yakshinis were adopted as a supernatural attendant in Jain iconography (Hooja 2004:375).

The yakshas were considered the deities of fertility, Water, trees, the forest and the wilderness. According to sacred literature and sculptural evidences it is clear that the yakshas

were transformed from a powerful and benevolent deity which exclusively worshipped to a terrifying and demonic nature position. Thus their status became as a secondary and attendant figure connected with fertility more than the wealth. The yakshas and yashinis were basically benevolent deities associated with fertility. The general term Shalabhanjikas is used for the women which holding the branches of a tree with sensuous figural representation in numerous ancient religious beliefs which were also yakshinis. While on the other hand the yakshini is described generally frightening and demonic nature spirit in the texts of the Brahmanical, Jaina and Buddhist traditions (Sutherland 1992: 137ff.).

The yakshas and yakshinis in the long run absorbed, marginalized, and demonized in the prominent religious scriptures but it's prevalence in these religious scripts indicates that once their worship was widespread and essential. The yaksha cult has its roots in ancient rural background, but it appeared in urban landscape between 3rd century B.C and 2nd century A.D. The fact cannot be denied that it was the main folk cult of exclusive, minor, and rural landscape. The yakshas stone images of Mathura and elsewhere were carved out by urban craftsmen and financed by the wealthy donor from the rural areas. The sculptures of yakshas and yakshinis shows that there were iconographic traditions, skillful artisans and shrine were the places of public worship. When a yaksha is shown holding the money bag in his left hand associates him with the wealth. With the passage of time the images of yaksha looking more urban than rural therefore sometimes it is difficult to distinguish him with the images of wealthy common men (Singh 2004: 383).

Several texts and epigraphs mention the yaksha Manibhadra as a protector deity of travelers and traders, and he was specially venerated in the main trade centers. A torso and a relief figure of Kubera, the king of yakshas was found from Parkham district. Another figure of Manibharda was also found in the same district. According to Singh (2004: 384), that a "Jakhaiya Mela" or "yaksha Fair" is still commemorating in the month of January every year at Parkham, the place of a colossal yaksha once stands near the water tank (now shifted to Mathura Museum). A small substitute of the colossal yaksha is placed there for worship and hundreds of people from the surrounding areas congregate at Parkham to worship the yaksha (Usha *n.d.*: 396).

Wild nature spirits of the Vedic tradition adopted by Buddhism and Hinduism like the yakshinis, naginis, or Śalabhanjikas, represent the Indian ideal of feminine beauty and symbolize the

protective/maternal energy of nature. The concept of maternal energy or mother goddesses was not unknown for Indians, but it was already in existence since Indus valley civilization during 2nd millennium B.C. This concept was also prevailing in European and Asia minors' cultures. The concept of mother goddesses was much popular among the common representations in the art of Mathura, early period of Barhut and Sanchi. The most popular representation of Indian art was the tree-goddess or woman-and-tree/Shalabhanjika. The Shalabhanjikas are shown contacting the trees, making them blossom an exchange of the fertility of womanhood to the tree (Czuma 1977: 91).

2.4 Prominent yakshas and yakshinis

There are several yakshas and yakshinis in pre-Buddhist and Buddhist sacred text. But here, the most prominent of them would be discussed.

2.4.1 Yaksha Kubera/ kupiro Yakho

In the Vedic period Kubera was the chief of evil and malevolent beings living in the house of shadow and darkness (Coomaraswamy 1931: 40). In the post Vedic and classical myths, Kubera was generally celebrated as the god of fertility and also as the king of a rich city called Alaka. Alaka was the dwelling place of semi-divine beings, situated in Himalayas, south of the Vindhya. It is also commonly believed that Kubera was the friend or servant of Shiva (Tieken 2018: 1). And again, a point of concurrence between Shiva and Vaishnavana is introduced here. Beside the fact that on a mountain or mountain-like palace in the North, both the gods dwell, they could share similar demonic assistants (Raven 1988: 112). And Kubera was also living there, and Shiva visited him at his residence there (Usha *n.d.*: 110). The latter was mentioned in one of the accounts that he was residing along with his wife at one of the peaks of Mount Meru and the same account has mentioned the Vaishnavana too as the resident of the slope of that peak, incorporates likewise among those living on its slopes the 'Ruler Vaishnavana, the incredible lord of the yakshas, who has his living arrangement on 'Kailasa' (Sutherland 1992: 67).

These distinctive qualities considered the yakshas as defender of the northern quarter, who live on the mountain of Vaishnavana/Kubera, (Bautze-Picron 2002: 250). *Rig-Veda* (7. 8-19) is telling about the yaksha people but there is no mention of Kubera, their king. According

to Joshi the Kubera's tribe was not from the high class of that society in which warriors were in majority therefore there is no mention of him in the *Rig-Veda*. He called the Kubera as the chief of that tribe which continuously snatching the wealth of the Aryans. He was disliked and hatred by the Aryans due to his enmity with them therefore, probably, he got the title of "Kubera" means the "ill-shaped one" (Joshi 1978: 100-1). Satapathy also following Joshi's view and remarks that "it is seems that Kubera was basically the chief of a local tribe before the arrival of Aryans and most probably they were living in a dense forest." When the Aryans came in contact with them, they hide themselves in the forests and remained there. Many scholars have different derivations for Kubera but all ends on the same result, like, if Kubera consider as the deity of prosperity, it is also possible that he might be an ill-shaped (Satapathy 2002: 42). Kubera is mentioned by Hopkins as the protector of prosperity or Plutos of Hindu myths (Hopkins 1898: 353). According to Zimmer, Kubera and his followers are primarily associated with earth, mountains and waters (Zimmer 1946: 70).

The Epics says about the yakshas that they used to meet with Indra in being the lavish treasury of riches, "Kubera was the lord of riches," so he shared the role of Indra-to whom he shared the northern area. Indra is famous for his wealth in the epics that he is said to rains the gold. Indra is occasionally come together with Kubera Dhanesvara as appeared differently in relation to other deities. However, soon, Kubera, the ruler of yakshas, superseded different divine beings, like, Indra, Yama and Varuna, and turned into the "norm of exhaustless riches" (Misra 1981: 4). Ramayana mentions the Marici as the son of Tataka and Gandhamadana or monkey as the son of Kubera (Usha *n.d.*: 29). Kubera's nine treasures are "*Padma, Mahapadma, Sahkha, Makara, Kacchapa, Mukunda, Nanda, Nila, and Kharva*. According to coomaraswamy, kubera's nine treasures are all nearly water symbols (Coomaraswamy 1931: 49).

Kubera is mentioned in Atharva Veda (5. 3-10, 28) by the names of Vaishravana, the son of Vaishravana and the dear calf of Viraj, who is signified as a divine cow. According to the hymn, Viraj was reached to Itarajanas/other-land or the Kubera's dwelling region after crossing the regions of Pitrhs, gods, Sages, men, Asuras, gandharvas and apsaras. Bhadra/lucky or Rddhi/success was the wife of Kubera. According to Mahabharata (3. 168. 13 etc), she united with Lakshmi, however she is considered here as the goddess of fortune, therefore she associates herself with all the great kings (Coomaraswamy 1931: 3-4).

The eighth book of Mahabharata “Sabha Parva” says that on the request of Yudhisthira, Narada defines for him the Hall/sabha of Indra, Yama, Varuna, Kubera and *Brahman*. Yudhisthira mentions in Adhvaya (43-48) the special features of all the five sabhas as defined to him by Narada. He said to the sage in Indrasbha that you have mentioned briefly the gandharvas and different seers. There we find a general reference to gandharvas and apsaras in all the sabhas and special attention was given, which means that they had no special status in Indhrasabha. While in Kubera sabha their features are described in detail by Narada (Mehendale 1984: 247-48). Mahabharata also discusses in detail the houses/sabhas of several gods. The sabha of Indra is described as “constructed by *VisvaKarma*, glowing, had seats with beautiful covers hanging in the space (could move on his will), have excellent houses, halls with tapestry, stairs, columns, stages and sacrificial podiums. The Sabha of Kubera is vast in length and width, white, had a high spire decorated with gold, had a canopy and it could travel through the sky. The Sabha of Varuna is described as white, vast in length and width, had decorated walls, gates, colorful canopy, located in waters and built with advanced architectural techniques. While the Sabha of Yama or Yamaloka has buildings of different shapes, built with advanced architectural techniques, white and pink colored, could roam with his will, had bells and nets, glowing with gold, silver and precious stones. All the Sabhas were multi-storied, having ponds, streams, gardens and means of transportation. The architect *VisvaKarma* belonged to danava tribe, and he is praised as there was no one comparable to him in architectural abilities (Debroy 1993: 213-14).

Mahabharata mentioned several stories of the defeat of Kubera by the Pandavas. Mahabharata (3. 151-153) says about the Pandavas that they were residing in many forests of malevolent spirits in course of their long exile of twelve years. They also reached to the foothills of Himalayas where there was Gandhamadana, a very beautiful and vast forest which was the residence of Kubera, his servants yakshas, Kinnaras, Rakshasas and gandharvas. According to the legend, one day Draupadi found a very unique thousand-petalled golden lotus flower with other-worldly fragrance. The flower was blown there by the wind from the lotus pond of Kailasa. Draupadi requested the Bhima to search more flower for her of this kind. Thus, Bhima reached to the lotus-pond with white swans in search of the golden lotus. The pond was guarding by the hundreds-thousands of Krodhavasha Rakshas. They were equipped with powerful armors, dressed in beautiful attires and were under Kubera’s order. Bhima was warned by the guards not

to interfere in the Kubera's and his yaksha's amazing pond where the gods came for drinking and enjoyment. He refused to get permission of Kubera saying that it is the gift of nature to all its creatures, as much as to Kubera. The Rakshasa rushed to stop him, but he jumped into the waters. The Rakshasas were killed by Bhima in a very little time with the help of his great gada/club and he plucked the divine lotuses according to his own will (Lad 1987: 54).

Lad mentions another defeat of Kubera and Rakshasas by the Bhima. According to Lad, the Mahabharata (3. 156-158) mentioned another humiliating defeat soon after the first one. The legend says that the Pandavas were residing there at the foothill of Himalayas, neighboring the Gandhamadana forest for five years. The snowy peaks of Himalaya have belonged to Kubera and his Tribe, Vidhyadharas, apsaras, Kinnaras, nagas and Rakshasas. At the evening before the darkness the peaks twilight up with the pink glow that one could see the momentary sight of the superhuman being and Kubera there. And their music and songs also used to hear at the foothills. Draupadi wished to go there where the access of humans was not allowed; therefore she instigated Bhima to clear up the area from the super-human beings. Before Bhima's attack, all the yakshas and rakshasas fled away except for the friend of Kubera "Manmani yaksha. Manmani was killed by Bhima and thus the paradise of superhumans falls under the humans or mortals' (Lad 1987: 54-55).

The Epics says about the release of the region (mountains and forests) of terror from the semi-gods and Kubera's yakshas had to go along the others. It is said that Manmani yaksha was therefore destined to die through a mortal's hands that the heavens are for the immortals and earth is for the mortal/humans to rule and enjoy. Manmani yaksha was cursed by the sage Agasti when Manmani spat on his head from the sky. Agasti cursed him for the insult of a mortal, to die at the hands of a mortal. When this happened Kubera had accompanied him in the chariot, so Kubera was also cursed for his silence role. When Manmani yaksha was killed by the Bhima and Kubera meet him face to face the cursed was revoked but Kubera lost his power and his army. According to the story Bhima came as the savior mortal to release them from the curse. After the defeat their power over humans reduced from their ability to help and protect them; it could easily be curtailed and shortened or even removed if they bowed and requested for their disrespectful act. The Epic keep the semi-gods under the check of the two mortal agencies i.e. sages and heroes and have here united forces to put a permanent end to audacity of Manmani

yaksha. Kubera accepts his role as supporter of the humans/mortals and not as their lord (Lad 1987: 55).

Kubera and Lakshmi have some features in common that have been mentioned in Mahabharata (3.140.4) thus they might have connection with each other. For example, both are associated with wealth and prosperity and both live on mountain Mandara. But their relation varies according to the sources. In some traditions Lakshmi is his spouse while other mentions Kubera her devotee (Rastelli 2015: 337-38). Gandharvas are described as the musician of Kubera by Mahabharata in connection to the abode of Kubera on the eve of Astavakra visit and the music is named as divya Gandharva (Mehendale 1985: 129). Kubera is describe in Epics as the possessor of “beloved thing” which gives sight to the blind, immortality to the mortals and bring back youth to the old (Coomaraswamy 1931: 40).

2.4.2 Yaksha Manibhadra

The yaksha Manibhadra enjoyed a very high status in yakshas cult, and his position appears next to Kubera. He was identified with different names like Manicara, Manivara, Manimat or Mani, but the well-known name is Manibhadra. Manibhadra is identified as a commander of Kubera, and defeater of Ravana and Rakshasas in Epics and Buddhist literature. Mahabharata mentions his residence at mountain Svetagiri and Mandara where he had yaksha servants of different shapes and have different weapons. According to Asvalayana Parva of Mahabharata when Manibhadra went to fetch the wealth of Marut, the Yudhisthira has paid offering to him, who confirms his status as the deity of travelers and wealth-giver (Misra 1981: 80).

Several texts and epigraphs mention the yaksha Manibhadra as a protector deity of travelers and traders, and he was venerated mostly in the main trade centers. It was the colossal figure of Manibhadra yaksha that unearthed in Parkham village which is dated to 2nd-1st century B.C. on stylistic bases, but the inscription on its pedestal dates it to the 3rd century B.C. The inscription mentions the name Gombitaka, the pupil of Kunika as its sculptor (Singh 2004: 383-4). Another inscription with the painting of a royal figure which mentions the Manibhadra yaksha is from the cave XVII of Ajanta. Dandin’s *Dasakumaracarita* of seventh-eighth century A.D. mentions yaksha Manibhadra as the mother of Taravali, who was the wife of Arthapala

(Coomaraswamy 1931: 10). The name “Parkham” is derived from “Pariksham” which probably means the one who can protect himself from Rakshasas. Mahabharata mentions Parkham as the main capital of yaksha Empire. It is also said that the famous scene of Mahabharata about the philosophical questions asked from Pandava brothers by the yaksha has happened at the lake of Parkham where a colossal image of Manibhadra was once erected (Entwistle 1991: 297).

The Buddhist and Jain literatures mention Manibhadra as the famous deity of eastern India and other references confirm the presence of his cult in Magadha, Brahmavati Mithila, Mathura and Pawaya (Misra 1981: 81). Archaeological and inscriptional evidences are available that shed light on the fact that, During the Gupta period and onwards the widespread practice of temples construction was famous among the elite and ruling class. Anthropological research also says that during this period, the construction of temples revealed that it was a significant instrument of providing religious validation for the ritual and political status of the donors. This is further testified by the epigraphic evidences which say that the local chiefs used to construct temples dedicated to the local deities to claim their political power over the people. For instance, an inscription of eight century CE records that king Kukuresvara was the patron of the erection of temple Kukkeresvara Mahadeva. The kanas copper plate from 6th-7th century CE, mentions that the temple in Orissa was dedicated to yaksha Manibhadra. These rulers used to construct the temples of tribal deities almost in tribal belts located in the far-flung areas to get the support of them and to show their suzerainty over them (Nath 2000: 43).

The Buddhist tradition defines Manibhadra as the protector of oceans and sailors. His image was installed by a group of traders at Pawaya in Gwalior (Varadarajan 1983: 5). The Buddhist literature testifies it that when Buddha arrived in Mathura, the *Brahmans* made many complaints against the place that were tormented by yakshas. Thus the chief of the yaksha was subdued by Buddha himself. In reference to the Buddha, it is said that there was a yaksha named Manibhadra, responsible for all the demons in heaven and below and he had sovereignty over the interior of the four oceans. Later on, he was attached to the doctrine of Buddha and vowed that he will protect the interest of the people (Vaudeville 1976: 210).

2.4.3 Purnabhadra

Like Manibhadra, Purnabhadra is also believed as the protector of the traders. Adi Parva, the first book of Mahabharata, describes a Naga deity with the name of Purnabhadra. At the same time Matsya Purana mentions a very significant story regarding a yaksha of Kashi. According to the description, Harikesa was banished by his father yaksha Manibhadra for his righteous thoughts, humane feelings and his devotion to Shiva. Yaksha Purnabhadra is described in the legend as a cruel, hard-hearted, vicious, and addicted to hunting and meat eater. His son Harikesa was not aware of these practices of his father as he was in Kashi and busy in achieving the great austerity. With the blessings of Shiva, he got the status of Ksetrapala/the deity of farmland or the food giver to all and got freedom from any disease and death (Upadhyay 1976: 128-29). Manibhadra and Devajani are described as his parents in the Vayu Purana while on the contrary in the Mahamayuri, Purnabhadra and Manibhadra are seems brothers. He has two wives, Tara and Uttama and had only one son, Harikesa. A story in Brhatkatha Shlokasmagraha connects him with Bhadravati Yakshini is represented in the story as a servant of Kubera. According to the legend, the Bhadravati was thinking about some elephant while sitting in the lap of Kubera. Thus Kubera was unintentionally hit by her with *Cauri*. Kubera cursed her to be converted into an elephant herself. As Purnabhadra was also present there as an attendant of Kubera heard that and conveyed Kubera's words to Bhadravati, so he was also cursed for his sympathy with her. But when, later on, Kubera remember it the curse was revoked, and they were restored to their previous form and status (Misra 1981: 85).

The worship of yakshas was prevalent before the time of Buddha and Mahavira, and the cult of Purnabhadra is as old as Panini where the followers of Purnabhadra are mentioned in Purnabhadda Vattika along with Baladeva and Vasudeva (Ushnisa). Although the detailed account regarding the shrine of Purnabhadra is mentioned in Jaina traditions. According to Bhagavatti-Sutra, the shrine near Bhagalpur was dedicated to yaksha Purnabhadra as it is evident from its name "Purnabhadde." The sanctuary is mentioned that was decorated with flags, banners, umbrellas, bells, and brushes of peacock feathers. It had several podiums, decorated with different kinds of Sandal and reverentially decorated with a coating of cow dung. Pitchers and jars for rituals were kept inside the sanctuary and on its beautiful arched doorways. The description also mentions that the shrine used to visit by the dancers, singers, actors, reciters,

wrestlers, ropewalkers and story tellers etc (Elgood 2004: 338-39). The worshipers also visited the shrine to ask for the fulfilment of their wishes. It was located in the middle of the garden named “Amrashalavana” with Ashokan tree at the center of the shrine (Misra 1981: 86).

Buddhist traditions also partly based on the ancient Hindu myths, and both have a number of demi-gods associated with trade and waters. For example, Ratnakara/Ratangara is regarded as the protector of sailors, and Jambhala could be associated with Varuna. Yakshas are defines in the Buddhist tradition as the protectors of oceans and waters. Purnabhadra and Manibhadra are mentioned among the protectors of the travelers and traders, and an image at Pawaya/Padmavati in Gwalior was installed by a group of merchants who were the followers of him. The Manimekhalai of ancient tradition is also believed in Buddhist tradition as the protector of sailors, merchants and the protector of the eastern seas (Varadarajan 1983: 5).

2.4.4 Sthuna or Sthunakarna

Sthuna or Pillar was a prominent yaksha resident of a forest near to Panchala kingdom, mentioned by Mahabharata as Sthunakarna. Sthuna is mentioned in a story regarding the king Drupada of Panchala and his son. According to the story, Drupada was a childless king who worshipped Shiva daily for many years and prayed him for a son. He promised that he would dedicate in advance his son to the mission of assisting in the obliteration of Drona. After many years of prayers and severe austerity Shiva blessed him with a child and said that “it is enough, O king! Thou shalt in due time have a child who will be first a daughter and then a son.” “This strange thing is decreed for thee; it will not fail!” When returned home, Drupada talked about the divine promise to his wife. She was faithful women accepted the decree of destiny with heart and mind. In due time, she gave birth to a very beautiful daughter, but due to her faith in the promise of Shiva, they announced that she is blessed with a baby boy. All the rites of a son’s birth were performed by Drupada and kept it so secret that no one was even suspected. She was taught with writing, painting and all the arts that were proper to a man. She learned shooting and fencing from the royal guru Drona and was in no way inferior to other princes of surrounding states. Then as she was growing up, her mother advised her husband to find a beautiful wife for their supposed son. So, Drupada sent delegations in all directions for finding a girl for his supposed

son. Finally, a maiden, the daughter of a king was selected and asked her hand for the proposed prince which was accepted by the maiden's father (Coomaraswamy *et.al.* 1914:168-9).

After marriage, when his wife came to know that her husband is actually a woman. Her father waged war against Drupada for the humiliation of his daughter. Drupada was pretended on all these matters because he already knew that he has a daughter, not a son. When Shikandini, the daughter of Drupada, saw the danger and grief for his parents, she decided to kill herself because this was caused due to her. She left for a nearby forest no one was residing except for a yaksha Stuna. There she met the yaksha, informed him about her conditions and requested him to turn her into a man with his magical power. The yaksha Stuna agreed on the condition that he would exchange his own *pum-lingam*/ organ of manhood with her *stri-lingum*/ sign of womanhood for a short time, but she would return it when the armies left his father's kingdom. They exchange their sexual organs according to the agreement. After knowing this, Drupada informs the father of his daughter-in-law that his son was actually a man, not a woman. Then the attacking king was to confirm Drupada's claim, and he sent young and beautiful women to learn, whether his son-in-law was really a man. After confirmation, the women went back and informed the king about it. When the king knew it, he went back home, and Shikandin has started a happy life with his wife (Doniger 2014: 352). But on the other hand, Sthuna was cursed by Kubera for this. At first, he was cursed to remain a female forever and Shikandin to be a male forever. The yaksha Sthuna became so much frightened by Kubera's cursed and Kubera showed his mercy and added that he would remain woman at least until Shikandin's death. According to the promise, Shikandin went back to the forest to return his sign of manhood to the yaksha. The yaksha was touched by Shikandin word and told him the truth that he had himself been destined to live with his newly obtained womanhood. And he comforted the young knight for the Injury he had unknowingly accomplished him, announcing: "All this was fate, Shikhandin! It could not have been prevented" (Coomaraswami *et.al.* 1914: 173).

2.4.5 Yama

In later mythology, Yama came to be the god of death, but he had a broad variety of functions in earlier mythology. He is mentioned in *Rig-Veda* as one of the first pair and referred as the first mortal/human. Yami was twin sister who wanted to marry him, but he rejected the

offer. In early traditions, Yama appears as the son of a solar deity, Visvasvat. He was adjusted in dharma later on as a god of social order and guardian of a direction of the earth. Katha Upanishad presents him as mortal and as a philosopher in discussion about death and its mystery with Naciketas. Later mythology presents him as more sinister and the god of death. As his two dogs, Sabala and Syama are described soul takers and lead the souls to the hell/Patala instead to the heaven of gods or to the place where their ancestors' souls were surviving. Once Patala was a place of comfort for the dead souls, but it changed to a place of punishment with dreadful creatures like; yakshas, Rakshasas, ghosts, dwarves and a realm of the souls of the dead. Yama is also described as a killer and associated with Shiva, the lord of cremation ground (Williams 2003: 305-06).

The *Vedas* mentions Yama as the lord of death and the departed souls live with him. He is mentioned in Chinese tradition with the name of Yen-mo-lo where he has many functions and forms, but initially he is believed as the god of underworld with the name of Yen-lo-wang. The later Brahmanic tradition describes him as judge of the dead and one of the eight guardians of the world. He was the guardian of the south. He is mentioned as the twin-born with his sister Yamuna and sun was his father. His images in China show that he was also worshipped there (Stevens 1998: 69-70).

Some of the scholars relating the terracotta or clay as the votive offerings for goddess during 3rd-1st century B.C. belong to Sunga and Maurya reigns. But other scholars suggest that these terracotta were offered as funerary gifts, associated with the cult of dead in south India, tree worship and synthesis of the goddess and local mother cult. Some scholars relating it to the village religion during 500-200 B.C. the early shrines were in the form of terracotta tanks. And a female figure was usually placed at one side of the water channel's base, and these tanks were provided with steps which lead to the shrine. According to Elgood (2004: 332), the Bengali ritual where the women present offerings to Yama was linked by Marshall with Yama-ukur-brata.

Atharva-Veda mentions Agni as the soul carrier from the funeral pyre to their respective places like heaven, Indraloka or Brahmaloaka or Naraka/hell. But this function is assigned to the god of death, Yama, in later accounts (Williams 2003: 50). Kala became well-known with the name of Yama who is believed as the son of Surya/sun god and Samjna. Samjna was the daughter of Kashyapa Prajapati. Yama/Kala changed into given the obligation to retrieve the

souls of those whose allocated time was at an end. The soul of the deceased was taken by his attendants. The soul is to be judged by Yama in his court according to the deeds of the deceased and sent to the respective place. His residence was at the city of Yamapuri or Samyamini (Williams 2003: 171).

The *yaksha prashna*, an episode of Mahabharata talks about the one hundred twenty-six questions, that were asked from Yudhishthira by the yaksha Yama and he gives correct answers to his all questions. This event had happened on the last day of the exile of the twelfth year of the Pandavas. According to the story, all the brothers of Yudhishthira were killed by the yaksha, after failing to answer the question of the yaksha Yama. Thus Yudhishthira himself went to the lake where he found all his brothers dead. There yaksha appeared to him in a very terrible form and warned him that he should first answer all his questions correctly then he will be allowed to the water of the lake otherwise he will be killed like his brothers. Yudhishthira gave him proper answers, and yaksha was satisfied. At that point, Yudhishthira was told that he would bring back to life one his brothers. He requested the yaksha that Nakula, his stepbrother to be brought to life because my father had two wives and I am alive for my mother, therefore, I wanted Nakula back to life that my stepmother also should have a son alive. When Yama listened to this reply, he was very pleased with his attitude and brought back all his brothers to life (Ray 2019: 4).

2.4.6 Nandi

Nandi was both a human manifestation of Shiva and a celestial bull. According to one of the religious traditions Kandikeshvara a dwarf or Adhikara-Nandin had carried on with a decent and long life. When his life was near its end, he prayed to Shiva for longer life. Shiva not only granted him a longer life but also made him as the supervisor of a group of ganas/dwarfs. Nandi was the human form of Adhikara-Nandin with the manifestation of Shiva. Nandi was a door guardian, and his images were placed at the gateways of several south Indian temples. Different accounts have different views about his birth. According to an account, Brahmin Śalankayana was presented with a son who had a physical appearance like Shiva. The son of the Brahmin Śalankayana was actually Adhikara- nandin fourth ninth rebirth and springing from the right-side of Vishnu. In another account, Nandi was sage who earned a boon from Shiva by his austerities and wished to become a supervisor of dwarfs of the Shiva. Nandi was associated with Shiva having many roles. His different roles include as Shiva's vehicle, the chief of Shiva's dwarfs, the

protector of all the animals and his courtier. In Vayu Purana, he is mentioned as the son of Kashyapa Prajapati and Surabhi. The image bull Nandi is usually placed at Shiva's temple with facing the inner shrine or garbha griha and white as milk (Williams 2003: 220-21).

According to Padma Purana, the great sages wanted to know about the supreme god among the Trimurti that deserved their worship. Bhrigu was chosen to test all the three gods for that purpose he went to Kailasa to see Shiva. Nandi was the Bull of Shiva who did not allow Bhrigu to the palace of Shiva saying that he is busy in making love and nobody is to be allowed to disturb him. Shiva was so addicted to marry making for that he was cursed by Brigu after waiting for many days to meet him but in vain. Due to the curse, he would only be venerated in the form of a lingam and yoni or male and female sexual organs (Usha *n.d.*: 202).

2.4.7 Hariti/ Mari, Mata, Badi, or Mai

The early shrines associated with yakshas and goddess Hariti where they were venerated is mentioned by Mahabharata (3, 84, 105) (Coomaraswamy 1971: 9–10). According to Mahabharata, a stone nagas or an altar kept under a tree, and the tree was sacred and associated with the yaksha or the goddess/ Hariti (Usha *n.d.*: 17–22).

As Sri/Lakshmi was the goddess, associated with vegetation, lotus and fertility; thus she was linked with fertility cults of yakshas and yakshinis. Although she had no mention in early Vedic traditions and the word Sri that occurred in that text is referring to supremacy and ability, suggesting high status, beauty, luster and brilliance (Elgood 2004: 333). According to Kinsley (1988: 20), she may have derived to Hinduism from Indo European goddess. The pre-Buddhist hymn Sri Sukta is the part of the appendix to *Rig-Veda* that mentions Sri/Lakshmi frequently; therefore, it is possible that the deity may have absorbed some features from earlier non-Vedic gods associated with fertility. Sri Sukta describes her as moist, observable through fragrance, residing in cow dung and abundant in the harvest. Kardama or mud is said to be her son. In Hindu traditions, she is associated with Kubera, the god of wealth while in Buddhist myths Hariti the wife of yaksha Nanda is regarded as similar to Sri/ Lakshmi the well-known pan-Indian goddess of pre-Buddhist time. While in orthodox Hinduism of later period her popularity with an aspect of Lakshmi was confined only to a village level (Elgood 2004: 333-34). In Hindu traditions Kubera was the husband of Aparajita and Hariti the wife of yaksha Nanda while in

Buddhist tradition they are known as Jambhala and Vasudhara and Hariti and Pancika respectively (Varadarajan 1983: 11).

According to the Mulasarvastivada Vinaya of the fourth or fifth century, Hariti is known as the Abhirati Yakshini. Abhirati means a joyfull girl. She was the daughter of Sata, the Benefactor of the yaksha of Rajagrha was, present-day Nalanda. She was to follow her father's pathway after his death; however, she refused to do so, having affirmed an oath in her earlier life, to devour the children of Rajagrha. Her brother Satagiri prevented her from these malevolent activities as he was aware of her bad nature. She was given in marriage with a yaksha Panchika of Gandhara to distract her from her early oath. She gave birth to five hundred children. To fulfil her oath of devouring the children of Rajagrha, she returned along with her five hundred children and has started the malicious activities of abducting and devouring of the children of this area. The people were unaware that the Abhirati is doing all this; they thought that an unknown yaksha is responsible for this massacre and to please the yaksha they have started food, music, banners and flowers in their prayers as present to the yaksha. When she was recognized as to the people by a yaksha as an abductor of their children, they called them Hariti instead of Abhirati which means thief. The people of Rajagrha complained against her to Śākyamuni Buddha. In order to stop her from her malicious deeds of devouring children of Rajagrha, Buddha concealed her beloved and younger son under his begging bowl. After searching far and wide and in vain, she requested Buddha to return her child, and if she did not have her child, she would finish herself. Buddha replied that you are crying for your one lost child out of five hundred children, think about those who have lost their only child or two children on account of your vicious devouring (Padma 2011: 5).

By hearing this, Hariti decided to convert to the path of the Buddha. Her passion for Buddhism impressed the Buddha, and he accepted her conversion and took her as a guru under his patronage. She became a lay worshipper or *Upasika* and professed the teachings of Buddhism. One among the five teachings was that she would cease the abduction and devouring of the children. She was anxious about the food of her five hundred children as they were accustomed to the diet of human flesh. But Buddha assured her that her children will be provided with food by his disciples every day as an offering. And in return, Hariti and her children would provide comfort and protection to Buddhist monks and monasteries (Shaw 2006: 112).

According to Foucher, Hariti was the fairy of wicked character belonged to the race harmful yaksha or the spirit of the air. She is also believed as the demon of the sickness of smallpox and the genius of treasures. This devotee was taken into consideration as a menace to contamination whilst smallpox infects an unvaccinated population of children. In modern time, in India, she still believes as the eradicator of the disease of smallpox by converting herself into a compassionate divinity (Foucher 1914: 280). During the Kushana period, the infection of smallpox was spread, and they felt the need to submit to her. Thus people leaned towards her and her worship was started. Hariti was accepted as the protector from the infection of smallpox. The claim gives the socio-historical situations that can have encouraged the spread of her worship (Shaw 2006: 124). Foucher narrates Yi-Tsing that Hariti was venerated as a fertility goddess and her images are erected in all Indian monasteries. She has worshipped as the patron of children, not their devourer. She is also shown with many hands which provide the concept of Sakti (Foucher 1914: 281-82).

The figures of yakshinis mostly depicts on stupa railings for beautification or outside the monastic area while the images of Hariti almost found inside. It seems that the adoration of Hariti was the first-ever independent cult of the goddess in Buddhism (Shaw 2006:110). Her curse was transformed into a beneficent deity in Buddhism. In Hinduism, Hariti existed as the folk goddess Mata, Mari, Badi, or Mayi (Joshi & Sharma 1969: 14). In contrast, all the Buddhist literature agrees on her status as the mother goddess of Buddhism. Hariti achieved a prominent status as a goddess in Buddhist domains. She is almost found having one or many children in monasteries which suggests her as the goddess of fertility and richness. Hariti is depicted in Gandhara Buddhist art in four different ways i.e., as a demon goddess, mother goddess, with Panchika and with cornucopia (Nisa 2018: 190).

2.4.8 Bhadra/ Aparajita

Kubera and Bhadra are described as the parents of Minakshi or fish-eyed girl. Mahabharata mentioned about the large family of Kubera and his two wives: Ridhi and Bhadra. Both his wives were very beautiful (Misra 1981: 62). According to the Arthashastra of Kautilya, in the northern sector of the town of Durganivesa, there were temples constructed for the guardian deities like Aparjita, Apratihata, Vaishravana, Asvin, Jayanta, Vaijayant, and Shiva. As it is mentioned that Kubera's worship was as earlier as Panini; therefore, he talks about the

worship of a Maharaja who was considered as Devata. The Bali was offered to the Maharaja is named by PatAnjali as “Maharaja-Bali.” Kubera was the guardian of Northern regions but according to some accounts, he along-with Indra guards the eastern regions (Usha *n.d*: 66). In Jaina traditions, the name Aparajita is mentioned with the name of Sasanadevata while in Bhuddist traditions and iconography the couple may be found in the tutelary couple of Pancika and Hariti and Vasudhara and Jambhala. In both, the cases the Kubera got independent and high status; therefore, he was dissociated from his previous relations. The shrines of ancient towns contain the names of tutelary yakshas in large number. Many towns have been identified by the scholars which supplying the names of yakshas like, Aparajati with the town of sthuna, north-west of Patna (Usha *n.d*: 167).

There are many examples mentions in Indian traditions regarding the conversion of yakshas into other things/forms. The Bhagavata Purana mentions about the conversion of two yakshas into trees/Yamalarjuna, and Kathasaritsagara mentions the conversion of a yaksha into Pishaca. According to Brihatkatha Slokasam Graha Purnabhadra and Bhadra were converted into elephants (Usha *n.d*: 146-7).

2.4.9 Yakshini Jirambi

Jirambi means the mother of “jeera” or cumin seed. In iconography she is shown standing frontally with elaborate hair dress, right hand on hip and left stretches towards a staff rising from a water pool. She stands under a canopy supported with a pole, and her image has the name “Yakshini Jerambi” in Kharoshti script. The style of the script is dated to third century AD. It means, during that time the yaksha cult was prevailing there. But the exact chronology of the images of this goddess is still unknown to us. The reason behind the difficulty to locate its date, such kind of figures that have been recovered from different area like; terracotta figurine from Temluk now in Amsolean museum in oxdord, terracotta plaque in Indian museum, Calcutta discovered from Kosam, a sculpture of the Yakshini from Didargang which become the artistic icon of India and many more sculptures from Mathura, Haryana and Amravati etc. that represents this goddess. During the first century AD, the large size images of yakshas disappeared, and the small size images continue to be venerated at the village level. However, the worship of this Yashini was in practice and popular as there is a bulk of its images discovered from different sites in India (Unnikrishnan 2017: 758).

2.4.10 Yakshini Padmavathi

Padmavati is mentioned in Vaishnava and Shaiva Puranas (Yegnaswamy 2017: 139). She like Manasa the Hindu goddess probably was a snake/Nagini Goddess. Along with her Nagini's character, her most unique attribute was in the form of a curious creature made up from the combination of a rooster and snake (Venkatesha 2016: 618). She is well known with multi-headed Naga's-hood behind her head, and this attribute connect her to the Tirthankara Parshvanatha. Padmavati along with another Naga deity Dharendra saved Tirthankara Parshvantha from harmful elements when was meditating and they became his yaksha and Yakshini attendants. However, the images of Padmavati with many arms and signs found from Kalugumalai have close resemblance with Svetambara iconography instead of Digambara (Orr 2005: 21).

The yakshas were the forest spirits and mostly worshipped by the believers of fertility cults. From these folk cultures, another cult was originated, known to us as "Matrika cult" or the cult of divine mothers (Yegnaswamy 2017: 139-40). The Matrika group of deities is also mentioned by the great Epic Mahabharata (Wangu 2003: 76), and its earliest tangible evidence is seen on the seals of Indus valley (Blurton 1993: 161). The worship of Matrikas was absorbed in all the major religions of the Indian subcontinent from the popular cultures of the pre-historic period. A saint Acharadinakara is mentioned in Jaina text Shasthisamskara invoking the eight-divine goddess/mothers or Ashtamatrikas. The names which mention in the Jaina text is similar to names mentioned in Hindu mythology that includes Maheshwari, Vaisanavi, Indrani, Tripura, *Brahmani*, Kaumari, Varahi and Chamunda (Vashishtha 1989: 149, Wangu 2003: 41).

A version of Bhagavata Purana mentions Padmavati as a river. That version links Sarasvati with the Ganga. According to this version, once Vishnu was busy in conversation with Lakshmi, Ganga and Sarasvati, his three wives. When Sarasvati saw that Ganga was passing playful glances behind her and Lakshmi's back towards Vishnu, she became very annoyed from this act of Ganga. Thus, she started beating Ganga and fight was ragged between them. In the meantime, Lakshmi intervened to resolve the issue, but she was cursed for her intervention by Sarasvati. She was cursed to be born on earth and in return Sarasvati was cursed by Ganga to be born as a river on earth. And Ganga was cursed for the same immediately by Sarasvati. Vishnu appeased all his three wives at this occasion but said that the curse could not be taken back, and

this had to have its effect. Due to the curse, Lakshmi was born on earth in the Ashrama of sage Dharmadvaja as a “Tulasi plant” and grew up as his daughter. She was married to an Asura Sankhachuda who was a partial manifestation of Vishnu. According to tradition, she became a river Padmavati in due course. Lakshmi left her earthly form as the Padmavati River and went back to the heavenly abode of Vishnu called Vaikuntha. Ganga became a mighty river on earth by the prayer of King Bhagi Ratha where King Santanu married her and gave birth to the eight Vasus, the attendants of Indra. She returned to Kailasa after giving birth to eight Vasus and became the wife of Shiva. Sarasvati had also left her mortal form thereby becoming the mighty river on earth and returned to Brahmaloaka where she became the spouse of Brahma. Apart from the version in Bhagavata Purana, many other versions are told like the one mention that Ganga flows from the knotted hair of Shiva (Williams 2003: 137).

The temples of Padmakshi were transformed into Jaina etc. for example at the center of the “Garbha Griha” of the temples of Trithankara Parsavanath, the figure of padmakshi was carved out to the left of the image of Parsavanatha and another image, which indicates the penetration of Padmakshi temple into Jaina pantheon. These figures were recognized as Padmavati Yakshini, Parsavanatha and yaksha Dharendhra. As mentioned earlier, that Parsavanatha was protected by the yaksha and Yakshini during his meditation from harmful elements. However, some scholars are on the opinion that the posture of in this scene is not similar to the features of the Jaina Yakshinin Padmavati mention in Padmasana (Pratap 1981: 697). In Jaina traditions the female divinities of the supernatural sphere are worshipped, these include the virtuous wives faithful to their husbands, those wives who cremate themselves alive after the death of their husbands (Von Glasenapp 1999: 106) and those women who adopt the path of self-sacrifice.

The Svetambara sect of Jaina still worships the sixteen female divinities of such qualities. These sixteen female divinities include Padmavati, Brahmi, Chandanabala, Draupadi, Mrugavati, Sita, Shiva, Shilavant, Prabhavati, Sundari, Rajimati, Kaushalya, Sulasa, Subhadra, Kunti and Damayanti. The names of these sixteen female divinities or “Sola-Sati” came to Jaina text either from Vedic, Epics or Puranic scriptures. For instance, Brahmi is taken from the Vedic literature, Sita from Epic Ramayana, Damayanti, Subhadra, Draupadi and Kunti from Epic Mahabharat Shiva from Shaiva Purana and Padmavati is taken from Vaishnava Purana. However, the group

of *sola-sati* or sixteen female divinities and the group Ashtamatrika or eight divine mothers/goddesses are purely associated with Jainism. Apart from the groups of female divinities, many worshipped in individual capacity too by all the Jaina believers. But when the vicious female divinities absorbed in Jainism as Matrikas, their vicious qualities changed to peaceful ones. Many of the images of these Female divinities were exhibited in 3rd century AD reliefs of Gupta periods that were absorbed in Jainism when these areas came under the sway of Jainism during 9th century AD (Yegnaswamy 2017: 139-40).

2.4.11 Kala Yaksini

From the eighth century A.D the Jains needed to confront energetic difficulties from different corners – primarily from the Hindu Pentecostal developments. The severe oppression from the Pallava lord Mahendravarman constrained the Jains to move to the hinterlands. The Jain focuses were bound to the exchange courses and conduits of Kerala. The region of Thiruvalla Changanassery lying in the highways of the water has several *kavus*/sacred-place which are non-Brahmin in their structure, rites and rituals. The Manimala River acts as a link between the east-side Western Ghats and west-side Arabian Sea. The river belt of Manimalayar-Pampa and Achankovil was famous for all of its pepper and other spices. The excellent country area gave diverse woods items. The waterways helped the transportation of business great to the Arabian Sea and a wide arrangement of inland and abroad exchange created from the days of yore. Relics of Megalithic culture like a stone basement with corroded surviving from an iron light, enormous number of entombment urns and so forth was discovered along the course of Pampa and Manimala streams and their tributaries. Several antiquarian objects, like the foundation of old circular shrines and quadrangular houses, buried with the advances of the time and the same non-use. All of these suggest traders had settlements, and there were vast markets where commodity exchanges were conducted overseas. Various Sasta, Naga and Yakshini sanctuaries of this area focused on the way, that there had a decent number of Jaina and Buddhist supporters in this locale. A granthavari of the fifteenth century specifies Panayannarkavu like Mahodayapattanam. This notice might be about a market town thrived in this district. Various kavus, associated with relics of such markets and Yakshini conventions are found along the stream banks of this region (Unnikrishnan 2017: 767-68). List of kavus (Kavu is the traditional name given to sacred groves across the Malabar Coast in Kerala, South India) connected to Markets: Muthuttu kavu situated

on a hill called Thappukad on the Thiruvalla Changanassery road. The deity is a temple goddess of Kodungallur, and Rurujith worship mode is actually practiced. A Kala Yakshini is blessed in the jasmine structure. Sakthi adore was followed here. Once in 12 years, a celebration was held here, and along with this celebration, a market was likewise conducted. Vasurimala is blessed here, which is connected with Pattini faction (Usha *n.d.*: 769).

Second is Kalkullathu kavu, right near Chengannur in the Vazhapally. The main deity is Bhadrakali. Kalampattu and Mudiyettu are rituals that are still held there. They love Marana Yakshini and Kala Yakshini as upadevatas. Mode, structure, and ceremonies indicate that this was a primitive kavu and was eventually made Sanskritized. The third is Utramel Kavuv; the temple was previously called Rudhiramalar kavu located in Thiruvalla, at Kavumbhagam. The main deity was Bhadrakali, and there are still several related rituals to the Yakshini and this temple. The temple premises involve A Yakshinithara. Bloody crimes were once made here. Here Kala Yakshini is worshipped. The fourth Peringaraperoor kavu was Naduvelichira in Kavumbhagam where Kala Yakshini was sanctified. Custom associated with the sanctuary expresses that this Yakshini was power god. The fifth was Kadalimangalam Venpala near Thiruvalla where Yakshini worship is prevalent there. Padayanikkolam is represented here. Kala Yakshini is worshipped here. The sixth was Thelliyur kavu Situated in the central Travancore region, an ancient kavu with Rurujith mode of worship. A Kala Yakshini is worshipped here. The goddess is in the most terrible form in the garland of human head. Padayani and Kalampattu are conducted here. The Cheruparak kavudevi is closely related to Ambalappuzha Sreekrishna's temple (Usha *n.d.*: 770-72).

2.4.12 Vajrapani

Vajrapani is derived from two Sanskrit words “Vajra” and “pani” which means “thunderbolt or diamond in hand” respectively (Santangelo 2013:217). He is represented in human form almost holding the vajra in his right hand. According to Alexander Cunningham Vajrapani was actually Devadatta, the cousin of the Buddha. Albert Grunewedel was at the opinion that vajrapani is the representation of the god Indra or Mara. However, Hermann Oldenberg (1901) who studied the life of the Buddha and his doctrine, assured the male figure to be a depiction of Hercules from Greek mythology. Other scholars like Senart (1905), Foucher (1905), Lamotte (1966), and Santoro (1991) also supported the view of Oldenberg (Perera 2020:

3). According to Ananda Coomaraswamy, Vajrapani is a successor and a derived form of the God Indra (*Ibid: 7*). Some of the scholars are of the opinion that Gandharan Vajrapani is derived from the Guhyakadipati yaksha (Tanabee 2005: 367). Nevertheless, it should be noted that the Gandharan artists have used the model of the Greek Hercules according to their interest with both Hellenistic and Indian elements in depiction.

According to Buddhist legends, Vajrapani was the constant companion and protector of the Buddha Siddhartha. As Buddha is represented in Gandhara art, almost accompanied by Vajrapani in different events' reliefs and friezes. However, the physical type of Vajrapani is derived from that of the Hercules (Tanabe 2005: 363). Lalitavistara mentioned Guhyakapadi yaksha with holding Vajra in his hand which is composed before the emergence of Gandhara art. Thus, one can say that it is the evidence for making the sculptures of Vajrapani in Gandhara. However, the same text mentioned that he wears armor while in art we only see Vajrapani with vajra without wearing any armor (*Ibid: 370*).

Chapter 3 Gandharvas and apsaras in Indian religious texts

The gandharvas as a class of gods were for the first time mentioned in Vedic literature, presented as sky-beings associated with the preparation of Soma. According to *Atharva-Veda*, they were six thousand three hundred and thirty-three in number. They preferred human ladies and sported with them, utilizing their powers to change their shape/form and fool all of them except the most self-controlled of spouses. However, there were many heroines whose asceticism matched the magical power of gandharvas. The later mythology mentioned them as the offspring of kashyapa-prajapati and his wife Arishta. While Harivimsa, an appendix to the Mahabharata, stated that they came from the nose of the Brahma. They were skillful in music and acknowledged as heavenly musicians (Williams 2003: 131). Basically, Gandharva is a bright heavenly being which is sometimes said as living with his wife Apsara in the waters. Various assumptions have been made by various scholars like some scholars considered Gandharva as wind spirit, other thought Gandharva is representing the rainbow, various scholar regarded Gandharva as a virtuosity of the moon and rising sun and cloud spirit etc. (Macdonell 1898: 136).

In the Epics and Puranas Indra was diminished to the simple head of divine beings who were still called devas however had little force or vitality. Indra was presented as constantly being scared of losing his status as Indra, he was in fact losing the status of the king of devas. To distract or seduce the sages, he employed apsaras because the sages were able through austerities to control the demons and gods. He needed a constant help from the supreme gods like Vishnu, Shiva and Devi. It was most awful that his character was changed from a powerful and proud king to a seducer of sage's wives. Indra was using his power of shape-shifting for deceiving the wives of the sages. Disorderly and drunk, he had become a mere clown with the privileged title of lord of the divine beings (Williams 2003: 157).

Generally, Gandharva refers to a class of heavenly musicians. Early Hindu mythology mention gandharvas as a minor deity but in later Rig-Vedic text it is described as semi-divine beings. Vishvavasu, the composer of the *Rig-Veda* was probably the first-born Gandharva mentioned with the name Vishvavasu DevGandharva. According to Taittiriya Upanishad there

are two categories of gandharvas. The first is Manushya Gandharva or human gandharvas and the second is Deva gandharvas or heavenly gandharvas. According to the Vedic conception there are many realms on the earthly globe which are distant from the reach of human's existence and the ordinary humans related with only three of them (Sastri 1903: 612).

Many Puranic accounts described the inaccessible realms on this planet for ordinary humans. For instance, the Himalayas have three different dimensional levels of which only the lowest level is accessible to the humans. Mahabharata also describes the higher lands of which many were visited by Bhima when he was collecting wealth. According to the Vishnu Purāna, gandharvas were the sons of brahma. "The gandharvas were next born, imbibing melody; drinking of the goddess of speech, they were born, and thence their appellation (*gām dhayantah*, 'drinking speech')." In other place the same Purana mentioned it as the descendants of Kashyapa and Arishtā therefore they were the grandsons of Brahma. According to Padma Purana they are the children of Vach (the Hindu goddess of speech). The nagas were defeated by gandharvas and their jewels and kingdom were snatched. The snakes asked Vishnu for help who promised to enter Purukutsa and destroy them. Narmadā the sister of nagas was sent to Purukutsa to ask him for help and her request was accepted. She obtained the power as a reward from their brothers that her worshipers and repeaters of her name should be safe from the poison of the snakes and all other poison too (Williams 2003: 499-500).

The earlier books show that gandharvas were the helpers of Indra and rewarded with a place in his heaven. Gandharvas were also provided with the wives as other deities were provided with. And when Indra was in danger of losing his throne, or the other gods were in a similar dilemma through the austerity of the sincere, some of the more beautiful apsaras were commissioned to visit them and divert their minds (Usha *n.d.*: 498).

3.1 Kingdom

Gandharvas had no specific kingdom. Gandharvas are mentioned with their residence in Lanka, in the different kingdom of yaksha and Rakshas in Himalayas and beyond the Himalayas in the Uttar kuru kingdom. Mahabharata mentioned their residence in the Sarasvati basin with

the reference of Balarama visit to Sarasvati. They guarded the gold mines of yakshas under the leadership Kuvera/ Kubera (Hewitt 1889: 295).

Apsaras are Hindu (Vedic) water spirit known as dancers, musicians, defensive deities of gamblers, deities of good fortune and may also bring insanity (Micheal 2004:26). apsaras are the wives/ Partners of gandharvas, the dancers of the Indra's court and the churning of the milk ocean. However, when they were not purified, they were not allowed to be accepted as wives by the gods and Asuras. Eventually they turned into the spouses of all with simple righteousness. They were approximately six hundred million in number and only the famous ones are mentioned by names in different texts (Samarasinghe 1996: 135). According to Macdonell Apsara signified a kind of nymph which is mentioned only five times in *Rig-Veda*. *Rig-Veda* (10, 123) stated her as she enjoyed with her cherished Gandharva in the highest heaven. *Rig-Veda* (9, 78) describes the apsaras of the waters as blended with water and flowing to Soma juice. According to *Rig-Veda* (10, 136), the long-haired ascetic who had semi-divine power can move on the path of the Gandharvas and apsaras. The Apsara of sea is mentioned by *Rig-Veda* (10, 103) as the wife of gandharvas in the waters (Keith 1989: 199).

Atharva Veda (2, 2) mentions their abode in seas where they come and go in no time and those goddesses that were connected with Vishvavasu Gandharva are defined in connection with stars, lightning and clouds. The apsaras were called as the wives of the gandharvas, fond of dice and confer good luck at play. Atharva Veda (4, 37) stated that they were requested to leave the vicinity of human and set off to the river or bank of rivers. The apsaras are termed in Satapatha Brahmana (11, 5 and 1) that they transform themselves into a kind of seabird. The post Vedic texts describe the apsaras as the frequent visitors of rivers and forest lakes in special reference to river Ganges and they are living in the Varuna's palace inside ocean. According to Yaska's Nirukita (5, 13) the probable etymological meaning of the word is "moving in the waters" (Macdonell 1898: 134). The oldest conception regarding apsaras was described in the early Vedic text where they were described as celestial nymphs of waters and the wives of gandharvas. But in later literature like Samhitas they are described in connection with earth in special reference to trees. Atharva Veda (4, 37) mentions them as living in banyans and fig trees where their musical instruments resound. The mentioned trees are also mentioned by other texts as the abodes of gandharvas and apsaras. According to Atharva Veda (40, 2) the gandharvas and

apsaras in such trees are plead to be hopeful to a passing wedding procession. The Sathapatha Brahmana (II, 6, 1) describes the apsaras as the dancers, singers, and musicians. Post Vedic literature mentions mountains, weather actual or mythical as their beloved resorts. Atharva Veda (2, 35 etc) mentions that people were feared of apsaras can do magic and can cause mental disorder against them (Usha *n.d*: 135).

The Sathpatha Brahmana (13, 4 and 3) describes that the love of the beautiful apsaras was sometimes also hired by men. The union of man and Apsara is only once mentioned in Vedic text while. The Sathapatha Brahmana (10, 10) mentioned the Gandharva and the aqueous Apsara as the parents of Yama and Yami. The association of Gandharva with the water spirit is a usual marriage; therefore, he is connected with the wedding ceremony. He is also connected with Soma therefor the unmarried girl is said to belong to Soma. In later literature, Vishvavasu Gandharva is regarded as the rival of the husband of new wedded girl during the first days of marriage which indicates Gandharva's love of women. The gandharvas and apsaras are prayed for offspring because they are also believed as fertility god and goddesses (Macdonell 1898: 136). According to *Atharva-Veda* (4, 34, 3) Yama is enjoying the company of apsaras in otherworld and these apsaras are connected with Soma. The apsaras decorates the court of Yama and Varuna before meeting with Indrasabha (Usha *n.d*: 137).

The *Atharva-Veda* (16, 118, 1-2) have mentioned three apsaras named; Rastrabhat, Ugrampasya and Ugrajit while Urvashi and Menaka were mentioned by Vajapeya Samhita (15, 15-19). Sakuntala, the mother of the royal family of Bharatas and Urvashi are mentioned in Sathapatha Brahmana.

The *Vedas* did not mention apsaras as a class but Urvashi and some other mentioned by its name. Manu mentioned that apsaras were created by the seven Manus and the ancestors of the mankind. Their origin is attributed to churning of the ocean by the Epic poem "Ramayana" and Puranic account is also agreed on their origin. It is generally believed that when they arose from the waters the gods and Asuras would not wed them thus they became the common property of both classes. The apsaras occasionally called the "wives of the gods" and "daughters of pleasure" (Wilkins 1900: 482).

Fourteen ganas/classes of them are mentioned in vāyu Purānas while Hari Vanci mentions seven classes of apsaras. Apsaras are divided into two categories i.e. “Daivika or Divine” and “Laukika or worldly.” The divine ones are said to be ten and the worldly are thirty-four in number. They are believed as the heavenly charmers who fascinate the heroes, alluring the ascetic sages from their devotion and self-flagellations. According to Kāsi khand they are forty-five million but only one thousand and sixty are the principal ones. The apsaras then be a magical and a fairy-like beings, beautiful and sensuous. They are the wives or mistresses of gandharvas and not prudish. They have numerous amours upon earth, and they are the rewards in the heaven of Indra for those heroes who fall in the battle. They are bestowed with the power of changing their forms and give good luck to the favored ones (Usha *n.d.*: 483).

3.2 Prominent gandharvas

The following are the most important gandharvas mentioned in Indian religious texts.

3.2.1 Vishvasu DevGandharva

Vishvasu was probably the eldest Gandharva mentioned with the name of Vishvasu DevGandharva in early Hindu mythology. It is believed that Vishvasu composed the *Rig-Veda* (10.139). Vishvasu existed during the Ram’s era. In Valmiki Ramayana the incomplete genealogy of Ruru is given according to which Ravana’s granduncle Malyavan had married his daughter Anala to Vishvasu. Thus, Vishvasu should be one generation prior to Ram. His daughter Pramadwara, who was raised by Sthulaksha Rishi and married to Ruru Rishi. According to this genealogy Ruru Rishi is the descendant of Gritsamada Rishi who was more or less 20-25 generations prior to Ruru Rishi while the genealogy mentioned 12-13 names. The given names go thus Gritsamada->Sucheta->Varcha->Vihavya ->Vitatya ->Satya-> Santa ->Shrava ->Tama ->Prakash ->Vageendra ->Pramati ->Ruru. In *Rig-Veda* (10.85), Vishvasu is described as a protector of virgins and transfers his role at the time of marriage to another (Singh 2003:165). The wedding poem from *Rig-Veda* (10; 85.22) is translated by O’Flaherty; “Mount the world of immortality, O Suryā that is adorned with red flowers... Prepare an exquisite wedding voyage for your husband. “Go away from here! For this woman has a husband.” “Thus, I implore Vishvasu with words of praise as I bow to him.” “Look for another girl who is ripe and still lives in her father’s house.” “That is your birth right find it.” “Go away from here, Vishvasu,

we implore you as we I bow.” “Look for another girl, willing and ready.” “Leave the wife to unite with her husband.” “May the roads be straight and thorn less on which our friends go courting.” “May Arya man and Bhaga united lead us together.” “O Gods, may the united household be easy to manage.” “I free you from Varuna’s snare, with which the gentle Savitr bound you.” “In the seat of the Law, in the world of good action, I place you unbanned with your husband.” “I free her from here, but not from there.” “I have bound her firmly there, so that through the grace of Indra.” “She will have fine sons and will be fortunate in her husband’s love” (Chawla 1994: 2824).

Atharva-Veda (2, 2.1) mentioned Vishvvasu as a heavenly god which having his abode in the heaven. He is one among the divine gandharvas, the lord of the creatures, the only Gandharva who is praised and venerated by men. In *Atharva-Veda* (2, 2-2) he is mentioned as bright as the sun, and he take away the wrath of the gods. While in *Atharva-Veda* (2, 2-3) he is described as living in union among the apsaras and he is faultless (Shende 1949: 331).

One hundred such units of delight which the Manushya Gandharva has make the delight of the deva Gandharva. A sage loaded with disclosure and free from all longings likewise has a similar bliss.” In legend of Jagannat, Manoj Das mentions Vishvvasu as the Savara chieftain, devotee of Vishnu and the father of Lalitha. According to this story Vishvvasu married his daughter to Vidyapati the member of Indradyumna’s court and continued to live in that charismatic forestry world. Soon he was attracted by the daily practice of home leaving with handful of flowers early in the morning of Vishvvasu. Vishvvasu goes daily even in cold, fog and in bad weather conditions and return after an hour. Vidyapati asked his wife Lalita about her father’s routine of going daily. She was ethically bound to tell him the story about her father. She said that there is a cave unknown to anyone except for my father where there is a most sacred object of our line and my father daily go there to pay his obedience to the sacred object daily. Vidyapati was surprised with the reply of his wife thus he asked her “was he nearing the fulfilment of his mission”? “I must have the privilege to see the object.” On a lot of persuasion her father agreed that Vidyapati be led into the cave but with tied eyes that he could not see the direction. When he was brought and his eyes were unleashed into the cave, he was amazed when see the bluish golden light. But object was in a stone casket but not in physical form. The scene made him believe that it was the divine object. Now he was in the mission to acquire the object and give it to the king Indradyumna of Puri. He entered the cave and picked up the casket. The

king unthinkingly realized that the object that fetched by Vidyapati must have divine presence and must be in a physical form. He was guided in a dream to go to the beach in morning time and locate a drifting log out of which the form of the object was to be carved. The king was pleased to see a large log floating on the waters. The log was tied by his men to the boat in order to bring it out of the sea but in vain. More boats and men were sent but they also all in vain. King saw Vishvasu in his dream sitting in front the empty cave in evening time without any food like the king during the whole day. And the daughter of Vishvasu was also weeping non-stop. Vidyapati led the king to the forest in the morning where he met Vishvasu and apologized for the misconduct of his envoy. He convinced him that there was a period for everything, and that the opportunity had arrived for the god in his own authority to be uncovered to all. That was the Lord's will. The Vishvasu accepted the request of the king and came along him to pull the log to the shore. When, they pull it, the log came ashore easily. The question of, what should be the form of the deity? was not resolved. At Kalinga there were sculptors' experts in wood works not in rock sculpting. The king was searching for an expert of stone sculpting. One day an old man approached the king and offer to carry out the job but on the condition that no one will be allowed to see him during him until the work come to an end. The king unthinkingly accepted the offer, and a large hall was allotted. All the doors were shut, and the stranger began his work. There were many reservations from the queen Gundicha Devi's side, but the king had no distrust about the capability of the sculptor. The Gundicha Devi used to hear the sound of the work in progress daily but once, after many days she did not hear the sound and the same silence was observed again the next day too. Then she forcefully opened the doors of the hall to see the reason of the silence. The old man was shocked and disappeared suddenly. The old man was none other than *VisvaKarma*. The Indradyumna was so much saddened for the image was left incomplete. But the king heard a sublime voice that told him that this was the form of the object, and he should worship it. The incompleteness of the image suggests the imperfection of mankind. The object was brought and placed inside the lotus like navel of the deity. Thus, the regular worship of the enshrined deity was started (Das 2015:180-81).

The priest of the lord was from among the descendants of Vishvasu through her daughters and Vidyapati. The object which was worshipped by Vishvasu and his forefathers was according to the legend, some of relics of Sri Krishna. The legend says that Sri Krishna was killed unintentionally by Jara Savara in the forest adjacent to Prabhas. His feet were mistakenly

shown to Jara Savara as the ears of a deer, and he shot an arrow which resulted in the death of Sri Krishna. The last rites of Sri Krishna's death were performed together by Jara Savara and Arjuna. The earthly remains were dedicated to the ocean while some of them were preserved by Jara Savara. Krishna no uncertainty had guaranteed him that he had done nothing erroneous and had just become an instrument of what had just been fortunately destined. He left his native place of living regretfully and reached to Kaling and settled down there in the forest known as Kantilo. The people of his clan either came along him or they joined him later, but he became the chieftain of his clan there. Thus, the relics of Sri Krishna became the stuff of worship of this dynasty for a number of generations up to his direct descendant "Vishvasu" (Das 2015:182). Some verses from the sacred Hindu literature testify that; Vishvasu was a heavenly Gandharva; he was the leader of gandharvas and was the guardian of Soma rasa. This category of gandharvas makes up the celestial musician and they itself entertain the higher devas and perform in the court of Indra.

3.2.2 Chitraratha

Chitraratha is said to be the son of Pradha and kashyapa and the ruler of gandharvas. In Indian tradition Kashyapa was the framer of the lunar year, the ancestor of the Chitraratha and Kusikas/Kasis of the Reg-Veda and the originator of the two holy cities of kasyapura/ Multan and Kasi/Benares. They were the forefathers of one of the united tribes who ruled Magadha, the ancient Indian empire. Their original home was in Kabul and is always spoken of as the northern people. The Keresaspa of Zendavesta was the same name as the Indian Kasyapa and the word "aspa" or horse in their name displays that he belonged to the tribe who termed themselves the sons of the horse same as Kusikas who called themselves the sons of the horse (Hewitt 1890:588).

Rig-Veda IV. 30. 18. Mentioned that Chitraratha was the charioteers, the men of the (colored) (chitra) chariot (ratha), and the Arna were the worshippers of Arani the firestick. The Chitraratha tribe is only once mentioned in the Reg-Veda, seems to be the Aryan and defeated by the Yadu Turvasu (*Ibid* 189-90).

Within a certain country reigned Chitraratha, in such of whose backyards was an intensive lake, guarded by his soldiers. In this particular lake were gold swans, which molted a

feather once in every six months. A big bird, having united them, was refused acknowledgment to their crowd; they are claiming the confidential occupation of the join, by the cost of the molted feather (Wilson 1827:24).

Reg-Veda IV. 30. 18 attested the Aryans and Scythian Chitrarathas as the allies from the very beginning, both the tribes were the descendants of Saro (the possessors of speech) and both were settled in Sarasvati, by indicating to the battle of Sarayu/Sutlej, fought between Aryan Arna and the Scythian Chitraratha on one side and the Yadu turvasu on the other, where Yadu turvasu were victorious. Mainly with the help of the Shiva bhojas/ cattle-herding Scythians, settled between the Sutlej and Ravi, that the Aryans inflicted a crushing defeat in the battle of the ten kings on the northern confederacy of the kuru Takshakas (Hewitt 1890:388).

Gandharas were possibly the earliest Saka tribe who entered in India, who also called Chitrarathas or charioteers and Kusikas, who offered dry barley as the most sui nagas food to themselves and to their horses. They also involved in special sanctity to the horse and to the worship of Indra. Pitarah and Barishadah were the Scythian chariot drivers who brought the worship of Indra to India from the northern settlement in central Asia along with their Aryan allies. They brought the Indra as the fertilizing rains and as the warrior god of thunderbolt (Usha *n.d*: 371-72).

There is another tale which indicates the influence of the horse worshipers over the Gangetic doab, mentioned in the Vajasaneya and Taittiriya Samhitas. According to this story the three queens of Kampilya (the capital of Panchala country), named Amba, Ambika and Amvalika protested against being obliged to sleep with the horse. This story clearly shows that how the offspring of these three mothers opposed to the introduction of Scythian customs of horse worship, one of which was that the wife of a chief who performed a horse sacrifice was, if an heir was desired, obliged to sleep with the horse that was to be sacrificed. Further the history of the wars of Jarasandha (the united tribes of the Kusikas and Magadhas) and western clans are evident of Sakas invasion. Jarasandhas were the black southern and fair skinned northern people, under the leadership of Dimvika, Hansa (the general of Kusikas) and Sisupala the king of Chedi defeated the Vrishnis and cattle-herding tribes and push them to the seashore. These defeated tribes of Vrishnis and cattle-herding were the Saka invaders. According to Hewitt the Iksh Vaku race were composed of the Sauvira and Sakas. The Sakas were the allies of Aryans on Sarasvati

when the battle was fought between Jarasanda's generals and the western tribes. The western tribes wanted to extend their territorial boundaries to the east which was naturally opposed by the eastern tribes and Kusekas of Kasi (Benares). At first the western tribes were strongly resisted but afterwards the eastern tribes were conquered by the formers. Thus, the eastern empire of Magadha with its capital at Kasi came under the Sakya rule with its capital at Saketa (Hewitt 421-22).

The evil on the planet never learns. It's symbolized by Duryodhana and the Kauravas going to the forest, while Pandavas were undergoing Vanavas. The evil forces head to the forest to ridicule the pure ones and to snatch their wealth. But with their dismay they're crushed and captured by Chitraratha, the Gandharva king, representing dharma's intervention, and can be ultimately rescued by the Pandavas. Duryodhana, saturated in shame, really wants to fast unto death. However, the demons from the nether world rise around him and assure him that as their chosen representative in the world he is bound to succeed. Thus emboldened, Duryodhana returned to his evil ways (Mohan 2005: 166-67).

The Paria Trilogy written by Goethe in 1821 were basically inspired by south Indian tales which refers to the origin of Mariamman (the goddess of smallpox) while Mahabharatha is the oldest textual reference to this tale. The story tells that king Chitraratha was playing with his wives in the water and Renuka, the wife of sage Jamadagni watching at them with desires for him. When she returned home, Jamadagni felt her desire and ordered his son to kill her. All his sons refused except the youngest one named Parasurama who beheaded his mother and received boons as a reward from his father. Parasurama immediately asked that his mother be brought back from death. Jamadagni agreed and Renuka was restored to life purified through her son's actions (Ganguli 1981: 249-50, kakar 1985: 87).

As mentioned earlier, that the Chitraratha were the ally of the Aryans in the battles against Yadu Turvasu and Gandhari. We also know that the Gandhari (Paktha/ Afghans) were also the allies of Aryans just as the Chitraratha. Most probably these Paktha who as gandhari were also called Asvaka/cavaliers were the same tribe as the Parthians who were the cavalry of Central Asia. When the fact added to these arguments that the Panchalas/ Srnjayas were the sons of Parthu, from Parthu race therefore they would be called Partha thus their identification develops close to surety. Mahabharata continually mentions Arjuna as Partha but his

supernatural birth was purely a legend, designed to show that the Pandavas were the descendant of the sun. This appellation is explained in a poem which mentions the name Parthu as Arjun's mother. If it is admitted that the Paktha were probably the same tribe as Gandhari, Asvaka and Chitraratha so then it is also most probable that they also were the tribe which is mentioned as Partha, Srnjaya or Panchala. If the defeat of Samvarana, mentioned in Mahabharata as one of the same events of the battle of the ten kings also admitted where Smavrana was defeated by Panchalas, it would be quit near to agree with the account of *Rig-Veda* where the Parthu are mentioned as one of the chiefs of the victorious tribes. The Indian tribes had been accustomed to use familial name for a long time after entering India, it is also possible for them to call themselves Pratha as their ancestors did the same in central Asia (Hewitt 1889: 225-26).

In the eighth Mandala of *Rig-Veda* the Yadu-Turvasu appears as the superior patron of Kanva clan of Brahmin bards. They were the reputed writers of this section of hymns. The Yadu-Turvasu is almost mentioned together in reference to the defeat of Aryan Arna and Chitraratha, and with the earlier successes of Divodasa (Trtsu king) in connection of his campaigns against Yadu-Turvasu. The coins of the powerful tribe of Yohiha witnessed the name of Yaudheya Rajputs, who were living in the country traversed by the Sutlej, between Ayudhan and Uchh. The victories of Divodasa probably represent the conquest of the country on the upper waters of the Sarasvati by the Aryan Trtsu, who drove back the yadu-Turvasu to the west and south. This make it quite clear that the Yadu and Turvasu were settled in the area south of the Sutlej long before the Trtsu came there. These tribes are mentioned in Mahabharata in the list of Kshatrya who use to come to pay tribute to Yudhishtira. They were probably the descendants of Yadavas. The battle between their ancestors and Arna and Chitraratha fought due to the attempt of these tribes who wanted to gain additional territory to that acquired by Divodasa. The hymn which mentions the contest with the Arna and Chitraratha shows the conquest of Divodasa as past event, and is clearly written long after his time, while the defeat of Arna and Chitraratha is seemingly spoken of by the author as a recent event (Hewitt 1889: 244-5).

There was another important tribe of Gandhari, who with alliance with Aryans owed a great deal of their success in civilizing the country. The wife of a Dritharashtra was a Gandhari, who was the mother of hundred sons. Gandhari were the tribe who occupied Kabul at the time of Alexander the great's invasion, they were called as Asvaka (the cavaliers/ the son of the horse).

Hewitt identified the Asvakas as Chitraratha/ charioteers and with the Parthu/ Parthians. Mahabharata and Rig-Veda mentioned the charioteers were the most important and influential people, and the chief warriors fought from chariot. During the ceremony of succession to the throne, Asvamedha or horse sacrifice was the obligatory part of the rituals. In the Śalpatha Brahmana it is said that the queen of the king who is approximately to perform the sacrifice should sleep with the horse that is to be offered the night before it takes place (Usha *n.d*: 293-4).

Chitraratha is the legendary name generally used for the Gandharva kings, and the visit of the Pandavas to Kachaka region is totally a mythical story, while during Mahabharata's time Kachaka was under the horse owing tribes is the historical fact. Chitraratha, a Gandharva king is said to have given 400 horses as a tribute to Yudhishtira. But there was another Gandharva king known as Ilansa, ruled the Kachaka region, who was one of the generals of Jarasandha the king of Magadha. Ilansa and Dimvaka or Chitrasena another Gandharva king were allies during the great war of east and west who drove Yadavas from Mathura, and this contest is seems to have been a real one not mythical. Ilansa is also known as Kusika, and through this name it is seems to be probable to trace exactly the route of Gandharva's advancement through Kachaka territory from north to Benares (Hewitt 1889: 295).

3.2.3 Tumvuru/ Tumburu

Tumburu was the son of Pradha and her husband sage Kashyapa. Kashyapa had many sons where four were well known for pleasant and sweet speech. These four were Tumburu, Huhu, Haha and Bahu. Tumburu was well-known as the best among celestial musicians or gandharvas. He is described as the courtier of Kubera the god of riches as well as of Indra the god-king of heaven. He was the follower of Kubera. His songs are mentioned usually be heard on Gandhamandana mountain where Kubera was living. Tumburu is sometimes described as the instructor of Rambha; divine dancer/Apsara and according to some traditions he married Rambha. He is believed as the "martial hero" of gandharvas, "yet one of the few yields to love." Tumburu is mentioned in Epic Mahabharata many times in relation with the Pandavas/heroes of the epics. Tumburu attended the horse sacrifice or *Ashvamedha Yagna* of Yudhishtira and gave him one hundred horses as a gift. He is mentioned that stayed for many days at Yudhishtira's court (Mani 1975: 798-99).

In Ramayana the Rama the avatar of Vishnu and his brother Lakshmana is mentioned in connection with Tumbura. It is mentioned that during his exile in the forest he killed a demon called Viradha and actually this demon was the cursed Tumburu. He was cursed by Kubera for he did not bring Rambha before him at the specified time. He was cursed that to be born as a Rakshasa/demon. It was also said by Kubera that Tumburu will be freed from the curse when Rama would kill him. Tumburu was born to giant Jaya and his consort Shatahrada as Viradha according to the curse of Kubera. He was born with fierce appearance and two long arms. According to the story he rushed at Sita the wife of Rama, holds her, and started to run. He was followed by Rama and Lakshmana; they compelled him to set Sita down. Thus, they caught him and sat on the shoulders of Viradha. His arms were chopped off by them, but he was still alive. Thus, they decided to bury him alive. Rama was told the story by Viradha and he got his position of Tumburu Gandharva again. Thus, he got rid of the curse and returned to his own home where gandharvas were living (Usha *n.d.*: 859).

Tumburu is a great musician and singer, and he sings the songs in courts of gods. Tambura is almost portrayed with horse-faced in South India. He plays a string instrument/Veena during singings. He holds wooden cymbals in his second hand that he beats it to maintain the rhythm. In a South Indian legend, he is mentioned, that he pleased Shiva through performing a severe asceticism. According to the legend Tumburu requested Shiva to grant him liberty to travel the universe with immortal horse-face, expertise in singing and music and capability live with Shiva and serve him. He was granted that entire he begged Shiva for (Jeyaraj 2004:162-63). In addition to Gopa and Narada he is considered as the lord of songs. Narada is mentioned in Bhagavata Purana as the teacher of Tumburu and he accompanied him on a visit to Yudhishtira's court. They both are mentioned as singers of glories of unborn one/god Vishnu (Te Nijenhuis 1970:67-8).

Adbhuta Ramayana mentions that Tumbura was awarded by god Vishnu for his excellence in singing as he was the best of all singers. Thus, Narada became jealous of him because he was also a devotee of Vishnu. Narada was told by Vishnu that Tumburu is dearer to him for his praising songs instead of austerities that you had performed. Thus, Narada was sent for learning music to an owl known as Ganabandhu. When Narada learned music from Gandabandhu, he came to conquer Tumburu. But when he reached the house of Tumburu,

Narada sees that he was surrounded by injured women and men. These men and women who Narada discovered were actually the Ragas and Raginis that were injured by his bad singings. Narada became disgraced and left his house and finally he learned appropriate singing from the wives of Krishna (Shashi 1998: 11-3).

Tumburu is known as dearer friend of Kubera and he was the instructor of gandharvas and Kinnaras in music and singings. Along with other lords of gandharvas like Citraratha, Parvata, Huhu and Haha, Tumburu was also mentioned as a lord. In some legends Tumburu is described as a sage rather than a Gandharva. Tumburu leads gandharvas to watch the battle of men. He is also mentioned in connection with sage Narada that he worshipped along with Narada and other gandharvas at Mount Meru. He is also said that he welcomed Arjuna in heaven when he was on visit to his father Indra. He is also mentioned as participant in the birth celebrations of Arjuna, one among the Pandava brothers. He is also described as a friend of Arjuna and watched his battle against his cousins, Kauravas which were fighting from Virata's side. He granted his Gandharva weapon to Arjuna and granted his war horses to Shikhandi who was the ally of Pandavas (Hopkins 1969: 153-56).

3.2.4 Shailusha

According to the Agni Purana where the story of Ramayana is narrated, written by sage Valmiki and he heard it from the Narada. He narrated that Rama instructed Shatrughna to kill Asura Lavana, capture his kingdom. He did as directed by Rama and built there the city of Mathura over the ruins of Lavana kingdom. On the other hand, Rama instructed Bharata to go and kill the wicked Gandharva named Shailusha, the musician of heaven. Shailusha and his sons were living on the bank of river Indus. They were massacred by Bharata and built two cities, Takshashila and Puskaravati over there. Bharata had two sons Taksha and Pushkara and these cities were named after them. Taksha became the king of Takshashila while Pushkara the king of Pushkaravati. It is said that Rama and Sita ruled for eleven thousand years along with their two sons named Kusha and Lava (Kelkar 1947:59-60).

In later literature Shailusha is mentioned as an actor, appears as a victim of human-sacrifice or *purusamedha* but in medieval period text he is described only a singer or musician. Keith and Macdonell proposed the exact meaning of the word Shailusha and asked about the exact period of

this story in India. Panini, almost certainly shows his acquaintance with a Natasutra created by Silalin. Some scholars are of the opinion that the word Nata is inserted as theoretical ledge in the dramatic art, but some scholars says that that undefined word may means at this stage as a mere mimier or dancer, but this view is also doubtful. According to V.S. Agrawala Natyasastra of Bharata was the creation of Silalin's school of dramatic art and the origin of this story might be in the Rig-Vedic carana, a factious island. All things considered, the known reality and level of this race in present time and its precursors since the times of Baudhayana and Kautilya make it improbable that these incredible works were expected for this class of people. The word "natyacryata" that occurred in Dharmasutra, explained by Buhler with similar point of view. The vamsa-nartin mentions about one of the victims of human-sacrifice was an acrobat or a pole dance. From this account, however, we can obviously identify an old ancestor of the advanced Nata. Though the Nata is not the only word which imply to a class of professional in ancient Indian literature, but the picture would be incomplete unless to find references for the words as Sailusa, Gayaka and Carana etc. The ancient Indian text mentions all these words in a similar manner. According to Apakara, Harita mentions distinction between Sailusa and Nata, thus Apakara said that Nata represents a particular cast while Sailusa was not belonged to the cast of Nata. Sailusa was a stage performer through which he fulfills his needs of daily life. According to Apakara's explanation, the Sailusa was from the class of Rangavatarin or masculine stage performer. Nangavatarin were defined as one who picks up service for Natas (Jha 1971:105-6).

The legend of Shivavarmaviprakathanaka mentions a rope dancer girl. She was very skilled in the art of rope dancing and visiting different towns for performed rope-dance. She was bedecked with various types of ornaments. During his performance she plays the trumpet. It is also well known that the dances by Nata were almost performed at night in Sabha full of audience. The dancer is said to be gifted with gesticulation, grace, love and jewelry. We also have references in the similar manner about a theater. The words Sailusasanga or party of dancers and Natapetaka or chamber of Natas indicates that the dancers were moving in groups to a place of performance (Acharya 2009:202).

Sailusa is mentioned as an actor or tumbler in a treatise on the Hindu theater of thirteenth century (Dillon *et. al.* 1960: 44). Sailusa were mentioned by Kautilya's Arthashastra that they survived on the incomes of their spouses therefore they were considered as engaged in harlotry.

Some of the Smrtis stated that these Sailusa are impure and touching their food was an offense for which a punishment was predicted. It is also said that the food of the washermen/*Karuka and Rajaka, Sailusa/* actors, Bards/*Nrsamsa* and Vintners/*Saundika* must not be eaten. In another account these are mentioned as they survive their lives on selling the liquor. According to Vas these four categories are also mentioned in AgniPurana. While Medh states that Sailusa and Nata are similar, both of them sell their spouses to public. In minor Dharmashastra there are many accounts which describe the food of those as impure who fulfill their needs through singings and music. Most of the sources testify those people as impure who live their lives on harlotry (Sternbach 1951: 57-58). The kings of the Gandhara are mentioned in Valmiki Ramayana as the descendants of Sailusa Gandharva.

3.2.5 Dhritarashtra

Dhritarashtra is mentioned in Mahabharata (18. 4. 212) as the Gandharva's king who had great wisdom. He was the grandson of king Shantanu; he had offspring from his two wives named Satyawati and Ganga. Ganga was cursed by Brahma in her previous life for uncovering her body in heaven on an event thus she was reborn on earth and married to the grandfather of Dhritarashtra. It is said that Ganga threw her seven sons into Ganga River while gave Bhishma, her eighth son to Satyawati. Satyawati raised Bhishma along his own two sons named Vicitravirya and Citrangada. Bhishma took the oath of *brahmavrata* or chastity hence Citrangada was crowned as the ruler. But soon, he was killed by a Gandharva while he was on expedition of hunting. Then his second brother Vicitravirya became the King. The three princes were kidnapped by Bhishma from the adjacent kingdom and sent two named Ambalika and Ambika to king Vicitravirya and the third sister was sent back to home. Vicitravirya was also died without and heir behind him. The kingdom became heirless, so Satyawati announced that she had a son named Parashara from her first Brahmin husband. His son was in fact Veda-Vyasa and he was brought to the palace and presented with Ambika and Ambalika one by one for the purpose to produce an heir for the throne. According to an account he belonged to a rural area, clad in tree-bark and had knotted hair. Ambika was just ready to remain with Vyasa by shutting her eyes, so her child, Dhritarashtra, was born with blind eyes. When Ambalika saw Vyasa the wild-one she lost her beauty thus her son was born similar in color and shape to his father. Vyasa saved his lunar royal heredity by returning to his sanctuary. Due to blindness, Dhritarashtra did not become

a king. Princess Gandhari was married to her by his uncle Bhishma. Gandhari coincidentally had a boon from Shiva to be mother of a hundred children. She had remained pregnant for two years, so she slit her womb and forcibly brought out a piece of flesh. The flesh was cut into hundred pieces by Vyasa and kept it in the butter pot. The eldest of the hundred sons was Duryodhana. Pandu was crowned as a king but soon was killed in the forest due to the curse of an ascetic. Thus, Yudhishtira became the king, who later lost his kingdom to Duryodhana in dice game. Draupadi was the mutual wife of Pandava brothers. She was also exiled with the Pandavas to the forest for thirteen years. After thirteen years they came back to claim their empire. But Duryodhana refused to return them their Kingdom. Thus, the great war of Bharata was fought at Kurukshetra between the armies of five Pandavas and the hundred Kaurava brothers led by Duryodhana. Dhritarâshthra contradicted the war and was honored with a moment's sight by Sri Krishna and had the option to see his *vishvarupa*/universal form. Dhritarashtra became blind again and during the battle, the event of Bhagavad Gita was reported to him telepathically by the sage Sanjaya. Dhritarashtra and his wife Gandhari left for a sanctuary/shelter adjacent to Kurukshetra after this great massacre. There he was visited by the great sages Vyasa and Narada. Then Dhritarashtra and his wife gandhari along with Kunti, the mother of Pandavas left for Gangadvara and performed severe austerity. They all died in a wildfire and entered the domain of Kubera, divine force of riches and bliss (Williams 2003: 118-19).

Hamsa or swan was given a partial incarnation as Dhritarashtra, whose character was entitled to a significant pre-existence in Mahabharata. In his previous existence as a Gandharva, Kashyapa Prajapati was his father and Arisht as his mother (Usha *n.d.*: 145). As lord is a general term mostly uses for the king, but Gita mentions twice Dhritarashtra as the lord of the earth (Fosse 2007: 179).

3.2.6 Chitrasena

The Epic Mahabharata mentions Chitrasena not as a single hero, but the name is mentions in connection with different parentage. In one instance he is describes as the son of Dhritarashtra and who was killed by Bhimasena in a battle. In another instance his father was elder Parikshit. He is also mentioned as a Gandharva, who was the music and singing teacher and friend of Arjuna and known in Mahabharata as a general of King Jarasandha. Chitrasena is also mentioned as a prince who was assassinated *Samudrasena* along with his sons. His name is also

mentions as the brother of Chitra and a king of Abhisara who was killed by Sruta*Karman*. He is also described in Mahabharata as the warrior of Panchala killed by Kama and also described as the brother of Kama, killed by Yudhamanyu. In other stories in Mahbharta he is characterized as the son of Kama, butchered by Nakula and also mentioned as a Naga in connection with Arjuna and other nagas like, Manika, Takshaka and Vasuki (Srisuchat 2005: 106).

As I earlier mentioned that Chitrasena was the name of different beings like Naga, human beings and Gandharva. As human beings he is mentioned as warriors in connection both to Kauravas and Pandavas. But it is difficult to trace that Chitrasena whose name is mentioned in Mahabharata that was inferred to be the name of king Mahrndaravarmadeva which was found in the legends. But King Mahrndaravarmadeve or Chitrasena is mentioned in two inscriptions, from which we can know that he was a Hindu and a worshipper of Shiva Linga. It also suggested that he should have a counselor who had knowledge of Epic Mahabharata who was named as Chitrasena. And we also know that the name Chitrasena is derived from the Epic where it was the name of a hero. The name was given by a Hindu king who acquired a great wisdom of Mahbharta from his Brahmin counselor. Conferring a name upon a person by the king as a reward to his services was a common phenomenon at that time in Hindu societies. But the interesting thing was that the phenomenon was also adopted by the Buddhist communities. For example, in sixth and seventh century AD, the Buddhist state of central Thailand was called as Dvaravati which was named after the main city of Vrshnis/ a Vedic clan (Usha *n.d.*: 106).

The fourth book of Mahabharata, Virata parva mentions chitrasena as a Naga. According to the text, when the final battle between Karna and Arjuna was about to take place. All the divine beings were on the side of Arjuna or Karna. The Chitrasena along with Manika, Takshaka, all the poisonous nagas which were the offspring of Kadru and other well-known Nnagas were on the side of Arjuna. And the low-ranked nagas were on Karna's side (Vogel 1995: 199).

Chitrasena is mentioned as Gandharva's King in Epic who stopped the Kauravas from camping near the pool where Chitrasena was living itself. The Vana Parva mentions Chitrasena Gandharva as the music teacher of Arjuna at the palace of king Virata. It is said that on the instruction of Indra, chitrasena trained Arjuna in Music and also became his friend. As Arjuna was cursed by Urvashi to be a eunuch for whole life, but Chitrasena along with Indra requested Urvashi for reducing the curse for a period of one year. Chitrasena told her about the bravery of

Arjuna and his other Pandava brothers thus she agreed and reduced her curse (Roy 1928: 98-102). Chitrasena is also mentioned in Buddhist literature as King of gandharvas and also as a yaksha's chief.

3.2.7 Matali

The epic Mahabharata mentions Matali as the Indra's charioteer who took Arjuna to the abode of divine beings/gods (Hewitt 1890: 361). Matali was skilfull in supervising the horses. In Buddhist literature Matali is also describes as the charioteer of the Indra and one among the yaksha's chief (Debroy. 1993: 211). He is said as the originator of lineage of Matwa-jat. Kauravya was from the Airyata's race and Aryaka is describes as his descendant. Chikura was the son of Aryaka who was killed by Suparna and he was the son-in-law of a Naga Vamana. From the daughter of the Naga Vamana, he had a son named Sumakha. Sumaka was married the daughter of Matali named Gunakishi. While the lineage which was originated by Matali started from his son Gomukha (Beniwal 2005: 43). Matali is also mentioned in reference to Shakra that he was sent down by Shakra along with his vehicle from the heaven to assist Rama in his battle. And he was received and greeted by Rama itself. Matali was mounted on the vehicle of Shakra which light the whole cosmos with splendor (Coomaraswamy *et. al.* 1967: 420).

Gita has assimilated all those ideas which have resemblances of expression and ideas from the Buddhist literature which fit easily in its system. But reacts severely against the ideas of Buddhism like, atheism, Renunciation, and the principle of soullessness. For example, if we compare the dialogue between Arjuna and Krishna with that of Surendra Shakra and Asurendra Vepacitti (which is almost same as that of Shakra and Matali), it becomes clear that the arguments of Vepacitti/ Matali are used by Krishna to defeat Arjuna. And if we examine the arguments of Arjuna, that are similar to that of Shakra (Upadhyaya 1968: 167-68).

It is said that a battle was fought between demons and gods, where demons were defeated and their chief Vepacitti was caught and brought before the Shakra the king of gods. Being a captive, he abused shakra in his presence and also in his absence. Then vepacitti/Matali told him that it would be your fear and weakness if you tolerate your abuse, but shakra replied, it would be inappropriate for an enlightened being like to care about such stupid stuffs. Matali told him that not to fight and control evil is similar to encourage the evil, but Shakra replied that the evil

could be controlled easily through silence at the anger of others. Shakra was further asked that by doing so, you would not only be betraying your weakness and fear, but you would also earn defamation, on this Shakra replied that praise or slander and fame or ill-fame has of no value for the enlightened one. He further added that real weakness is that to resist force with force and for the enlightened one, forgiveness and tolerance matters the most. And to become a victim of anger is an evil and real victory is to conquer the anger. Those who cannot control his/her anger cannot do well with others. Now if we examine the dialogue between Arjuna and Krishna we will find mostly the similar mode, words and tone of the arguments and replies (Usha *n.d.*: 68).

Matali is mentioned that he knows about the immortal remedy/nectar. He made sure about this legend for the cost of a chariot. The immortal nectar/*amrta* is according to the legend; In the event that an individual mistreats a Brahmana, he does not get water to drink. He should drink just the water of the tears moving from the eyes of a distraught individual, additionally that utilized for the bathing of the dead and that utilized for the shaving of beard. They can be utilized for hiding oneself securely. Indra is said to enter the waters and remained hidden with the help of this immortal *amrta* nectar. If water enchanted with magic is effective. It is to be hurled as “water thunderbolt” towards the enemy. Waters are mentions as the force, power, and heroism of Indra. Thus, waters with magical application are used for conquest by the Ksatriyas and *Brahmanas*. All creatures will have surrendered to the practitioner and water also become obedient to him (Shende 1949: 277).

3.3 Prominent apsaras

3.3.1 Urvashi

Urvashi was an Apsara born from the thigh of a mortal instead of her birth or creation in the heaven by divines. She was born due to the conflict between sage Narayana and Indra. According to the legend, the grandsons of Brahma from his son Dharma were Nara and Narayana. They were warming up the seat of Indra with their amazing *Tapas* or austerities. Indra tried to stop them from getting power by using his power, boons, fear and by temptation of his heavenly gorgeousness. The fear and boon used by Indra had no effect to stop Narayana and in response he slapped Indra’s thigh to teach him lesson. Thus, Urvashi was born from the thigh. Urvashi means the one who born from the Uru/thigh. Initially she was in excellence of all the

apsaras. On that occasion other beautiful women were also created, and all were presented to Indra. Indra left for his abode along with the new presents and his celestials and the Sage apologized by him. She was very much skillful in dancing and singing that she got eleventh position in competition in Indra's heaven. But later, she was cursed to be born on earth. According to Devi Bhagavata she was cursed by Brahma while in Bhagavata purana she was cursed by Mitravaruna. Urvashi had heard about Pururvas, the handsome king, fall in love with him and married him (Williams 2003: 286). The story is mentioned in *Rig-Veda* (10. 129) has been copied to Puranas. According to the story, due to the execration of Indra and Varuna, Urvashi was compelled to leave heaven. Pururavas, a human king fall deeply in love with her and she agreed on certain conditions. She said, "I have two lambs which must always remain with me both by day and night; you must never be seen by me undressed; and I must eat only ghee/butter" (Wilkins 1900: 484). Indra soon missed Urvashi and sent gandharvas for bringing her back to heaven. The Gandhrvas knew that she married a human king on the above-mentioned conditions. So, the lambs were pulled out by gandharvas when they were in the bedroom. The king rushed after the lambs to rescue them while he was undressed, trusting to darkness may hide him. But at this time the sky was lit by the gandharvas with a bolt of lightning (Williams 2003: 286). And unluckily his body was shown by a flash of light to her, thus the condition of her living with him being broken and she returned to her heavenly abode. Pururava was distracted at his loss and strolled everywhere in search of her. At last, he was successful in his mission to find her and took a promise from her that she would meet him yearly and present him with a son. She guaranteed him after five visits that he would succeed if he offered a sacrifice with the expressed object. He became Gandharva by following her advice and got eternal possession of his strange bride (Wilkins 1900: 484).

Rig-Veda (10. 95.16) mentions the story of Urvashi and the king Pururva that they were in love with each other secretly for four years which resulted in marriage when Urvashi became pregnant. Soon after this she would have claimed her rights and an honorable place in Pururva's family. The demands could not have been straightforwardly given in the Pururva's society, and in response she made the decision of leaving his home forever. After sometimes Pururvas came to know that Urvashi has given birth to a son. Thus, he tried his best to find and persuade her for coming back to home. Their conversations are recorded in *Rig-Veda* (10. 95.3), where Pururvas is apologizing for his previous mistake. He further mentioned in *Rig-Veda* (10. 95. 17), telling

Urvashi that, one must not try to separate husband and wife even if it goes against the social order. The *Rig-Veda* (10, 95. 17) mentions that, when Urvashi did not accept his requests, she was assured that she would be the actual owner of his wealth and property, but still she did not accept his proposal and refused to be back as his wife even in the next life (Gaur 1974: 143). The story of Pururvas and Urvashi becomes more interesting and obscure in *Rig-Veda* (10. 95), which drawn the attention of many scholars and priest of those days. These priests and scholars wrote the story in their own version without any bindings and limitations. According to Geldner the story is mentioned in eight different sources, which are Katthakam, Satapatha Brahmana, Harivimsha Purana, the commentary of Shadguru Shishya on Sarvanukramani, Brhad-devata, Vishnu Purana, Mahabharata and Kathasaritsagara. Although, apart from these eight sources, the story is also narrated by Vayu Purana, Ramayana, and Matsya Purana. The story got more popularity when Kalidasa wrote it in one of his best plays *Vikramorvasiyam* (Usha *n.d.*: 142).

Early Tamil literature also mentions Urvashi. According to Tamil epic *Silapadhikaram* Madhavi was the famous dancer from the lineage of another Madhavi. And the second Madhavi was none other than Urvashi herself, who was born in this mortal world as a result of curse. She was descendant due to the exchange of loving glance with Jayanta in a divine gathering in the presence of Agastya, Indra and Narada. So they both were cursed by Agastya. Jayanta was cursed to be born as bamboo while Urvashi to be born as mortal (Janaki 1987: 526).

The Epic *Mahabharat* describes an event of heaven in which Urvashi came close to Arjuna during his visit to heaven. The same event is also mentioned in all the sources of the south, Bengali and Devanagri version of the North while it is totally absent in Kashmiri version. We know about an event when Indra had observed Arjun giving unusual attention to Urvashi. Therefore, he requested Chitrasena to tell Urvashi for visiting Arjuna at evening. She went to Arjuna as was directed but he did not attract towards her. She enraged and cursed him to be live like a eunuch without specification the duration of the curse. When Indra came to know about this incident, he supported Arjuna by stating that the curse would assist him with living like a Brhannada during his term of living in seclusion/ajnatavasa. Thus, the effect of his curse was reduced to only one year by Indra (Mehendale 2001: 198).

The story of Urvashi's cursed is mentioned in Puranas also with a difference from the above-mentioned stories. According to Puranic version of the event, it is mentioned that the

sage Durvasa or Nath-yogi of later period was called to the Indra's heaven as an honors guest. A dance was organized for him and Apsara Urvashi was the dancer, but the charming concubine was discouraged: his austere expressions were in contradiction with her gorgeousness and adorned form (Misra 1966: 91). Due to her dance out of rhythm the enraged sage cursed her to descend to earth and become a woman at night and a *ghori*/mare at daytime. She would only be free from the curse she will have three and a half strikes a Vajra-weapon. In Purana version there is no love story mentioned between Urvashi and Puruvas while mentioned in above versions of the legends. In Purana she is defined as a courtesan, and she is turns into a mare due to the curse (Orsini 2015: 338). Epic Purana also mentions that she died after wandering on earth in the forest of flowers and dense trees. Dangvi, the king of Dangi-desa was informed by his gardener about the death of a beautiful mare. When he saw the beautiful mare and is smitten at once (Misra 1966: 93-4). But when he came face to face the mare escaped. All his horsemen failed to chase her only the King was left to follow her at nightfall. He saw that the mare was transformed into a beautiful woman, and he frightened at first but did not stop to follow (O'Flaherty 1979:8). Dangvai brought the mare to his palace which was welcomed by the queen and bedecked it with fine dress. The mare was kept secretly in the palace and Dangvai used to spend all his time with her. Eventually one of his queens, Padmavati, came to know the truth. The Puranic messenger, Narada, informed Krishna in the meantime, about the beauty of the mare and persuaded him to snatch her from the king Dangvai. To obtain the mare, Indra had sent an envoy to investigate about the truth of Narada's report. Dangvai refused that he has no such kind of mare and told the envoy that whichever elephant or horse you want; I will give it to you. Then he was threatened by Krishna that if he wants to save his horse, he should surrender up his mare (Misra 1966:100).

Dangvai made a vow that "he will never surrender the mare as long as he is alive." He called Krishna a bad king; whose master/ *Thakura* have always been seen forcibly takes someone else's wife (Orsini 2015: 340). "Whenever a god/king behaves poorly, how can his subjects live"? If a *Thakura*/lord does not observe dharma, dwelling in hell is his fate. Dangvai said that what sin I have committed against Krishna that he wants to snatch my mare. He decided that I would leave the country for the sake of mare rather than to handed over it to Krishna. Danvai was advised by each of the envoy to surrender the mare to Krishna or be ready for his wrath. He was also advised by his wives to give up the mare to Krishna and beg forgiveness. But Dangvai preferred to leave for an exile (Misra 1966:100). Dangvai's exile took

him to the several mythical beings like, Shesh-Naga, the Ocean, Kubera, Vibhishana, Yudhishtira and Duryodhana. But all of them refused to give him shelter from the Krishna because they were indebted to Krishna (Usha *n.d.*: 104). After the refusal of all these beings he decided to kill himself. For this he prepared a great fire while crying loudly at the bank of river Ganga. He was going to burn himself along with the beautiful Urvashi/mare. Fortunately, in the meantime Subhadra the half-sister of Krishna and wife of Arjuna has come for getting bath in the river. Profoundly struck by seeing such misery, she enquires after his destiny and afterward sets out to support him, whatever the results (Usha *n.d.*: 110).

3.3.2 Menaka

Menaka is famous as pearl of the apsaras. She is mentioned as the mother of Shakuntala, she gave birth to Shakuntala at the Himalayas and left her alone there who was brought up by a Rishi, Kanva of Kashyapa's family. As mentioned earlier that, apsaras were the nymphs of water, dancers at god's heavens and symbols of sensual delights of life. And the apsaras used to send by gods to distract the ascetics because they afraid of their power of austerities. Menaka is one among those apsaras who was sent for distraction of the Vishwamitra. According to the legend, Vishwamitra was determined for gaining celestial power through severe asceticism. So, he left for a forest where has started meditation, sat motionless until a hill was built around him by termites. Therefore, Menaka was sent for the purpose to distract and stop him from gaining spiritual power as Indra was afraid of it. Menaka was successful in distracting him, but Vishwamitra started again a severe kind of asceticism for acquiring the spiritual power. Menaka was again sent but she failed to distract him this time. Thus, he was succeeded in acquiring the spiritual power and became the well-known rishi, Vasistha (Pattanaik 2003: 136).

According to Hariyappa, Vishwamitra was again distracted by Menaka when he resumed his austerities. According to this version, Menaka came to bath in the lake/*Puskara* with wonderful beauty. Vishwamitra was attracted and he invited Menaka to live in sanctuary with him. She became once again successful in her mission. After many years Vishwamitra realized about his foolishness, so he dismissed her with. Then he went to the northern mountains and started again a severe austerity for the next thousands of years on the bank of River Koshi or Kaushiki. His thousands of year's asceticism brought him into the attention of all gods and sages. It is said that he was welcomed by god Brahma as a Maharishi. But he was not given the status

of Brahma-rishi because he had not yet acquired full authority over his sanities (Hariyappa 1951: 294). Menaka is also described as she was accompanied by gods of wind and desire in the mission of distracting sage Vishvamitra. According to this version of the story, Menaka went to the sanctuary and exhibited herself in a very innocent manner. But when Vishvamitra looked at her, the wind came and exposed her beauty and at the meantime the god of desire hit the heart of Vishvamitra with his arrow. So he loved the Apsara Menaka. When she came to know that she is pregnant, so she decided that she should go back to heaven as her job was done. For giving birth to the child, she went along the Malini River into the Himalayas. In Himalayas she bore a girl, abandoned the child alone and returned to the heaven of Indra. According to this version the child was guarded by the birds (Coomaraswamy *et. al.* 1967: 354).

3.3.3 Alambusha

Alambusha was the apsara with great beauty and lotus eyed. She is mentioned in Veda's literature as Rshyashrnga (Harris 2000: 152). The Mahabharat of Krishna Dwaipayana Vyasa also mentions her. According to the legend, once Kunti was resting in his room and heard these words loudly that an ascetic was living in the mountainous range of hundred peaks by seeing this Indra became so pleased while sitting in his car with his celestials. The music of an invisible drum was heard in entire celestial sphere and there were shouts of pleasure. The entire land was filled with flowers which were showered by unseen beings. At that occasion many tribes of divine and semi-divine beings gathered there to present their respectful adoration to Pritha's son Arjuna. Among these tribes who attended this event were the gandharvas/sons of Vinata the lord of creation, nagas/sons of kadru, the seven rishis: Kashyapa, Bharadwaja, Vishvamitra, Gautama, Vasishtha, Jamadagni and Arti. Among the other celestial's gandharvas and apsaras, Angiras, Marichi, Pulastya, Krata, Pulastya and Daksha the lord of creation were present there. The apsaras dressed in fine cloths, bedecked with celestial ornaments and garlands belonged to various tribes came there and danced with chanting of praise about Arjuna/Vibhatsu (Ganguli. *et. al.* 1992: 59). The Tumvuru along with other gandharvas sang the song of delightful notes. Among the other and musicians were Ugrasena and Bhimasena, a Naga and Urnayus, Dhritarashtra, Gopati and Suryavarchas the eighth, trinapa, Karshni and Yugapa, Chitraratha and Nandi, Parjanya, Salisirah, Kali the fifteenth, Vrihatta, Karala, Brahmacharin, Suvarna, Vishwavasu, Suchandra, the tribes of Huhu and Hahu and many more. Almost all the celestial

tribes of Gadharvas and apsaras were present there at the event. Among the apsaras who delighted the occasion with their group dance were; Alambusha and Misrakesi, Anavadya and Anuchana, Gunavara and Gunamukhya, Soma and Adrika, Suchika and Marichi, Tillotama and Vidyaputra and Ambhika, Kshema Devi, Lakshmana, Manorama, Rambha, Asita and many other. While the large-eyed celestial apsaras that delighted the occasion through their singings were consisting of; Sahajanya, Menaka, Pujikasthala, Ghritachi, Karnika, Ritusthala, Cishvachi, Umlocha, Purvachitti, and Urvashi (Usha *n.d.*: 258).

The Alambusha *Jataka* mentions the story of great sage Isisinga/Vedic Rshyashrngga or the unicorn. According to this story Isisinga was born after a doe drank water in which the semen of Budhisattva fallen inexplicably. With the passage of time the boy became a great ascetic like his father. It is described that the palace of Sakkha was shake by his austerities. The afraid Sakka, sent Alambusha the nymph to seduce and distract him. When Alambusha went there, came to know that he has spent three years totally unaware of all worldly attachment and “lay unconscious in her embrace,” before, at last when he remembered his true mission. In contemporary Thai-Buddhism an amulet with humanoid figure having phallic horn is depicted which is similar to the amulet on the head of Isisinga. The humanoid amulet with curved phallic horn is said as originated from Cambodia where it was used for gaining sexual power to its possessor. In art, the story is depicted in Buddhist site of Bharhut and it is also describes that a pilgrimage site was also associated with Isisinga where he was venerated by his followers (Harris 2000: 152).

3.3.4 Ghritachi



Ghritachi is described as a heavenly nymph. She was famous for her beauty that many great sages, ascetics and great Brahmins fall in love with her. Several sages and Vyasa or the author of Mahabharata are mentioned that they had left their *Tapasya*/asceticism, practicing from years after seeing this beautiful Apsara. And many of them have children from Ghritachi. She seduced a sage for the second time, he lost control when saw Ghritachi because he has desire for a daughter, Shrutavati. The other who became victims of her charms were; Sage Ashthavakra, King Pramati and Bhradvaja VishvaKarma. She is mentioned as a perfect dancer at Arjuna’s birthday party. The stories of her seduction remind us that how one could lose years of austerities for the pleasure of a moment (Williams 2003: 143).

The Mahbharata (I, 67) mentions the story about the Bhadvaraja who was near to be appointed as a king. But he was failed to acquire the title because when he saw Ghritachi without clothes, he did not control his desire and his semen sprayed on the ground. He collected his sperm from the ground and was kept in a *Drona*/jar. From which a child was born who was names as Drona. He was an Ayonija child. Ayonija means “who has not come from a Yoni or from relation with a female” (Markale 1986: 58-9). Drone was a great Brahmin warrior and master in archery of the war of great Bharata. He was the war trainer of both Kauravas and Pandavas (Williams 2003: 83).

Brahmavaivarta Purana (I. 10) describes VishvaKarma born Brahmin with the blessings of Brahma. He married an Apsara, Ghritachi. She was reborn as milkmaid. The offspring of VishmaKarma and Ghritachi became well known as Jatis. The Jatis were consisted of Potter, tailor and carpenter and those who were skillful in Tantra vidya. The term silpi is commonly applied to the people related to these occupations (Misra 2011: 44). Bharadvaja is mentioned in relation with Ghritachi at the time when Vishnu was personified as Krishna. The Bharadvaja became the father of Drona mentioned above (Williams 2003: 83). Ghritachi is also mentioned among the distractors apsaras sent by god Indra to sage Nara and Narayana, after they ignored Indra’s visit and his threat. Then frightened animals were sent by Indra to out an end to the austerities of the sages but all in vain. Finally, an army of apsaras were sent, consisted of Menaka, Rambha and Ghritachi. The apsaras became successful in their mission and brought the sages out their Ashrama through their music and dances (Usha *n.d.*: 223-25).

Ghritachi is also mentioned in connection with the Vyasa that also had son which never entered a womb. According to this myth, Vyasa had desire for a son thus he began a severe austerity near Mount Mahameru. Indra became afraid of his celestial power, sent Apsara Ghritachi to put an end to his *Tapasya*. She converted herself into five-colored and a beautiful parrot. When Vyasa saw the parrot/*Sukka*, fall in love with it. He discharged his semen on firewood, but when the woods were place on fire the celestial son was came to a life. He was named as Shukka, after the beautiful parrot. Sukka became a great sage and helped his father in establishing an educational institute in Vyasa’s *Ashrama*. Sukka left his home and attained divine power while his father reborn and did not get release from the cycle of rebirths (Usha *n.d.*: 304).

3.3.5 Shakuntala

Shakuntala was a celestial Apsara, the daughter of Menaka Apsara and the Sage, VishvaKarma, and the mother of the great king Bharata. Her story is mentioned, both by Kalidas and the great poet Vyasa. According to Kalidasa, Indra was afraid of the Vishvamitra's austerities, he sent the beautiful Apsara, Menaka, to distract the great sage from acquiring celestial power. Menaka became successful in her mission, married by the Sage, and impregnated her. After, her child was born; she left her alone on the bank of Malini River and returned to Indra's heaven. The child was found by the sage Kanva, being tended by birds/Shakuntas and he brought the child to his sanctuary/*Ashrama*. He named her as "Shakuntala," after the birds. She turned into a very beautiful young girl. One day, the king Dushyanta arrived after hunting in exhaustion and hunger to the Ashram when Kanva was not present. When he saw Shakuntala the beautiful Apsara, he falls in love with her and married her. Their marriage was in accordance with Gandharva's way of marriage i.e., they married by their own action and words. The king went back to his kingdom and promised her to be back for her but forgot his promise. All the story of Kalidasa and Vyasa is almost the same but at the point of forgetfulness, they have different views. According to the Vyasa, the king forgot her but when Shakuntala came along with her son after many years passed, the king was reminded by a heavenly voice. While Kalidasa, mentioned that his forgetfulness was due to the curse from a devil Sage Durvasu. It is described that Shakuntala was cursed for she did not serve the Sage Durvasu during his visit to the *Ashram*/hermitage. She is further described as she has the signet ring of the king, but it has lost in the river. She along with her son, Bharata were dismissed by her father King Dushyanta. The ring was swallowed by a fish which was caught with it. The ring made its way to the king. Thus, he remembered Shakuntala. The king eventually found his wife and son. At last, Bharata succeeded his father's throne and kingdom and became a well-known emperor of India (Williams 2003: 251-52).

3.3.6 Tilottama

As the modern Hindu claims that every kind of Knowledge and modern science are present there in the *Vedas* and Puranas. They mention Tilottama as an example for the robotic idea in Hindu literature. According to Mahabharat, Tilottama was created from all the beautiful organic and inorganic elements. She was created to captivate the two *Asuras*/demons,

Sunda and Upasunda. She was created by Vishvakarma, the divine architect from all the beautiful elements. The Sunda and Upasunda were granted strength by Brahma. They were that much stronger that there was no way to defeated them. Thus, Brahma advised the VishvaKarma to create Tilottma to trap them in fight with each other. She worshipped the gods through circumambulation way of worship before she left for the earth. According to another legend from Purana, Brahma sent her to the mount Kailasha, the residence of Shiva, to pay her homage to him. Shiva saw her and avoided her because his wife, Parvati was also present beside him. Shiva was captivated by her charm that much that he created four faces in all the cardinal direction for the purpose to see her always as she was circumambulating around him. At the meantime Parvati was told by the celestial Sage Narada about the Shiva's intensions, so she hid his eyes with her hands submerging the world in Darkness. Then Shiva created a third eye to bring back the universe to light (O'Flaherty 1981: 294-5). While Indra created thousand eyes for the same purpose. The demons, Sunda and Upasunda had defeated the Devas, expelled them in terror and captured the three worlds. Tilottama is mentioned as of their match. When they saw Tilottama they fall in love with her and turned into enemies of one another. Hence, she became successful in her mission. The Padma Purana's version of the creation of Tilottama is different from the Mahabharata. According to Padma Purana, Kubja, an ugly widow, was doing the auspicious rituals for eight years which resulted in *Magha-Puja*/purification-bath. Thus, Kubja reincarnated as Tilottama in her next life. She brought the heaven to its proper order through her austerities (Williams 2003: 252).

According to Brahmananda Purana, the Tilottama and Rambha, the *Tvastr*/the heavenly builder god, Vishnu, Vishvamisra, Jamadagnya, two sons of Kadru; Naga Ashvatara and Kambala, Gandharva Suryavacas and Dhritarashtra and other gandharvas and demon Yajnapeta used to reside in the months of *Maga* and *Palguna* or *Tapas* and *Tapasya* (Tagare 1999: 224). Shiva's anthropomorphic form is not mentioned clear in any Hindu literature, but one can clearly understand from the story of Tillotama that how one of the four faced formed of him developed (Sankalia. 1943: 152). According to Kathasaritsagara, she cursed king Sahasranika for ignoring her words when was coming back to his kingdom from Indraloka. According to the story, when Sahasranika was returning from Indraloka he was requested by Tilottama to wait so she could tell him an interesting fact. But he was absorbed in thoughts of his beloved, Apsara Alambusha (one of the sisters of Tillotama) and ignored what she said. Enraged tilottama cursed him for his

conduct that would be live in separation from his beloved for fourteen years (Varadpande 1987: 115).

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Chapter 4 Nagas and naginis in Indian religious texts

The “Naga” or Serpent roots to Indian mythology which is depicted as half-human or half-serpent. Sometimes wearing a crown, they live under the earth where they are the guardians of wealth and fertility (Stutley 1984: 99). It was an Indian myth that a man-tortoise had two wives namely (Zimmer 1955: 52) Vinata or heaven and Kadru or earth, whom he impregnated and both the wives’ laid eggs, Kadru laid numerous eggs and Vinata laid only three. Kadru reproduced a number of snakes of different variety while Vinata reproduced only Garuda out of her three eggs. The enmity which is still existent between these two groups is actually the continuation of the enmity of Kadru and Vinata. According to Indian mythology the nagas and Garuda are the off spring of one father from two wives. In Javanese description of this story the nagas and Garuda are cousins and descendants of the two sisters i.e., Kadru and Wirata/Vinata, while in the Malay variant they what’s more have a similar dad, the sun, making them patrilineal kins also (Winstedt 1926: 418).

The worship of Hindu to ophiolatry/snake is traced back to Ancient Indus civilization. There is a wider consensus that serpent worship was part of the indigenous culture that pre-dates the Indo-Aryan migration and the development of the Vedic literature. It has been verified by archeological discoveries in Mohenjo-Daro, Harappa, and Lothal, where seals and terracotta pieces depict serpents in a variety of pictorial contexts. Several of the rituals still practiced today were first detailed in sutras from 600-400 BCE (Hartel 1976: 664-66).

The start of Naga-worship and the Naga cult is anonymous in India. The snakes might have traces from its early stage of human colonization because these are found almost everywhere in the human inhabited regions. The reverence of snakes might have been due the fear of their bite which leads to death. Here an endeavor has been made to search for references of nagas confirmation in different literary sources and also in archeological records. The *Rig-Veda* I, 32 1, 2, 6-14 and I, 32 (3, 4), mentions to Vrhtra as the “the first-born of the snakes” and to Indra as the triumphant snake slayer (Mundkur *et al* 1976: 431). The word “Naga” means cloud and in Vedic literature it also means “the waters” refers to the rain, worshipping the snake as it rains clouds and flashes of lights. Such snakes are likewise the source of water for the Javanese (Wessing 2006: 212).

In the Rig-Vedic period also, it was prominent among one class of inhabitants, and it is interesting to note that gradually it influenced the religion and imagery of the invading Aryans. It has been consecutively highlighted that snake-worship was unknown in the Rig-Vedic age and became prominent only during the Sutra period. All through the *Rig-Veda* we meet with an emotion of contention, of an opposition, and a rivalry for predominance between two different sorts of culture and ideology. This is the reason we are first acquainted with the Snake-god as Ahi Vrtra, the rival of the Aryan god Indra. The name “Naga” which is used in later literature to refer the snake god has not been mentioned in early Vedic text. The Satapatha Brahmana (XI, 2, 7, 12) mentions it for the very first time but it is not clear what exactly they meant either snakes or great elephant. In any case, this does not impact our decision about the idea of Ahi Vrtra, since he is depicted consistently in *Rig-Veda* as the snake that lay around or inhabiting under waters, and as holding a full command over the waters of paradise and earth as well. We must remember that the association with earth and water were the two prominent characteristics of the Naga cult. It was this latter aspect that had to assert gradually its influence over the Aryan religion and coming in contact with it, was to be change itself (Gupta 1939: 224-25).

The hymns tell us about the Ahi Vrtra, that he got no reverence from the Aryan clans, and they considered it as a malevolent spirit of impressive force who must be battled down. However, during the end days of the Rig-Vedic period, the Snake-god is engrossed in the Aryan pantheon in the form of Ahi Budhnya or the serpent of the deep. The snake-god is seemed to be newly introduced god to Aryan pantheon and was not much popular yet therefore *Rig-Veda* had mentioned it only twelve times (Macdonell 1981: 72-73). But as in the verse that gives most information about him, the poet exclaims, “I praise with songs the Ahi Budhnya, the serpent born in water, sitting in the bottom of the streams in spaces,” we are left in no doubt about his divinity. Evidently, he is but a later incarnation of the Ahi Vrtra, but who is considered more an atmospheric than a water god, although his origin is in water. In this period, he is frequently coupled with Aja Ekapada, “the supporter of the sky, the stream, the oceanic waters” and with the thundering flood. These facts seem to indicate two parallel developments of the Snake Cult among the original worshippers and the invaders. Among the Dravidian and other non-Aryan races, the snake was mostly associated with the earth and its oceans, and thus came gradually to be transformed into the beautiful, mysterious half-god and half-human Naga that inhabited the nether-world and was endowed with magic powers. Among the Aryans who believed it within

the water surrounding the world, he was soon incorporated among different atmospheric deities. From this, it became only some more steps to the coupling of Ahi Budhnya with Agni, who became “a raging Ahi within the space,” and thence with Rudra who became one of the seven deities identified with Agni, and a later manifestation of Aja Ekapada, described as a type of Agni. He turned into nonetheless being related to Apam/water deity invoked because the high-quality son of waters, standing waters. But it was his association with Rudra that came to be the most emphasized upon, this way was laid the foundation of the incorporated aspect of the Naga cult with Shaivism (Gupta 1939: 225-26).

It should be noted, however, that snake- worship of the purer type had also been introduced into the Aryan society during the age of the *Atharva-Veda*. The presence of a priestly class related to the cult is also suggested by the fact that according to the Taittiriya Samhita a Sarpa-rajni or serpent-queen was the authoress of one of the hymns (X. 189) of the *Rig-Veda*. In later times, whilst the non- Aryan kind of Naga worship had spread over the large portion of India, it has become a beloved pictogram of the brand-new religions that attempted to fight it down, to symbolize the nagas as doing homage to their respective gods. Thus, we discover Vishnu reclining on Ananda Naga inside the midst of the primeval ocean and the nagas depicted in artwork and literature as providing worship to Buddha as well as Parsvanatha. In doing this, however, each of these new cults absorbed greater or much less the large number of masses of Naga mythologies and they made some of the most well-known Naga gods, semi-divinities of their personal pantheons. But no other religion came to be associated as much with the Naga cult as Shaivism. And this is obvious from the coins having Shaiva symbols in the Naga kings’ period (Gupta 1939: 226).

The nagas are also referred to the communities of ancient India who worships the snakes-gods and they hold an important place in Indian history. The cult of snake worship assumed a unique significance and importance in India than in any part of the earth. This specific cult was given extensively divided or advanced in diverse forms. However, it is exciting to admit right here that in Hindu Pantheon the symbolism of nagas is much more multifaceted. If we look closely into the Hindu religious rituals and spiritual lifestyle, a snake is not an evil creature but a divine figure which represents eternalness and also actuality. It absolutely represents the procedure of life which includes creation, which develops into maintenance after which the

ultimate demolition and finally to extinction. We can find references to snake deities in both Hindu folklore and literature. They are popularly associated with both Lord Vishnu and Lord Shiva and several other divine figures including Indra, who is usually believed to ride an elephant known as Nagendra, the Lord of the snakes, which most probably shows the control over the snake world (Borah 2017: 199).

Vedic texts very often use the phrase ‘Ahi’ which clearly stands for ‘snake’. The phrase ‘Ahi’ in fact displays the worry for the snakes. Apart from this the word additionally stands for reflecting the uncommon functions of snakes and for the admiration of the snakes. Among the *Vedas*, *Rig-Veda* mentions that the nagas became a network of normal deities who had been once worshipped on an everyday basis in the period of the Yajur-Vedic society. *Rig-Veda* also refers back to the numerous services that were made to the Naga deities throughout this era’s diverse spiritual rituals and practices. *Atharva-Veda* talks about diverse prayers dedicated to the nagas, which had been actually chanted to cast off the adverse attitude of the snake deities. This Veda in addition refers that the snakes are nothing but the saviors of the human beings or of the groups. According to those writings, snakes are capable of destructing the peace of the world or of the extinction of humanity due to which we may also remember, obviously, the fact that Naga cult is probably emerged and grew eventually out of the fear in human hearts for his or her destruction via snake deities (Usha *n.d.*: 200).

If we look at the ancient period of Indian history, then we can notice that the worship of nagas was quite popular in Northern region of India. For instance, numerous chronicles of Kashmir talk vigorously about the worship of a high-quality and a number of Naga deities in that region. The most popular Naga deity of that region as meditated within the writings is “Nila” who was deemed as the protector deity of Kashmir, and that was believed to have lived in the water. An acclaimed 8th century’s ruler of ancient Kashmir, Muktapida Laliditya curiously professed that they were the descendants of Naga Karkotaka, who is a well-known character in the episode of Nala of Mahabharata. Some ancient Brahmi inscriptions from Bharhut point out approximately two Naga kings, namely, Elapatra and Cakravaka. If we undergo the Buddhist literature, it will be clear that Naga Elapatra was the popular Naga of Takshasila, where the top-notch serpent-sacrifice of the Kuru king Janamejaya is believed to

have been taken place to take revenge from the Naga Takshaka for his father, king Parikshit's death (Usha *n.d.*: 152).

The northern mountainous range of India was the residence of these Naga tribes. The evidences from Indus valley civilization's sites like, Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro will in general recommended that the worship of snakes was an element of the original inhabitants of India whose branches had spread to the reasonable place that is known as Kashmir. The literary sources of Tibet, Ceylon, China and the indigenous literature all have confirmed the popularity of Naga worship in early Kashmir (Ray 1970: 156). The local literature which includes the Rajatarangini, Nilamata Purana and the Vasuki Purana genuinely witnesses the beginning of Naga cult in the region of Kashmir. As Nilmata Purana, an ancient text of fourth to third century B.C, has mentioned that Naga worship was the major religion of Kashmir (Usha *n.d.*: 153). Nagas are considered to have been the offspring of Kadru, the spouse of Kashyapa (Usha *n.d.*: 155).

The account of Rajatararigini tells that kashyapa was the king of the nagas, whose imperial canopy was the hood of the snake, and he raised the Kashmir above the waters, Nila. There have been many theories about their origin and what they were. They were never mentioned as a human in ancient tradition of India, but in Indian folk-stories they are represented as a prominent human race. While in the metaphorical representation of later authors, they become heavenly beings or genuine snakes; and are entrusted to underground abodes. The remnants of nagas are still survived in human form in the neighboring mountainous regions of Kashmir and also in some places between the river Ravi and Chenab. Here the famous Naga gods like Basdev or Basak Nag, Takshaka, or Takht-Nag, Vasuki, Shesha and other were not that much popular but still were worshipped according to their ancient traditions. The Takshaka festival or Takshaka-Jatra was celebrated here up till the reign of Nara raja who had ruled the region some two or three centuries prior to Cristian era (Oldham 1891: 361-2).

The Naga Cult or the Serpent Worship was one among the most ancient systems of veneration in India. The earliest evidence of the Serpent Cult in India has been reported from the archaeological excavation at Chirahd a Neolithic site in Bihar. Among the horde of terracotta figurines of animals and birds found at Chirahd, the discovery of the terracotta figurine of a snake is very significant (Sankalia 1974: 307-8). The excavator has identified this terracotta figurine as the first ever depiction of the Serpent cult dating back to the early part of the third

millennium before Christ (Usha *n.d.*: 304). However, the prevalence and popularity of the Naga Cult during the early historic period (3rd-4th century B.C.) has been reported from Maniyar Math near Rajgir of the great Mani Naga, whose center of worship was at the Maniyar Math of Rajgriha would no doubt be of much help in constructing the religious history of Indi (Gupta 1939: 229). The antiquities relationship back to the first century A.D and the literary references amply testify to the fact that the Naga worship became famous and spread widely across the India from Mathura to Kerala. Orissa, the famous seat of various religions was also changed into an important center of Naga worship from very early time. The rock-shelters of Sundargarh are painted with the earliest illustration of the snake motif in Orissan artwork. In addition to the paintings of snakes in monochrome darkish crimson (hematite) and bi-chrome pink and white, other rock-shelters like Lekhamoda, Manikmoda, and Tonga also have the mysterious depiction of snakes in engravings. The continuity of the worship and festivities linked with Naga in Orissa can be traced back as far as 1st century A.D, with the accession of Emperor Kharavela. Orissa witnessed a glorious epoch in art, architecture, and sculpture in unbroken continuity. The antiquities determined up to now all through this period unmistakably prove the prevalence and popularity of Naga worship in Orissa. The hills of Udayagiri and Khandagiri, which turned into a well-known place of Jainism throughout the reign of emperor Kharavela, comprise numerous caves, where a number of caves have the engraved depictions of Naga. Serpents are represented on the facade of the Anantagumpha flanking the door arches. Such representations of nagas have also been made in Ranigumpha. These sculptural representations of nagas appear naturalistic. The representation of nagas was not only for the religious purpose but was also for the decoration. A serpent is seen entwined with a big tusker in a tree and geared up to strike at his head inside the Alakapurigumpha (Pradhan 2001: 149).

In the caves of Khandagiri, the images of Parsvanatha, canopied by a seven-hooded snake can be seen in several places. Two colossal Naga images are being preserved in the Orissa State Museum. The iconographic features of these images suggest that they might have preceded Kharavela's time. Three more lifelike images of Naga and Nagini have been discovered at Sunderpada near Bhubaneswar. These impressive Naga and Nagini in images have been found in the vicinity of Bhubaneswar as independent cult images. This testifies the fact that Bhubaneswar was an important center of Naga Cult. During the beginning period of Gupta, following the period of Kharavela, we do not find any Naga images or sculptures from any part

of Orissa. But the 4th century inscriptions of Orissa clearly show the continuation of the Naga cult. The Asanpat Inscription of king Satrubhanja of the Naga dynasty in the Keonjhar region during fourth century A.D refers the dynastic worship of Naga. The Kanasa Copper plate grant of the king Lokavigraha, the king of Tosali dated in the Gupta era refers to the worship of Mani-Naga (Usha *n.d.*: 150).

In the contribution, the king records the donation of a village on the bank of river Salia to a Brahmin, for the renovation of the deity Mani nagas war. The document also mentions the call of officers of the call BhavaNaga and Nagadutta who have been possibly of Naga lineage. The subculture of worshipping Mani nagas war is also determined at the bank of river Langulia in southern Orissa and Subarnarekha in north-eastern Orissa, wherein we find Mani Nageswar temples. In Ranpur area of Puri district, it is thrilling to find a small mountain in the shape of a coiled serpent that's worshiped as Mani-Naga (Panda 1986: 15).

The prevalence of Serpent worship among the royal dynasties and the people of Orissa are further proved by the two Midnapur Copper plates of Somadatta and Subhakirti, feudatories of Maharaja Sasanka in the first half of the seventh century A.D. It was during this period that serpent worship was more closely associated with Shaivism (Mujamdar 1945: 7-9).

The cult of Naga seems to have grown to be famous in the Mayurbhanj area with the ascendancy of the Naga dynasty just earlier than the upward push of the Bhanas within the location. The Naga dynasty of Mayurbhanj referred to as the Vairata Bhujanga dynasty worshipped Naga as their tutelary deity. The Patamundi hill close to Puradiha is referred to as the original seat of the Naga Goddess (Senapati 1967: 84).

During the rule of the Sailodbhava and Bhauma-Kara kings, as the cult of the Mother Goddess had gained reputation, around Bhubaneswar we do not find any specific Naga depiction in the vicinity of Bhubaneswar, an ancient Indian city. But some of the temples of Bhubaneswar like Parasurameswar, Nakuleswar and Vaitala belonging to this era contain some Naga sculptures as decorative motif. In the Prachi valley region in Puri district the cult object of Naga has been discovered from many places attesting to its reputation. At Kantapara, about 30 km from Bhubaneswar at the northern bank of Prachi, an interesting picture has been found (Panda 1986: 21). It is a four-armed female deity with seven-serpent hoods over her head, the right hand maintaining an aksamala and the left hand is in abhayamudra. The deity seems to be

an impartial cult object being worshipped by the local people of the region as a village deity. The deity is domestically known as Vilasini (Odisha 1975: 5). There is a shrine on the northern facet of Ramesvara temple of Tola in Prachi valley, fifty-four km from Bhubaneswar, devoted to a seven-hooded Nagini. At present the deity is being worshipped as a village deity named Marchikeyi (Usha *n.d.*: 15).

It is not an unusual practice throughout India that, the Naga divinities, such as the Astakula-Naga of Puranic origin are worshipped during numerous ceremonies of high caste Hindus along with the sacred thread rite, bridal ceremony, and Shraddha rite. In our historic scriptures numerous hymns, with ritual offering have been found for those ceremonies. Apart from this traditional shape of Naga worship, the human beings of Orissa worship Naga in various forms which include Water Spirit, it become a perception some of the early population of India that the most common haunts of snakes are lakes, ponds, springs, pools and river. They believed that water is being controlled through the snakes. In Orissa it's miles a common practice to install Naga devatas at the banks of ponds and springs for worship. In many Shiva temples which were constructed on the bank of rivers and ponds, nagas have been depicted in conjunction with the Lingam (Pradhan 2001: 152). Ancestor Spirit, The nagas are appeared as reincarnation of the dead. There are several times to reveal legendary deified snake heroes in India. Many Hindus possess deadly snakes in their homes feeding and petting them. This exercise remains found in lots of villages in India. This exercise is also prevailing in Orissa. The inhabitants of Orissa including Oraons, Santals, Koli and Khonds regard the snake as their ancestor and worship it. High caste Hindus in Orissa also accept as true that the snakes are the embodiments of their ancestors (Roy 1928: 326). Nagas were also regarded as the guardian of the Hidden Treasure. Since distant past it was believed that the snake is the son of earth (Vogel 1926: 20). Kadru, the mother of the Naga race is assumed to be a personification of earth in our epic literature (O'Malley 1935: 116). In all Indian mythology, the nagas are portrayed because the lords of the earth and its hidden treasure in Patala. It is not an unusual observance in Orissa that the Gunis (attraction masters) looking to unearth suspected hidden treasure propitiates the Naga-devatas. A tribe referred to as Jhara worship nagas as their guardian of wealth. Many houses in Orissa can be seen with the carving of Naga images (Pradhan 2001: 153).

Nagas and naginis were also regarded as the gods and goddesses of Fertility. From time immemorial, the mother earth has been worshipped as the Goddess of fertility. The serpent is considered to be endowed with the characteristics of mother earth. Primitive people worshipped Naga as a divine being who ought to bestow fertility to their fields by controlling the rain. Ananta or Shesha Naga was worshipped as a God of harvest and cultivation. In Orissa the cultivators do not kill a snake in the paddy land as they've a firm belief that the presence of a snake will make sure the productiveness of the land. The peoples of Orissa just like the Santals, Bhumijas, Kola and Kondha worship nagas at the start of the monsoon for a whole period of cultivation to get higher vegetation. The Brahmins in Orissa worship Naga on the time of marriage. Infertile ladies also worship Naga and count on vows which they fulfil after they're blessed with children (Pradhan 2001: 153).

Nagas are also believed as tutelary Deity. It was a usual practice for the royal dynasties of Orissa to worship a tutelary deity or Istadevata. The Vairat Bhujanga dynasty of Mayurbhanj worshipped the serpent deity Khinchikeswari as their tutelary deity (Vasu 1912: 36). The Chhindaka nagas of Chakrakutamandala worshipped Manikeshvari as their tutelary deity. The deity remains worshipped with the aid of the royal households of Kalahandi and Hingir in the district of Sundargarh (Pradhan 2001: 154).

4.1 Naga Worship association with other religions of India

The cult of Naga was one of the most widespread types of worship in ancient time, which was found a noticeable position practically in almost all religious systems of India. Through a process of assimilation various features of primitive cult worship have found their expression in higher religious order (Basham 1954: 17). Among the different sects of Hinduism, the association of Naga is mostly prominent in Vaishnavism, Shaivism, and Shaktism. It is also interesting to notice the union of this cult with Jainism and Buddhism.

4.2.1 Vaishnavism

In Vaishnavism the serpent always played an important role. The great serpent Shesha is believed to be a manifestation of Lord Vishnu. Lord Vishnu reclining on Shesha and contemplating the creation of the world is a common representation in Indian art and iconography. Such images of Lord Vishnu, reclining on Shesha is also found in many temples of

Orissa as decorative motifs. In Sambalpur we notice a beautiful Vishnu temple dedicated to Anantasayi installed by the Chauhan king Balaramadeva after conquering Surguja (Senapati 1964: 47). Balarama or Baladeva, the eldest brother of Krishna is believed to be the incarnation of Shesha Naga. The Bhagavata adopted the popular worship of nagas with the belief that the Naga images are the representation of Baladeva, the elder brother of Krishna (Pradhan 2001: 154).

4.2.2 Shaivism

The Naga Cult is closely connected with Shaivism. The Naga or serpent is closely related to Shiva than any other deity of Hindu pantheon. In some Shiva's shrines the Naga replaces Shiva as an object of worship. Lord Shiva is worshipped as a Naga at Nagesvar in the shrine of Varanasi palace of the king of Nagpur. At Maneswar in Sambalpur district there is a Shiva temple where the presiding deity is a big brass idol of Naga. In almost all the Shiva temples we find the Naga idol along with the Shiva lingam (Pradhan 2001: 154).

4.2.3 Shaktism

In Orissa Shakti worship was in vogue from very ancient times. There the people worshipped Shakti in various forms such as Mahishamardini Durag, Parvati, Chandi, Viraja, Saptamatrika, Chamunda, Mangia, Varahi, Kali, Vimala, Charchika, Bhagavati, Stambeswari, Samaleswari and Pataneswari. From among these deities the serpent is closely associated with Mahishamardini Durga, Viraja, Chamunda and Kali. With the development of the Shakta Tantric Cult in Orissa, Naga and Nagini found expression in the cult images as well as sculptural depiction on the outer facade of the temples (Pradhan 2001: 155).

Although the prevalence of Naga worship can be traced from remote past, i.e., at least from the Indus valley Civilization, no reference is to be found anywhere of any important female serpent character from the beginning of the Vedic times down to the time of the Buddhist literature. Of course, it is admitted that the Mahabharata speaks of the name of Jaratkaru, sister of Vasuki, and contains a detailed account of her, but her existence ceases to exist after the birth of her son, Astika. Elsewhere in the same epic the nagas, the offspring of the poisonous snakes, are said to have been born from Kashyapa by Kadru who is described as the mother of all the

snakes. In the Ramayana, it is Surasa who is said to be the mother of the snakes. But no divinity was attributed to them (Jash 1986: 169).

4.3 Prominent nagas andnaginis

4.3.1 Takshaka

Takshaka is derived from the word “Taksh” which means “to reduce, to style, to invent, to shape in thoughts,” thus “Takshaka” means a carpenter or woodcutter. It is not impossible that the Khandava forest was the residence place of people who earned their livelihood through cutting wood and shaping it to fulfill their daily life needs. It is possible that the Pandavas made several woodcutters as their slaves, so that they might work to construct their palace. Another possibility may be suggested here that whereas the original story became mythologized, the narrator modified the name from Takshaka to Maya as that could provide his desired didactic orientation to his story. But “Takshaka” additionally means the sutradhara, “a stage-manager, a primary actor who arranges to cast the characters, to instructs them and takes a prominent role in the Prastavana/prologue.” Thus, the sutradhara/Takshaka is the responsible one for the continuity of act in a drama. He makes an important appearance in the opening act. Takshaka is quite outstanding inside the Adiparvan. There seems to be a “time when the Epic began with the Astikaparvan, “because the Epic itself states that some learnt it “from the story of The Book o Astika.” Thus, there was a time when the Adiparvan started and conclude with tales in both of which an effort is made to save Takshaka, in one from Janamejaya, and in another from Agni, and in both the cases it is far from Indra who is keen for his safety. It is therefore suggested that Takshaka represents the continuity of nature. However, hardly man attempts to damage nature and her power. If anyone does so, he can never be triumphant completely. Nature will outwit his merciless schemes. This vitality of nature is supported through Indra, the god of rain. Thus, even in that holocaust there’s still hope for people, in spite of their possessed foolishness (Anand 1990: 43-4).

The struggle between the Kauravas and Pandavas supposed the involvement of many kings and warriors. Many of them were killed. But one received a totally special treatment. There is a whole parvan, the eighth book of the Epic, handling the slaying of Karna. This is not always without its importance. In a firm sense, Karna is responsible for that internecine war.

When Draupadi was dragged to the corridor, Dhrtarastra's son Vikarna defended her, upholding that she was not won by the Kauravas, and thereby suggesting that they had no right to humiliate her. At this juncture Karna spoke to him and justified the stripping of Draupadi. After their attempt fails, he mocks her, and also her husband telling them that they have been saved through their lady, as Draupadi had selected their freedom while she changed into provided three boons by the Duryodhana. To try to strip a girl bare at the same time as her husband watch helplessly is awful sufficient, however, to tell her kshatriya husbands that it's she who has redeemed them is adding insult to injury. Karna will never be forgiven. He had acted in contradiction of dharma. During the warfare his chariot receives stuck in the slush. He steps right down to lift up its wheel and pleads with Arjuna that he should stop fight because it is not right for a person who's in a chariot to assault some other who's standing on the earth. It is then that Krishna tells Karna that he has no claims to make on dharma, due to the fact he had neglected it in humiliating Draupadi. Even if one is of the same opinion with this, it was still unfair at the part of Arjuna to slay Karna in that scenario. During the battle on different events too unfair way were utilized by each of them. The combat for land goes on, and dharma is repeatedly violated. The Khandavadaha scene repeats itself (Usha *n.d.*: 48).

When someone tries to get land at any cost, then it is he who stands to lose. After the warfare just ten of them survived: seven from the Pandavas and three from the Kauravas side. All the sons of Draupadi have been murdered. Abhimanyu too has perished in the war. The Pandavas anointed Parikshit as their successor and ascended to heaven. In the Khandava hearth Takshaka and his son Ashvasena get away. Takshaka has not forgiven the Pandavas. He bites Parikshit to loss of life even with all the precautions taken by his courtiers. It is very much surprising that whether the reality that the boy who cursed Parikshit to be bitten by Takshaka is referred to as shrhngin. Who has something to do with the reality that the birds that escaped death in the Khandava fireplace were sharngakas? The presence of Takshaka connects the loss of life of Parikshit to the Khandavadaha episode narratively even as the presence of shrhngin does so by evocation. By destroying ecology, we are making life difficult for our sons and grandsons (Anand 1990: 48-9).

Janamejaya, the son of Parikshit, desires to take revenge of the death of his father. So, he institutes a solemn Snake Sacrifice. By this he hoped to get all the snakes burnt in the

sacrificial fireplace, which includes his father's murderer, Takshaka. But because the preparations were on, a sutradhara foretells that Janamejaya will now not achieve bringing Takshaka to his sacrifice. We have already mentioned that "Takshaka" also means a satradhara. In the Khandavadaha episode Arjuna and Krishna assist Agni to burn down the living place of Takshaka and his family. He and his son escaped. Janamejaya's Snake Sacrifice is as a consequence evocative of the Khandavadaha episode. Again, Takshaka is saved by using the intervention of Astika. Who is this Astika? What connection does he have with Takshaka? We shall now try to answer these questions (Anand 1990: 49).

The first book of the remarkable epic, Mahabharata, concludes with the burning of a forest, Khandavadaha. It is a warm summer season day. To beat the warmth, Arjuna proposes to Krishna that they go for a picnic, and Krishna simply concurs. Accompanied through their womenfolk they visit the bank of Yamuna, and revel in themselves. There Arjuna and Krishna are approached via a Brahmin who needs food from them. When both of them agree to satisfy his hunger, he discloses his actual nature as Agni, and everyday meals will not satisfy him. He desires to devour the whole wooded area, but whenever his efforts are foiled by using Indra who is bent on protecting his friend, Takshaka, who lives in that woodland. As they want superior guns to assist Agni, he requests Varuna to do the requisite. Varuna offers Arjuna an effective bow and inexhaustible quivers and additionally a totally rapid chariot. To Krishna he gives an infallible discus. Thus prepared, Arjuna and Krishna declare themselves geared up for the challenge. Then Agni starts to burn the woodland. Indra tries to pour rain but is averted by using Arjuna and Krishna. These two additionally stop all the creatures that try to get out of that hell. There was an extreme massacre. Only seven creatures escaped: Maya- a demon, Ashvasena - the son of Takshaka, four little birds and their mother. Agni is supremely happy with this cruel feast that lasted six days, and he dismisses his two helpers. They and Maya return to the bank of the river (Usha *n.d.*: 25).

It is understood that the Garudopanisad is a mantra in opposition to snakes. Traditionally it's far indexed most of the Atharvana Upanishad's which can be referred to as unique works of the second one half of the first millennium A.D. himself. The snakes do not bite that guy for twelve years who might also listen this great understanding on the closing day of the darkish half of the lunar month. Who reads this exceptional knowledge and attaches it to himself

at the last day of the darkish half of the lunar month that man the snakes do not bite for lifetime. Having him seized it will protect eight *Brahman*'s with grass, with wood and with eye, so said the revered Brahma, so speaks the Garudopanishad. Om, we reward the Supreme Being, we do worship the golden winged. Let Garuda direct us! We worship him whose eye is reddish, who is gold-glanced, the tremendous soul, the lengthy-armed, who has strong shoulders, who's adorned with the aid of snakes as ornaments. Ananta is stated to be on the left wrist, Vasuki is the yajñāsutra, Takshaka is the katisutra/girdle, Karkota is the necklace, Padma is at the proper ear, Mahapadma is from the left side, Sanka is on the head, and Kulika is at the bosom. Recollecting this on the time of the three samdhya/ritual of worship this soul which is inside the form of Garuda the poison might be destroyed fast like fire thrown into water. Om salute, we worship the nine familial snakes. We praise him, who has poison-teeth. So, allow he who creeps guard us! "Om peace, peace, peace." Here the Garudopanishad is completed (Wojtilla 1975: 392).

Nagas are wicked creatures who look at the same time in the pretense of noxious cobras and furthermore in human form. One of them was Takshaka, who had caused the demise of lord Parikshit II, the father of Janamejaya. The Bharatan tales of peace and war, input as within the everyday YajurVeda-Brahmana tradition of rotating narrative throughout all sattra/sacrificial-session sacrifices of long period. The aftereffect of the story in this specific incident, however, was very unusual; the supporter ruler Janamejaya was averted from the very motive and principal objective of the sacrifice, complete obliteration of the nagas. Even the prime culprit Takshaka succeeded to escape. According to Mahabharata (1. 53. 7; 18. 5. 27), the snakes have been rescued by the visit of the younger priest Astika, who was the son of a Brahmin austere Jaratkaru by a Naga female also named Jaratkaru (Kosambi 1964: 31).

Krishna also has an interesting relation with the Naga. The infant Krishna trampled down but Naga Kaliya was saved who prevented possession of the Yamuna bank and got right of entry to the river pond. According to Mahabharata (1.215-219) With Krishna's full support, the Pandavas burned out the Khandava forest to establish their new city of the kuru kingdom/Indraprastha near modern day new Delhi. The land-clearing activity has been mentioned in the Mahabharata as an excellent blood-sacrifice to the Agni/Aryan fire god, with intentional massacre of each animal that attempted to get away from the ring of fire. However,

the Naga Takshaka, Indra's exceptional companion, had moved out to Kurukshetra (Mbh 1.219.23) thus got away from the fire. A large number of minor nagas were killed. This devastation of the Khandava jungle had not been fulfilled before because of the fact that Indra stopped each past endeavor by bringing down unseasonable rain to smother the fire (Kosambi 1964: 38).

According to the fashionable Sanskrit description of Mahabharata (1. 40-44) Parikshit, the King of Hastinapura had died by the serpent Takshaka's bite, and no effort was made restoring his existence (Gray 1922: 327).

The Punjab and the adjacent states made a very strong Kaurava confederacy, and the intense fight by means of destroying their ruling families and armies could have critically destabilized their power and gravely damaged their strength. Now it is worth noting that the opening part of the Mahabharata describes how Parikshit, the son of Abhimanyu was executed by the Naga Takshaka. The Naga Takshaka was the ruler of Takshashila (present day Taxila) in the Panjab, and the way Janamejaya, the son of Parikshit, defeated Takshaka and conquered Takshashila. This is described in absurdly fantastic way, but there is one element important in it, specifically, that the kingdom of the Punjab, which was a solid rampart in the Great War, has all vanished; the Naga Takshaka ruled over the Panjab, and came into direct clash with Arjuna's grandson and great grandson who was the ruler of Jumna. In the event that one may guess a risk on such a feeble story, it is that the nagas more likely than not ascended to control during the interim of weakness which followed the extraordinary fight and have vanquished the territories of the Panjab (Pargiter 1908: 335).

In the first book of the Mahabharata, Parikshit the father of Janamejaya was killed by Naga Takshaka; consequently, Janamejaya swore to smash all of the serpents in a sacrifice. Janamejaya is therefore called the "serpent-sacrificer" or "sarpasat-trin"; in any case, his ceremony was hindered when the snake-sage Astika was granted a boon and asked that the sacrifice stay fragmented. In the Brahmana textual content quoted above, however, the sacrifice is completed via the nagas; Janamejaya himself is stated as a Naga, as are the Dhrtarastra and others well-known nagas identified to us by the epic. The sacrifice has been changed into human ritual against nagas during the composition of Adiparvan while the family priest of Janamejaya is recorded in ancient book of paushya as the son of a Nagini. Over the span of the change of the

custom from a sacrifice by and for the snakes to a sacrifice to butcher the snakes, the representation of the ceremonial has been lost. Or nearly appropriately we may recommend that the placing of the Bharata account in the eve of the serpent sacrifice of Janamejaya is not, in spite of everything, a worthless, incomprehensible coincidence inside the records of Indian tradition. Rather, it is the result of the natural power of the symbol and the existence of the substratum of the myths in the epic. The narrative of the extraordinary fight sacrifice of men or are the divine beings, as the epic itself demands, or for sure snakes, as such a significant number of their names, characteristics and activities recommend the account of the birth through viciousness of the legitimate heir, the leftover, the dynastic father (slaughtered in the womb by Ashvatthaman, the Naga manifestation of Rudra; restored at his birth by Krishna; at last killed as ruler by the bite of the Naga-Takshaka). The oration of the story of Mahabharata on the eve of serpent sacrifice shows us a clue to the significance of the myth hidden in its soul. The extraordinary sacrifice is encircled by the ritual which, in its unique structure, demonstrates the ancient representation of the sacrifice (Shulman 1978: 125).

In making this explanation, certain significant aspects of the tale had been placed apart. Takshaka is mentioned as the friend of Indra, the principal god of the Aryan. Indra time after time fought Agni, another important Aryan god, for the sake of Takshaka, his non-Aryan friend. This is absolutely unusual if the myth turned into actually telling a story of an Aryan slaughter of non-Aryans. One would have anticipated a non-Aryan god to have defended Takshaka, not Indra, who indeed turned into so fond of this Naga that he “fought” his own “son” Arjuna for his sake. One can provide quite some other rational interpretation of the myth. A fundamental detail in it, is about a combat between Indra and Agni, wherein Agni wins. Do we no longer have here an information in non-secular records when the older, war-like god become dropping his preserve over a nomadic societies that had settled right down to a more sedentary life: Agni become after all the hearth fire which every Aryan householder stored cautiously kindled all through his life. Significantly, Agni became championed with the aid of Krishna, who appears to have been an extraordinary defender of gods in the direction of the human being’s manner of life. In the Bhagavata we discover him championing the cause of Govardhana, a mountain-deity worshipped by means of cowherds, again against Indra (Lath 1982: 148).

It might be seen that the name of Vasuki is all the more regularly referenced regarding Patala/Dhat-mandala as it is occasionally called, whereas the name of Takshaka is regularly connected with Takhasila, the northern capital city of India. The festival at the Kailils is simply in honour of Vasuki; even though the district in which it held far needs to be established upon Takhasila. It is possibly, consequently, that both these chiefs were not living during the same period, but they both were the succeeding rulers of the Naga clan (Oldham 1891: 376).

The famous folk tales agree with Mahabharata that Janamejaya had defeated the nagas, but at that time Vasuki and Takshaka were not present. Although the tradition further adds that the conquest was acquired through treason. It is stated that Takshaka was rescued by Indra, which undoubtedly refers to his death earlier than this occasion. His son “the powerful Aswasena” is not mentioned again. Nothing is known about the death of Vasuki. Some traditions mentioned his name, but these are of later period, therefore these traditions are clearly referring to his successors. The present-day Punjab is inundated with folk tales of the Naga kings. According to traditions, one of the emperors/*Salivahana* was the son of Basak-Naga and subjugator of Vikramaditya. *Salivahana* was alive for a long time after the death of Vasuki, however, might also were certainly one of his successors. Truly Colonel Tod states that he was the descendant of Takshaka (Oldham 1891: 378).

4.3.2 Adishesha or Shesha-Naga

The Vishnu Puranas and Bhagavata refer to the celestial Naga Ananta-krishna/Ananta-being who is believed as the cause and corporeal help of all creation. Ananta means “endless” which is also known as Shesha, the Naga-god, or Adishesha, “the first snake.” Ananta is portrayed as a basic innovative being in whose hoods are held all the worlds of the universe, and whose everlasting coiling keeps up the system of the cosmos. According to Matsya Purana, “at the end of current era only Shesha Naga will remain after all living beings become ashes through fire.” Whereas Ananta has association with Vishnu, Vasuki the Naga-lord with Shiva, portrayed around Shiva’s neck as a warning and as a sacred sign. Vasuki is significantly more engaged with the common issues of divine beings and men than Ananta, and is generally appealed during building a new house to guarantee the security of the house. Vasuki, Shesha and Ananta are believed as either chief nagas or Naga-rajass, contingent upon the understood

estimation of each inside the witnessing society. They are consistently carriers of rainstorm and fruitfulness when conciliated, or quakes, loss and obliteration when annoyed. Vasuki, Vrhtra, Ananta and Shesha are basically believed as wild and generally fierce, paranormal mediators of the universe in physical shape. The restraining of the revered snake seems to start in the amalgamation of native tribal people and Vedic Brahmins wide-ranging across north-central India at the time of Vedic Aryans first moving into the Indian sub-subcontinent about 2200 BCE (Jones 2010: 94-5).

The Mahabharata and Ramayana of early period provide enough information regarding the nagas. The images of Naga in art were commonly depicted during the historic period. In Kerala the beginning of the worship of Naga is unknown however it is believed that it was started during the reign of Parasurama. Due to fear of the hazard to humans the Brahmins requested the Parasurama to allot a different place for residence to the nagas and he did so. A number of legends of Hindu mythology describe nagas with different significant functions. The lord Vishnu sleeps on Ananda shayana which is also called as Shesha or Adi-Shesha. The Naga Vasuki is viewed as the lord of the snakes, who permitted devils and divine beings to utilize her body as a rope to draw out the potion for saving individuals. The snake around the neck of Shiva indicates that he has provided an important status to the snakes (Das *et. al.* 2017: 2).

The Balarama older brother of Krishna finally became the 8th avatar of Vishnu. Since in some instances Balarama is considered a reincarnation of the cosmic serpent, Shesha, upon whom Vishnu slumbers for the duration of the intervals among each global age, it is suiNagas for Balarama to be depicted as a serpent deity. Putative examples display him in a hip-shot posture, his proper arm raised over his head and his left hand holding a cup in front to his chest. The cup is a reminder of Balarama's fondness for sturdy liquor. Occasionally he includes different attributes and wears a floral garland, and his head is now and again tilted towards the left shoulder (Hearn *et. al.* 1991: 95).

According to Heinrich Zimmer the Naga rajas and the predecessors of all the crawling snakes of earth like, Shesha-Naga or Ananta, who symbolizes those things which remained of the planetary waters of the ocean after the earth and the lower and upper underworld realms had been molded. He examined a Vishnu's sculpture where he was sleeping on Ananta's coil, floating over the water as representing the "union of the three manifestations of the solitary,

celestial, eternal, planetary element, the energy that forms and inhabits all forms of life.” As a category nagas are genii or water-spirits, highest ranked beings of the heavens of underwater and protectors of the life-force hidden inside the waters of the earth. Zimmer also suggests that “Buddhist and Hindu portrayals of this type of prominent celestial beings are not so different from one another, either primarily or in detail” for the reason that each the art and the doctrine in essence had been same in India (Zimmer 1946: 61-3). As Shesha Naga is the lord and ancestor of the nagas of India, the Phaja Naga Sisutho who believed as the king of all the spirit being in Isan, northeastern Thailand, is considered being substitute of Shesha and Machulinda. Machulinda was also the king of the serpents and the protector of the Buddha from the rainstorm (Lux 1971: 93-4).

In Hindu notion, at the stop of each world age, after the universe has been destroyed, it returns to its primal state as a cosmic ocean, without form or bounds. Vishnu sleeps there, resting at the floating serpent, Shesha-additionally referred to as Ananta (limitless)-watching for the suiNagas time for the recreation of the universe. When Vishnu wakes from his sleep, there emerges from his navel a lotus, the Brahma, the creator of the new universe sit upon the lotus with four heads (Metropolitan Museum of Art 2012: 95).

The ancient Indian conceptions of the universe are basically comparable. The universe is inside the shape of an egg-Brah-mandia, “the egg of Brahma” and so it is depicted in the painting. Within it sleeps the god, Vishnu, on the thousand-headed serpent, Shesha or Ananta, which lies on the primeval waters. From Vishnu’s navel issues a lotus out of which comes forth the god, Brahma, who creates the world (Bender 1959: 17).

Thus, Vishnu is associated with Shesha Naga and Garuda who were eternal enemies of one another. The Shesha Naga is believed as the representative of the cosmic water, infinite, the cause of all kinds of water, whatever is the animal’s portrayal of him; but still Garuda is his enemy and is the conquering principle. This is a dispute with reason because Vishnu is absolute, which contains all the essence of god. He contains all the contradictions and dichotomies (Zimmer 1946: 76).

A superb example of authochtonization of early Vaishnava Bhakti is Baladeva-Samkarsana as the incarnation of Naga Shesha. Baladeva-Samkarsana was the elder brother of Krishna. Baladeva as the manifestation of Naga implies that a synthetic accord may have been

made between early Vaishnavism and the Naga cult. Shesha gave protection to the kid Krishna when he was being carried over the Jumna River by Vasudeva; Shesha's "avoiding the water by mean of his hoods" is resemblance to Muchilinda shielding Buddha by his hood during a rainstorm. The similarity among Vishnu-Krishna and the nagas is also acknowledged by a passage of Bhagavad Gita "10. 28-29, 37" when Krishna declared himself as "Ananta among the Nagas, and Vasuki among the snakes." Shesha-Naga, a representative of the primordial waters, is one of the principal manifestations of Vishnu. Shesha Naga is regularly seemed to be in a supporting role as a vehicle or sofa of the reclining Vishnu in cosmogonic traditions. Ananta-shesha is also a manifestation of Narayana, who is stated to sleep on Shesha Naga. L. B. Keny put forwards that "possible Dravidian origin of Narayana is the reason of the portrayal of Shesha-shayi being supported by a Naga living on the waters." According to Keny, the word Shesha-shayi means "one slumbering/resting upon Shesha." Accordingly, Vishnu perhaps acquired the formula of Shesha-shayi from Narayana. The coils of the lord Naga, Shesha, which represent the waters of life, are homologous to the sea, each being physical emanations of the divine spirit of Vishnu. The Mahabharata (6. 34. 27) mentions Vishnu as the loud-noised ocean. Therefore, Vishnu as final reality is both the sea and the Naga. The serpent-ocean represents the innovative energy of the primordial truth Vishnu (Jones 2010: 38-9).

Shesha and Garuda seem to have friendly relations. The friendly relationship of Shesha and Garuda can create relationship between Krishna and the Naga king and for the status of the Naga king within the Brahmanical Pantheon. The chief among the Naga gods is portrayed as having been extremely mystical and dedicated to austerity. And it is stated that he has gone under the earth, so as to help it, by wish of Brahma. Lie had clearly left this world before the troublous instances noted inside the Mahabharata; what's more, the legend of his going under the earth may likewise have emerged from his having been buried as an austere (Oldham 1891: 375).

4.3.2 Vasuki

The prominent Nagaraja Vasuki was the brother of Jaratkaru (Hartel 1976: 679). In the mountainous region, adjacent to the Ravi having many places of worship or sthanas dedicated to Indra-Nag. The legend is associated to this region is, that there was a Naga king whose name was substituted by Indra-Naga. He came back to earth after ruling over the gods for a long time and became a Naga again. It seems with a little ambiguity, to be the Nahusha

mentioned in Mahabharata and one among the sons of Kadru and Kashyapa mentioned by epic, Harivansa and Vayu Purana. Indra-Naga is depicted with a crown on his head in human form. He is attended by nagas and equipped with a bow. A few Asuras bosses seem to have assumed celestial tributes. Raji, who have been a Naga and the brother of Nahusha also assumed the divine honors and acknowledged as Indra by the Devas. Vasuki is generally called as Basdev, is stated that was busy in war with Garuda. According to the local myth, once the Vasuki was escaped and took refuge at Kailas Kund after defeated by Garuda. According to the legend Vasuki was saved because of his minister Jibbutbahan/*Junutavahana* who is believed to have sacrificed his own life, but he saved Vasuki. Although, In the meantime, an army was formed, by which Garuda was crushed and slaughtered. On the bravery of Basdev's minister, he ordered that Junutavahana should also be revered along him in the same temple. Thus, the image of Junuvahana was kept together with his master Basdev. The legend is depicted in the manner which shows the event happened as a conflict between the rival ethnic groups rather than supernatural or symbolic clash. The Hindu communities of Kund and surrounding regions still commemorate the escape of the Basdev at Kund through a great festival every year in September. The Kailas Kund is a mountain lake situated between Ravi and Chenab rivers and thirteen thousand feet high from the sea level. The lake is believed as a sacred place where only the people of the two upper casts are allowed and the other people can only see it from a specific distance. The continuation of this festival suggests that the event might have been happened in real (Oldham 1891: 364-5).

The vast region which is inhabited by nagas witnessed their imprints from which we can guess about their number and strength in India of that time. From Kashmir towards south up to Narbada or even beyond, the names of Vasuki or Basak Nag and Takshaka were very popular. Naga rajas dominated all through the Himalaya in addition to the most part of Northern and Central India, the Indus valley, and the region adjacent to the mouth of that river. Apart from this, colonies have been mounted from Patala to the coasts of India, in Ceylon, and possibly even beyond them. The symbolic tales of the epics, Puranas and the early Buddhist traditions verify the far-reaching impact of the Naga people. The Astika Parva (18. 79) describing Vasuki Naga as the churner of the ocean undoubtedly suggests the trade carried on by Vasuki or his subjects with the far-flung countries. The early link between Vishnu and nagas indicates through the portrayal of Vishnu reposing over the Naga. The mythical subterranean Patala of the Puranas was clearly

the Indus valley; where numerous remains at different places are still present that must belong to different Rajas. Patala was one among the cities belonged to Asuras and considered as the oldest settlement of the solar race, the capital city of the Naga chiefs, and the port wherein Nearchus shipped his army to Babylonia. According to local traditions the present-day Multan was called Hiranyapura, the city of Chief Asura HiranYakshinipu and the city which has the scene of man-lion avatar (Usha *n.d.*: 367-8).

The Naga-gods Takshaka, Vasuki, Shesha and others, were deified rajas of the humans and the Naga became their ethnic symbol. As they are mentioned in Mahabharata as the sons of Kashyapa and Kadru and Shesha is told as the first born and then Vasuki, therefore, Shesha Naga seems to have been elder than the others. It is further confirmed by Mahabharata which testifies the arrival of gods to the bank of Saraswati who announced there the great Naga Vasuki as the raja of all the snakes (Oldham 1891: 375-6).

4.3.3. Elapatra

Elapatra, A 1000 headed Naga; living with the sun for a part of the year; in the month of *nabha*/ a month sacred to Indra. A discussion has been started regarding the individual qualities and the gradual evolution of such Naga deities as Elapatra and Chakravaka of the Bharhut period (Gupta 1939: 229). The name Elapatra is well-known in this literature and a relief of 1st century A.D from Gandhara representing Buddha and Elapatra, now depicted in Prince of Wales Museum Mumbai (Wojtilla 1975: 387).

Xuanzang informs us about the worship of Elapatra that the people of Takshasila used to visit Elapatra's shrine for worship when they desired the rain. And still in Panjab, the appeasing of the Naga is well known, before any other deity when fine weather or rain is desired (Oldham 1891: 376).

This dating for the prevalence of the serpent worship in ancient Kalinga is perhaps indicated also by the Mahavastu, composed in 1st century B.C. or A.D. It refers to the four great treasures as: Sankha at Benares, Padma at Mithila, Pingala in Kalinga and Elapatra in Takshasila. These names are, in fact, those of the great serpent kings of the four quarters (Das 1965: 43).

Some old Brahmi inscriptions from Bharhut mention about two Naga kings, namely, Elapatra and Cakravaka. If we go through the Buddhist literature then it can be seen that these writings have mentioned about Naga Elapatra as the popular Naga of Takshasila, where the great serpent-sacrifice of the Kuru king Janamejaya is believed to have been taken place to take revenge from Naga Takshaka for his father, king Parikshit's death (Borah 2017: 200).

4.3.4 Chakravaka

According to Mahabharata seven hunters and ten deer of the hill Kalinjala, a goose of the lake Manasasara, a Chakravaka of Sharadvipa were born as *Brahmans* in Kurukshetra and became very learned of the *Vedas* (Narasu 1993: 79).

4.3.5 Dadhikarṇa

We know from epigraphic evidences that Naga worship, at least of Nagendra Dadhikarna, was current in the age of Kanishka (Gupta 1939: 228). The Jamalpur mound yielded a profusion of Buddhist remains and was the site of a major vihara (monastery) established by the Kushana king Huvishka in AD 125. An inscription on a stone slab discovered here refers to its installation in the place sacred to Dadhikarna, lord of the nagas, by the Chandaka brothers, chief among whom was Nandibala, the sons of the actors or dancers of Mathura. The date on the inscription, tentatively read as the year 26 of the Kanishka era (AD 104), suggests that a Naga shrine existed at this place before the setting up of the Buddhist vihara. An inscription on a pillar base, presumed to have belonged to the Buddhist vihara, which records that this was Devila, a servant of the shrine of Dadhikarna. The fact that the donative inscription of the Dadhikarna shrine and Buddhist donative records here and elsewhere describe their aim in similar terms - the promotion of the welfare and happiness of all sentient beings - indicates an element of shared religious vocabulary and sentiment. Many other images and inscriptions indicate that the Naga cult enjoyed considerable patronage in the Mathura region in the early centuries AD (Luders 1961: 38, No. 12; 126-7, No. 95; 148-9, No. 102; 164, No. 124; 208-9, No. 182). The inscribed base of a statuette of a standing Naga figure was reportedly found on the Bhuteshwar mound. The pedestal of a headless Naga statuette, inscribed with the name "Dadhikarna" was recovered from the Yamuna (Singh 2004: 385-6).

Naga worship being greatly prevalent, and nagas being particularly associated with reservoirs of water, there are inscriptions giving their names and the dedication of shrines to them. A small image in the Mathura Museum bears the name Dadhikarna. The inscription is in Kushana Brahmi and reads Dadhikarna and points to very early attention paid to the Naga deities in this area. An inscription preserved in the Lucknow Museum mentions a temple of Dadhikarna Naga that existed at the site of Huvishka's monastery at Jamalpur and this sculpture of Naga with the name Dhadikarna preserved in the Mathura Museum shows the wide popularity of the nagas (Sivaramamurti 1957: 35-6).

4.3.6 Bhumi Naga

An epigraph of a Naga flanked by two Nagini is found from the site of Ral Bhandar which is situated 13 Km to the north-west of Mathura whose pedestal depicts water tank and garden might have been made for the venerated Bhumi-Naga. The engraved pedestal from Girdharpur Tila seems to be the record of the gift of a cloak maker where a Nagini and a male figure holding spear in his left hand and his right hand is raised in abhaya-mudra are depicted. Another stone slab from Mathura, now in British Museum possibly has the depiction of Naga and Nagini records the building up of a small temple in this village (Singh 2004: 386-7).

4.3.7 Manasa Nagini

Manasa, the goddess of serpents, is one of the most famous deities in Eastern India. She has a twin element as the life taking and life-giving goddess, sporting poison in a single eye and the nectar of immortality inside the different parts of the body. Worshipped with the aid of Hindus and Muslims alike she is understood to be very watchful (jagroto) - sensitive to the needs of her devotees however equally alert to insults and slights to her honour and standing as a goddess. She has been mentioned for the first time in Mahabharata as the mother of Astika, saviour of the nagas (serpents), who have been threatened with extinction by King Janamajaya's serpent sacrifice after which in greater detail in numerous Puranas. Manasa testimonies in the overall performance traditions of rural Bengal but are sourced from the mangala kavyas. These texts, composed largely within the 17th and 18th centuries, were primarily based on folk myths. They present Manasa's tale in methods that diverge extensively from the Sanskrit Puranas. In these testimonies she is Shiva's illegitimate daughter, born from his semen which fell on a leaf

while he was meditating at the banks of a lotus pool. The semen flowed down the stem of a plant and reached Patala wherein Manasa was born and taken up by using the serpent mother Kadru and granted sovereignty over them. Desirous of receiving worship on this planet (*martya loka*) she is going again to the lotus pond and persuades Shiva to take her with him to his abode on Mount Kailash. Shiva reluctantly concurs to take her there hidden in a flower basket. Durga reveals her in the basket and in a jealous rage blinds Manasa in a single eye. Manasa turns her poisoned eye on Durga, and the latter dies. It is said that Manasa had of poison in her blind eye, as a result appellate, Vishahari. But just as she can cause dying with an single glance, she can also revive the only she has troubled and is persuaded to bring Durga returned to life. She is married to the sage Jaratkaru and deserted by way of him whilst she is still pregnant for breaking a promise by no means to disobey him. She comes to a decision to establish her cult and sets off for *martya loka* followed by way of her sister Neta, the celestial washerwoman, who was born from the sweat of Shiva's brow (Chatterji 2014: 34).

In the rainy season, Manasa is worshiped both by Hindus and other tribes in western Assam. A part of the ritual is the recitation of a legend describing how a specific dealer stood dead against the reverence of the goddess, how through trick and fraud she murdered off the entirety of his children, how his most youthful daughter-in-law had restored her husband to life, and how in a result of compromise, the trader consented to offer veneration to the goddess with his left hand while his right hand being held reserved for the worship of Mahadeva who was his chief deity of worship (Goswami 1967: 21).

Manasa become conceived from the exquisite Lord Shiva's passion- But whilst she turned into born Shiva became no longer gift - he had forgotten that his seed had born fruit (Chatterji 2014: 1). The word Manasa in the sense of a deity is absent inside the early Sanskrit text. The Ashtadhyayi of Panini and even the lexicon of Amara did now not point out the name of Manasa. Some students believe that Sanskrit *manas* or thoughts; so inside the phrase *manasa* the suffix of instrumental has been added to give the feel of "by mind." According to the later lexicographers - by way of *manasa* is meant the goddess who has been created "via thoughts" or contemplation with the aid of Kashyapa. Sukumar Sen Vipradasa's *Manasa Vijaya*, Asiatic Society, Introduction, P. XXX considers that "Mahamanas as an epithet of the triumphant gods takes place within the Rv. 10.103. Nine Manasa as the sound of a celestial nymph is not always

unknown in Sanskrit literature. The sound is manifestly connected with manas “mind” and it does not exclude other connotations of the verb “think.” H. Bhattacharya *Hinduder Devadevi: Udbhava O Krama-Vikasa*, vol. III, Calcutta, 1980: 152, says that the expression *Atisprdhah samaryata Manasa Suryahkavih’ Rig. 5. 44. 7)* Shows the prevalence of the call Manasa (here represented as the spouse of Surya or as the ray of Surya). Besides some stray references in the former religious scriptures there are collection of literary works of the Mangala-kavyas in Bengali literature wherein Manasa-Mangala is very crucial and exhaustive one, depicting the worship and her positive potentiality (Jash. 1986: 169).

This is not to disclaim that crop-goddesses too have or may have emerge as consorts of Dharma (or Shiva after which Dharma) in his characteristic as crop-deity (which he additionally appears to have) after which been diagnosed with Manasa because of their hyperlinks with Dharma. This might additionally explain certain tree-rites linked with Dharma and Manasa. The parallels Mitra attracts from different cultures are thrilling, however can show most effective that positive rites concerning timber are general everywhere. However, we must no longer overlook that positive timber along with Euphorbia/ spurges and the screw-pine play a vital role in Manasa’s personal cult too. Dharma is likewise the consort of different goddesses, which fits in nicely with his composite person and cannot be merely an instantaneous result of his having end up Manasa’s consort, even though it is very much true that Manasa herself has been diagnosed with a few goddesses particularly Durga and Sarasvati, and this will have caused the status quo of secondary relationships. Be that as it may, chief among the different goddesses related to Dharma are Shashthi (goddess of youngsters and childbirth) and Shitala (goddess of epidemics, particularly smallpox) both non-Vedic, however, are not always non-Aryan. Mitra opines that shishthi is a goddess of fertility, therefore not only of childbirth, but also of crops. That in lots of rites of fertility and childbirth, in Rearing cows and their merchandise (even the pinnacle of a useless cow) play a tremendous element, and that in a number of these rites Shashthi too figures, is, however, for him a sure sign of the continuation of the ancient “Indo-Egyptian lifestyle” (Das 1983: 690).

The cult as usual in Bengal is relatively different in individual from what it is in the other parts of Northern India. Among the not unusual run of human beings each in Bengal and in the south the cult has retained its primitive man or woman to a very tremendous quantity. Roughly

talking, in Northern India the Photograph of a serpent considered male in character which called Nagaraja or the king of the snakes is held in worship, and within the south it is for the residing snakes to whom worship is regularly offered. Instead of the “king of the serpents” and the residing snakes, an anthropomorphic serpent goddess referred to as Manasa is worshiped in Bengal. A one-of-a-kind cult known as the Manasa-cult has advanced in this part of the country and is quite famous amongst all sections of the Hindus, mainly most of the lower classes in a few regions. The rites as observed in reference to the worship of the serpent-goddess Manasa vary broadly exclusive in districts of Bengal, but a cautious assessment of those suggests that they have got originated from a not unusual supply. The elements of distinction which have advanced within the intervening time are not anything but local factors and as such have no intrinsic relationship with the essential factors (Bhattacharyya 1965: 1).

Throughout Bengal, the vicinity of the district of Birbhum in West Bengal has certainly the large following of the serpent-deity, Manasa. Any informal traveler to the rural regions of this district will surely consider me in this factor. Even, at the present time the serpent-worship in Birbhum is a completely nicely advanced and residing cult. Almost in each village of this district a visitor will encounter one or extra serpent shrines. These are but low dust-walled straw huts located in the house-quadrangles of a number of the low-class Hindus (Usha *n.d.*: 2).

Some small shrines were built-up permanently from bricks at specific temples by the generous devotees. These shrines were sometimes also depicted with permanent figures made of stones or metals. At Khidderpore close to Calcutta, inside a shrine there’s a big Photograph of the deity made from brass which ought to have attracted the attention of many passers-by. Daily worship of the goddess is held at this vicinity throughout the year. In some areas of east Bengal there are permanent temples for the worship of Naga goddess. The two places which have the permanent temples for the worship of nagas are well known; the one situated in Vikrampur, Deccan, is called Manasa-Bari or the house of Manasa and the other is situated in suchakradandi, Chittagong, is known as Jalkumari-Bari or the house of Jalkumari (Bhattacharyya 1965: 5).

A very rich folks-literature flourished in Bengal about the neighborhood legends of the serpent-goddess Manasa, possibly as early as the 13th century A.D. One of those legends, written in the form of narrative poetry, gained the widest popularity of all of the instructions of folk-literature in Bengal, at some stage is now not this the best kingdom but additionally the adjacent

countries of Bihar and Assam. The same theme of poetry which was descendant from generation to generations for centuries is adopted by numerous poets till date. The theme was taken from the folk story of merchant Chand and Behula. The Chand and Behula was not the single folk story which sings the magnificence of Manasa deity. There is another story which is chanted during the ritualistic worship of Manasa held by Bengali girls throughout the months of rain. Apart from the above-mentioned stories there are numerous Naga-tales of a non-spiritual nature inside the folks-literature of Bengal (Usha *n.d.*: 10).

4.3.8 Kadru Nagini

In ancient Egypt he was Son of the Earth; and in India, too, it was Kadru, the Tawny One, personification of the earth, who gave birth to the thousand great nagas. Here his earliest appearance in art is on a seal found at Mohenjo-daro (ca.2500-ca.1500 B.C.), where two cobras with spread hoods rear protectively above devotees kneeling on either side of a figure seated in yogi fashion (Marcus 1965: 186).

The word Naga (serpent) comes from Indian mythology. Nagas are sometimes depicted as half-human, half-serpent. Sometimes wearing a crown, they live under the earth where they are the guardians of wealth and fertility (Stutley *et. al.* 1984, 198-99). According to an Indian myth (Zimmer. 1955: 52), a tortoise-man had two wives, Vinata (heaven) and Kadru (earth), whom he impregnated. Both laid eggs, Kadru many and Vinata three. Out of Kadru's eggs hatched a great number and variety of snakes, while Vinata failed to brood two of hers to term; from the last one issued the golden-feathered Garuda (mythical eagle). The two mothers, however, had fallen into enmity, a relationship their offspring continue into the present. In the Indian myth, then, the Garuda and the snakes are children of one father. In a Javanese version of the tale (Bergema 1938: 494-95) Wirata (Vinati) and Kadru are sisters, making their offspring matrilateral parallel cousins, while in the Malay version (Winstedt 1926: 418) they in addition have the same father, the sun, making them patrilateral siblings as well (Wessing 2006: 208).

Since very remote past it is believed that the snake is the son of earth. Kadru, the mother of the Naga race is believed to be a personification of earth in our epic literature. In all Indian mythology, the nagas are portrayed as the lords of the earth and its hidden treasure in Patala. It is a common observance in Orissa that the Gunis (charm masters) trying to unearth

suspected hidden treasure propitiates the Nagadevatas. A tribe knew as Jhara worship nagas as their guardian of wealth. Many store houses in Orissa are seen with the carving of Naga images (Pradhan 2001: 153).

Catalogue:

Chapter wise representation of the Semi-Divine Beings of Hindu Origin in the Buddhist Sculptures of Gandhara.

All the sculptures in the catalogue are from different sites of Gandhara region and now displayed in various museums and reserve collections around the globe.

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Chapter 5 Depiction of yaksha and Yakshini in Buddhist Art of Gandhara



Figure 1. Interpretation of Dream of Maya (Photo by researcher, From Lahore Museum).

Description:

The broken panel is showing the interpretation Maya's dream and Amorino yaksha. To the right in a framing is a naked amorino is standing under tree branches on a pot base with averted rim. He has chignon and genitals shown. He holds a large branch of palm in his left hand and something in right hand. The framing is provided as scene separator, but the right scene is missing. In the next scene the royal couple is sitting in the center and listening to the *Brahman*, who is sitting to the left and interpreting the dream.



Figure 2. Dream of Maya (After Zwalf: 1996: Fig. No. 141).

Description:

The broken Stupa drum panel is showing the Dream of Maya. Maya is depicted laid on her left side, her head is laid on pillows and her left hand is beneath her head on the pillows. Her right hand is resting on the mattress. She has wreath headdress, earrings, neckband and bracelets, and a *Paridhana* covers her legs. An elephant is shown above her with trunk hangs slightly downwards. Outside the female guard (yavani) holding a spear in her left hand while her right is raised in admiration. Above her is a half-length, turbaned celestial in *uttariya*.

On each side is a framed and fleshy yaksha standing on a pot base with averted rims. Both of them are naked, their genitals are visible, and their legs are crossed at the ankles. To the right of the panel is depicted with his left raised arm to hold foliage while his right hand is resting on his thigh. The left one is also with raised left hand while his right hand is raised near his shoulder with open palm.

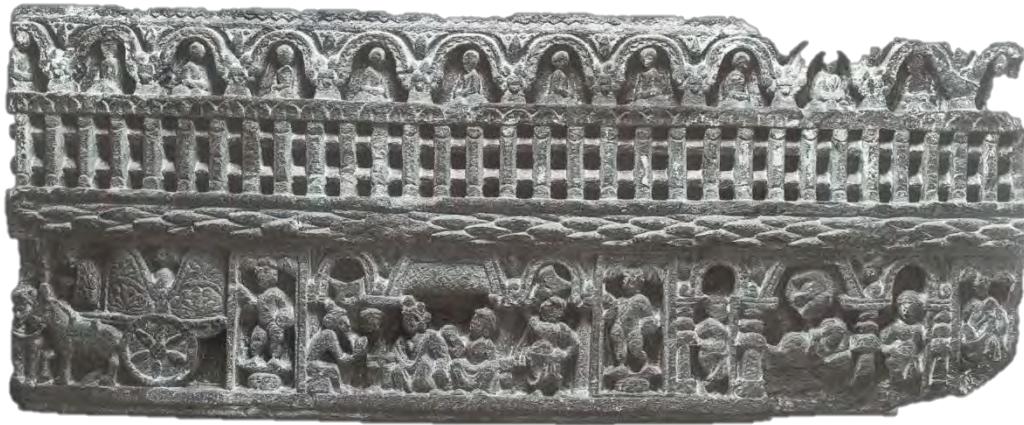


Figure 3. Dream of Maya, the Interpretation of the Dream, and Departure from Kapilavastu (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 143).

Description:

The Stupa drum panel showing three scenes; Dream of Maya, the Interpretation of the Dream, and the Departure from Kapilavastu. The right scene showing Maya under trapezoidal roof, lies on a couch which is damaged and a haloed elephant above her is also there. Maya is flanked by two female guards under arch.

The next scene is of the interpretation of dream where Siddhodana and Maya are sitting in front of bearded ascetic with chignon and right hand extended towards them. Both are looking at ascetic. Between Siddhodana and the ascetic a head is visible may be of a guard as there is another female guard behind Yashodra under an arch with waving crescentic fans.

The last scene is presumably showing Maya setting out for the Lumbini Garden. A chariot is shown with two horses to the left, a woman sits between the two high lobes of its side, and she wears a wreath headdress. A guard in front with a spear and patterned shield is also there.

There are three framed amorini or yakshas standing on pot bases and under foliage. The one to the right wears a robe and taking flowers apparently from a bag formed in his robe. His legs are damaged beneath the knees. The central Amorini is naked and facing to his right; stands with his left leg bend a little which makes his feet apart while his knees are closed with each other. His right is raised and touching the boarder of the frame near his shoulder while his left

hand holds something near his hip. The third is same as the second one with turned a little more and standing with no bent in his legs and knee knocking.

Above the scenes is an ovolo with garland enrichment under a *vedika* register with a lotus-petal. There nine arches each contain a seated monk.



Figure 4. The Tournament (khan, et.al. 2005: Fig. No. 10).

Description:

The broken, defaced, and exfoliated stupa drum panel is depicting the Tournament. The panel is divided in to two horizontal registers. The lower register has two episodes of the tournament.

A damaged figure may be of Yakshini, is depicted at the extreme right of the panel with crossed legs. The traces of her right raised hand can be seen. To her right the wrestling scene of Siddhartha and Devadatta, both grasping to each other from the waists with bent bodies, next are profiles of standing figures, watching the wrestling.

The next scene is of Devadatta's killing of elephant through his fist. Two other figures are watching the scene. In the upper register is a long balustrade with figures standing behind and watching the tournament. The figures are much defaced and only dim profiles of heads and busts are visible.



Figure 5. Renouncing Scene of Siddhartha (Photo by researcher from Taxila Museum).

Description:

The chipped and broken trapezoidal panels depicts renouncing scene of the Bodhisattva Siddhartha. Bodhisattva is depicted on his horse emerging from the front. A yaksha setting with his right knee and the left foot on the ground is lifting the horse in air from hooves. The yaksha holds the hoops of the horse in his both hands above the ground in the air.

Siddhartha is depicted with an elaborate turban with high fantail crest, ear pendants, necklace and bracelets. He is shown with long moustache and clean shave. Chandaka is to the left of the Buddha with holding umbrella over the head of Siddhartha. Another figure is standing in *Anjali mudra* behind the Ananda. In the background two more figures are depicted, the one near the corner is in *Anjali mudra* while the other is city guard holding spear in his raised right hand.

To the right of the Buddhisattva Siddhartha, the evil Mara is standing clad in Kushana costume tries to stop Siddhartha. Behind Mara a figure is standing in *Anjali mudra*. Above them

at the corner a figure is holding flywhisk. Vajrapani is depicted near the right shoulder of the Buddha, holding his Vajra in his hand.



Figure 6. The Great Departure of Buddha (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 177).

Description:

The broken stupa drum panel showing the great departure and chaitya arch frieze. The right scene is missing only a standing female figure is shown with wreath headdress and hair

loop. She is clad in a drapery and holds a textile with both hands near her abdomen. In the next scene the Bodhisattva on horseback is shown, emerges from an oblique doorway. He wears a crested turban and an *uttariya* and holding the reins of the horse. A turbaned figure is visible above the head of the horse. Another turbaned figure in *uttariya* is shown standing in front of the horse with lower body missing.

The horse is passing with the hands of two yakshas around their hooves. Only bust are shown of these yaksha.

Here the framed Corinthian column is used as scene separator with the usual base mouldings and above, between fillets, is an ovolo with pointed-leaf pattern.

The upper register has two arches between three persepolitan columns with capitals; contains two standing amorini. The amorini are standing with holding something in their right arms while their right hands are also resting on it.



Figure 7. The Great Departure of Buddha (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 178).

Description:

The Stupa drum panel is also showing the Great Departure. Here the oblique doorway is shown incomplete and lacks the inner jamb. An umbrella is shown in the doorway behind the horse. The head of the Boddhisattva is missing, wearing trousers, and a cloak from the shoulder, holds the horse's reins. An armored man standing with crested turban and spear in his stretched right hand. Behind him a female figure is shown with joined hands.

A kneeling yaksha holds the outer foreleg in his left hand over his shoulder the other leg is not visible; it may also be supported by the yaksha too.

At the left side is a framed Corinthian column with a high abacus and the usual base mouldings.



Figure 8. Exchange of Clothes (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 180).

Description:

Broken Panel with parts of two scenes; the right one is missing only a figure is visible and second showing Exchange of Clothes. The figure of the right scene wears a sleeved and knee-length garments, collar and earrings. The next scene is showing presumably the

Bodhisattva with head missing, in *Paridhana* and neckline, stands with holding the *uttariya* looped in both hands near his shoulders. Beside him Vajrapani stands with Vajra in his left. Beside Vajrapani and another turbaned figure clad in *uttariya* holds a flower-like thing in his left hand. Two heads are visible behind them where the one is with head missing while there is with chignon and earrings.

Between these two scenes a framed, plump and naked amorino/ yaksha is standing on a pot with broad averted rim, facing toward the second scene. He stands with joined hands, touching the boarder of the frame; he has chignon and bracelet, chignon.



Figure 9. Farewell of Buddha by Kantaka. (Photo by researcher, From Taxila Museum).

Description:

The broken and chipped Relief is showing the farewell of Karnataka. On the left Bodhisattva handing over the jewelry and turban to the Chandaka another figure stands on the extreme left. All figures are much defaced and chipped, details of the dresses and other features are not clearly visible. His favorite horse Kanthaka is kneeling and licking the feet of his master. On the right side is a yaksha standing cross legged, on an encased base of a pot with left hand

holds branch of a palm tree. The yaksha is clad in *uttariya* and *Paridhana* but in much defaced condition and all features are not clearly visible.



Figure 10. Hymn of Naga Kalika (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 183).

Description:

The panel showing two scenes, the lower and incomplete scene is depicted with the hymn of the Naga Kalika.

In the lower scene Bodhisattva is shown standing, wears the monastic robe over both shoulders with two undergarments. His right hand is in *abhaya*. Naga Kalika and his consort Suvarnaprabhasa are shown in standing with joined hands and looking at Bodhisattva. The crested turbaned Kalika is clad in *uttariya* and *Paridhana*, with one thick robe end swinging forward and a five-headed serpent rising above his head.

Suvarnaprabhasa wears a wreath headdress, a garment, a *Paridhana* round it and a scarf, and above her head a broken, probably single-headed serpent indicates her nature. Behind Kalika's arms rise two lotuses on separate stalks and below him, incomplete, is the blown-petal ornament on the side of the nagas' pool from which the flowers may be supposed to rise. Vajrapani is standing with his Vajra in left hand view from the backside. He is naked to the waist. Beside the Vajrapani there are two figures which are damaged badly. Above the Vajrapani, two barely half-length, turbaned deities are visible. On both sides the lost shafts of the pilasters probably also once had worshipping amorini, as in the upper scene.



Figure 11. Incomplete scene of hymn of the Naga Kalika (Photo by researcher, From Taxila Museum).

Description:

The incomplete paneled pilaster is depicted with a Yakshini figure under a stylized palm tree, framed in a bead-and-reel molding. She is standing on her right foot and the left leg is bent at the knee and her left toe is touching the ground behind her right foot. She grasps the palm leaf with her raised left hand while she holds her shawl in right hand near her hip. She wears *dhoti* and a scarp draped around the shoulders and hanging free at the sides. Her upper body is nude up to waist. She only wears a necklace. The water pot on three steps on which she stands is the normal base for yakshinis and yakshas portrayed under a palm tree.

To right of the framed yakshini, only the left end of another panel is visible which depicts the hymn of the Naga Kalika and his wife. Here only the Nagini is preserved while the Naga and the right scene is missing. The Nagini wears *uttariya* and *Paridhana* and emerging from the water tank. She has Naga-hood behind her head, and she has ear pendants.



Figure 12. Subjugation of Mara and incomplete scene (Photo by Researcher from Taxila Museum).

Description:

The large broken stupa drum panel is depicting two scenes the right one is of the subjugation of Mara while the left one is broken having only four figures. At the center of the right scene a haloed Buddha is seated on a grass strewn throne with right hand on the knee while

the left holds his drapery. He is clad in a robe which covers his both shoulders, hair is combed backward with *Ushnisha* tied with a cord. His throne is surrounded by the Mara's army with terrible faces, bearded, bulging eyes and long hair but standing in peaceful poses. A figure is prostrated in front of the throne. Mara is depicted on the right side of the throne, clad in warrior dress with a sword in his left hand wearing elaborate turban and necklaces. He seems terrified and looking at the Buddha.

A rectangular frame is provided with a Yakshini as scene separator. The Yakshini is standing with crossed legs under arboreal canopy. Her right hand is resting on her hip while the left is on knee. She wears a headdress with turned head towards his right.

The left broken panel is depicted with four haloed figures in *Anjali mudra* with elaborate turbans. The lower side of the panel is plain while the upper acanthus leaves.



Figure 13. Attack of Mara (Photo by researcher, From Peshawar Museum).

Description:

The panel depicts the haloed Bodhisattva Siddhartha in *abhaya mudra*, seated on a low throne under an arboreal canopy. He wears drapery which covers his entire body except for his hands. He has damaged face with wavy hair which rose into *Ushnisha*. To the left of the

boddhissattva, Mara is standing along with his daughter behind her. Mara wears an ornamented headdress and twisted necklace. His daughter wears a headdress and a long dress with a waist belt. To the right of the Siddhartha her two daughters are standing. One is in a long dress having a waist belt while the other wears a transparent upper garment and *dhoti* bejeweled with a necklace and in dancing pose.

The two Corinthian pilasters at each side of the panel are depicted with a yaksha and Yakshini. At the right pilaster there is a naked figure of yaksha with defaced head, in *Anjali mudra*, standing on stepped pedestal with right leg bent slightly. The left pilaster is depicted with a Yakshini, standing on a pedestal with a decorated headdress. Her upper body is bare while wears a *dhoti* as lower garment having wavy folds. His right hand is resting on his hip and holds probably thunderbolt in his left raised hand, turned slightly to his left towards the main scene. To the right end of this broken panel a defaced figure is shown in standing, looking towards his left, holding a bunch of flowers in his raised right hand while holds the hem of his drapery in left hand.



Figure 14. Buddha and Kashyapa (Photo by researcher, From Peshawar Museum).

Description:

The broken small frieze depicts with Buddha and Kashyapa on the left scene. Buddha holds snake in bowl. To the extreme right a Yakshini is depicted with head and left arm missing, standing cross legged in *tribanga* pose. She holds the palm tree branch in her right hand with shawl visible hanging down from her right arm, nude upper body, wears *dhoti* as lower garment. She is under rectangular frame. Her weight is on her left leg where her hip is touching the left border of the frame.



Figure 15. Invitation of Shri Gupta to Buddha for a meal. (Photo by scholar from peshawar museum).

Description

The rectangular relief is depicted with two scenes. The left scene is incomplete with four figures. There are two ladies standing, clad in local dresses and holds something in their left hands. Above them two more figures are depicted. All these four figures are turned slightly to their right side as they are looking at something.

The second scene depicts the haloed standing Buddha in *abhaya mudra* walking on inverted lotuses along with Vajrapani and a monk behind him. Buddha is clad in loose garment which covers his both shoulders. With his left hand he holds the sanghati. He has an oval-shaped face, and his hair is combed backward in a wavy style with a raised *Ushnisha*. Vajrapani holds his robe in his left hand and turn towards the Buddha while the right hand is broken which almost holds the Vajra. The monk behind the Vajrapani holds a bowl in his left hand. Another head is visible above the monk at the corner.

To the right of the Buddha, the kneeling Shrigupta with hands broken is probably in *namashkara mudhra*. He wears pendants and has elongated mustached face. Behind him another turbaned figure is standing in *namashkara mudra*.

Between the heads of shrigupta and the other figure a head of a yaksha is visible under the door cornice. Above the cornice there are three more figures are shown.

Two Corinthian pilasters are provided one at the right and the other separating the two scenes. The left pilaster has a defaced yaksha in *Anjali mudra*, standing on a lotus pedestal. The second pilaster also has a figure on a square base. The cornice above the pilasters and the upper border has a denticulate design.



Figure 16. Buddha in Indrashala cave (Photo by researcher, From Peshawar Museum).

Description:

The panel shows Buddha in Indrashala cave of Magadha in *dhyana mudra*. This cave is located in a rocky mountainous area suiNagas for meditation. Animals are depicted around the cave. Buddha is seated on a rocky throne, clad in monastic robe of Gandharan fashion. His hair is combed backward with low *Ushnisha* at the top. To the right of the Buddha a deva is visible in *Anjali mudra* with halo behind his head.

To the right of the deva, Gandharva Panchasika is depicted in standing with halo behind his head. Gandharva Panchasika is the messenger of Indra. His ornament consists of necklace and a beaded amulet string that crosses over his chest and left arm. He wears *dhoti* with wavy folds tied at the waist. His upper body is nude. Panchasika holds a harp in his hand and is about to play - an indication of the impending arrival of the god Indra.

The Indra with Halo behind his head is standing in *namashkara mudra* behind the gandharav to the extreme left of the scene. His ornaments consist of ear pendants, necklace and bracelets. He wears drapery which covers his left shoulder while his right shoulder is bare, and *dhoti* is also visible under the drapery.

An Indo-Corinthian pilaster is carved at the extreme right of the panel. A defaced yaksha is shown standing on large, inverted lotus flower on the shaft of this pilaster. The yaksha is facing toward his left and holds something in his left hand while his right hand is resting on his hip.



Figure 17. Submission of Naga Apalal (Photo by researcher, From Taxila Museum).

Description:

This defaced panel depicts the submission of Naga Apalala. The right of the panel with the Corinthian pilaster, a youthful Vajrapani is standing with Vajra his left hand. To the right of Vajrapani, the haloed Buddha is standing in *abhaya mudra* and holds the edge of his drapery in his left hand. To the right of the Buddha the kneeling figure of the Naga king and his wife with two other females with Naga hoods are depicted, all in *Anjali mudra*. Behind the queen are two other naginis with hoods.

Above the naginis on rocky formation a yaksha is visible with vajra in right hand is smiting the mountain to make the earth tremble and terrify the Nagaraja. The yaksha is clad in lion cloth,

standing with a left leg bent and resting on a rock while his right leg is on the ground below. The yaksha is shown with a muscular body. Above the Buddha five other figures are also depicted in attacking position.



Figure 18. Submission of Naga Apalala and incomplete scene of Offering of Dust (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 216).

Description:

The Stupa drum panel is depicted with two scenes, the right one is incomplete while the second one showing the Submission of Apalala.

The incomplete scene showing two boys standing under a dome/three rows of acanthus with facing to their left, the one to the right is badly damaged. This may be the remaining part of an Offering of Dust.

In the complete scene, the haloed Buddha is standing frontal in *abhaya mudra* while he holds his robe with his left hand. Beside him is Vajrapani standing with one hand on hip, the other holding the top of the vajra as it rests on the thick twisted *uttariya* twisting round his middle and *Paridhana*. A tree is shown behind him with a branch bent to the ground.

Three half-length figures are emerging from a surface/water. The first and tallest among them is Apalala shown with joined hands. He wears a necklace and a turban. A serpent hood is shown

behind his head whose underside is marked with sloping grooves and rise from the ground-line. Beside Apalala is his wife who is shorter in comparison to him and also under a similar serpent hood. A male figure is shown naked, with raised hand touching his head.

A wall of conventional mountainous terrain is shown with rounded projections above them. Above the terrain another Vajrapani is emerging with a stretched arm holding a Vajra. At the left corner a tree is shown which frame the scene.

A framed amorino/ yaksha is standing cross-legged at the knees as a scene separator. The amorino is naked with genital indicated. His right hand is resting on his hip while grasping the branch of the tree with his left hand near the head. A saw-tooth cornice runs above and the framing fillet below is plain.



Figure 19. Conversion of Naga-Apalala (Marshall 1960: 69).

Description:

The panel is depicting the submission of Naga Apalala. The haloed Buddha with curly hair and *Ushnisha* is standing. His right hand is raised while hold the hem of his drapery with his left hand. Buddha is clad in monastic robe which covers his entire body from neck to legs. Vajrapani

is standing behind the Buddha holding Vajra in his left hand and wear the monastic robe like his master which covers his entire body. Above the Vajrapani there is another monk visible in background. The forehead of Vajrapani has a curious mark which appears to be the third eye, suggesting an Indian origin.

To the right of the Buddha in foreground the Naga Apalala and his wife are depicted, emerging from the water tank. The water tank is decorated with arboreal design. The Naga and Nagini shown in *Anjali mudra*, wears ear pendants and necklace. Serpent hoods are visible behind their heads. Above them is a dwarf-like yaksha is depicted with thunderbolt in his right hand, smiting the mountains to terrify the Naga Apalala by trembling the earth.

This Vajrapani beside the Buddha is quite distinct from the yaksha engaged in striking the mountain. The fact that the latter has a Vajra or thunderbolt was an attribute of Indra, as, from time immemorial, it had been of the Greek Zeus. But, as the weapon par excellence of irresistible force, it was put into the hands of other deities or semidivine beings, of Athena and Poseidon, for example, among the Greeks; of the vajrapani and of this earth-shaking yaksha among the Buddhist.



Figure 20. Conversion of yaksha Atavika by Buddha. (Photo by researcher from Peshawar Museum).

Description:

The broken Panel is showing Buddha converting a barbarian yaksha Atavika to Buddhism. At the center the haloed Buddha in monastic robe is seated in *abhaya* on a seat with three flowers under pointed arch. The bearded yaksha Atavika is standing to the right facing towards the Buddha with a child in his lap. He wears a short trouser with upper garment and his necklace has a tree lead at the center. At the left another bearded figure is standing with right raised hand facing towards the Buddha. The arch, upper and lower cornices have saw-tooth enrichments. At the right is tapering pilaster with Corinthian capital.



Figure 21. Sculpture of yaksha Panchika (Photo by researcher from Peshawar Museum).

Description:

This sculpture depicts a figure of bejeweled Panchika seated on a couch with an elaborate headdress, looking forward. His figure is positioned in a similar stance to those sculptures in

which Panchika is accompanied by Harithi. In this case, it appears that the apparent isolation of Panchika is due to the fact that the right portion is missing. Panchika's left arm is broken at shoulder level, while his right hand is placed on his thigh. The lower garment is transparent, with a sling or belt-shaped element crossing over the chest and left shoulder. The dhoti is marked by slightly curved incised lines. A nude child is depicted standing between the legs of Panchika. Two figures of reduced size, located to the left and right of Panchika likely represent the donors. The figure on the right is a male in *Anjali* mudhra clad in caftan and trousers. The figure on the left is that of a lady.



Figure 22. Harithi and Panchika. (Photo by researcher from Peshawar Museum).

Description:

In most cases, the figure of Harithi is depicted as seated on a couch to the right side of the scene, to the left of her husband, Pannchika. However, in this panel, Harithi is depicted on the left of the scene. As such, this panel represents a rare anomaly within the Peshawar Museum collection.

Panchika is holding a staff in his left hand, while Harithi holds a child in the right side of her lap. Another child can be seen towards his mother. A third child may just be discerned above her right shoulder.



Figure 23. Stone panel with Harithi and Panchika (Photo by Researcher from Peshawar Museum).

Description:

The broken and defaced panel depicts the important legend of Harithi and Panchika. Two children are present on either side of Harithi, while a third is depicted as sitting on the left side of her lap.

Panchika holds a staff in his right hand, most of which has been lost due to damage. The heads of Both Harithi and Panchika are missing.



Figure 24. Panchika and drinking scene (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 90).

Description:

The panel has two registers. The upper showing haloed Panchika seated with right toe on a footstool and his left leg is resting on ground. His legs are mostly damaged and the loops of *uttariya* with terraced folds are visible across the lap. He wears a high turban with large crested pleated crest to one side, earrings, a necklace with bead at center of his chest and a double strand

of beads runs from the left shoulder and over the floral disc of the right armlet. His eyes are open and having thick moustache. He has raised breast and bare abdomen with a round boss as a navel. He holds a large spear which is broken. Behind his left hand a child with a long chignon. At the bottom two children are shown the one to his left leg is rubbed while the corresponding one wears a collar, belt and anklet. There are standing figures with one hand raised and looking at the deity's knee.

The lower register contains, at center a haloed figure is seated on a lion with damaged head. His left hand is resting on his knee while holds a bowl above his right shoulder with his right hand. To his right side a man seated on his knees. Near the head of the lion is a standing child with his left hand on his hip, raises a right hand with bracelet and seems to look to his left at the woman on both knees, with hands joined, head raised.



Figure 25. Yakshini and female figures with musical instruments. ((Photo by researcher, From Peshawar Museum).

Description:

The damaged stone frieze has four female figures, next to them is a pillar and Yakshini. Yakshini is depicted on the left side of the panel with crossed legs under arboreal canopy (only traces available). Her head is missing with nude upper body and prominent breasts, Wears *dhoti* as

lower garments. Her missing right hand is appeared to have held tree branch, left hand is resting on her hip. She is standing on her right leg with bent left leg with only toe touching the ground in front of her left foot.

To the left of the Yakshini, a pilaster with three stepped base is depicted as scene separator instead of yaksha or Yakshini or Amorino on it.

The right scene is depicted with four female figures. To the extreme right a female figure with head missing is standing, wearing *dhoti*. Her right hand is missing but the traces show that it is raised. She holds her *dhoti* above the thigh with left hand. The position of her legs indicates that she is in movement. The second female has nude upper body with hanging shawl around he shoulders and *Paridhana* as lower garments. Her right hand is stretched outwards near her right hip while she holds her *dhoti* same as the first figure with her left hand. The third figure is depicted in flying position which is damaged and unidentifiable. The last female is in setting pose with harp in her hands. She wears headdress, necklace with bare upper body. She holds the musical instrument in her left hand and playing it with her right hand above her stretched right leg while her left leg is bent at knee.



Figure 26. Unidentified Scene (Photo by researcher, From Peshawar Museum).

Description:

This broken panel has two scenes where the left one is missing. The Yakshini is depicted as the scene separator between the two scenes. She is standing on a pot under the stylized palm tree, framed in a bead-and-reel molding. She grasps the palm leaf with her raised right hand while her left hand is resting on her hip. She wears *dhoti* and a scarp draped around the shoulders and hanging free at the sides. Her upper body is nude up to waist. She only wears a necklace.

To the left the haloed Buddha is shown standing with two figures behind him and one to his front. The bottom of the panel has lotus leaf design.



Figure 27. Incomplete scene of Buddha and worshippers (Photo by researcher, From Peshawar Museum).

Description:

The stone fragment of frieze with two worshippers and Yakshini stands in frame. The worshippers are shown on the left damaged portion, standing in *Anjali mudra*, with curly hairs, mustached faces and wears ear pendants and local dress, turned slightly to their right side.

To the right of the frieze a Yakshini is framed in *tribanga* pose on stone slab supported by square stone under arboreal canopy. She holds the branch of the tree with her right hand while left hand is resting on her hip. She wears headdress, ear pendants, a necklace, a shawl hanging down behind her shoulders. Her upper body is nude and wears *dhoti* as lower garment tied around her waist.



Figure 28. Part of a Panel with Haloed worshippers (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 483).

Description:

The cracked and damaged Part of a panel showing haloed worshippers and amorino. To the right of the panel in the framing a naked amorino is standing with head and genitals badly scratched.

He holds a large object probably a palm stalk in his right hand and his left hand is on the hip. The double band of armlet is visible beneath his left arm's elbow. His height is similar to the haloed figures.

In the scene there are three complete figures and the fourth one is almost damaged. The heads of all these worshippers are almost damaged only earrings remaining and wear *uttariya*, *Paridhana*, double neckband, bracelets. The first and thirsd are shown with joined hands while the second holds a bunch of lotuses in right hand above the shoulder and his left hand is on the hip.



Figure 29. Kubera, The king of yakshas (Khan, et. al.2005: Fig. No. 194)

Description:

The chipped and defaced fountain head in form of grotesque Kubera figure is seated cross legged on thin rectangular base. Kubera has curly beard, thick moustache with open mouth for water

pouring. He wears bracelet on right wrist. There are also holes in ears, navel, and top of head for discharge or water.

It is said that Kubera was the chief of the tribe who used to snatch the wealth of the Aryans. Therefore, they disliked and hated Kubera and it is most probable that the title “Kubera” means “ill-shaped” is given to him by the Aryans (Joshi 1978: 100-1). Kubera is almost shown in art with pot-bellied and squirrel as his attribute in his right hand and the jewel is coming out of squirrel’s mouth. This figure of Kubera is recovered from the Parthian occupation at Sirkap, Taxila having fountain head and large belly (Khan *at. al.* 2005: 59).



Figure 30. Stone fragment of a frieze (Photo by researcher, From Peshawar Museum).

Description

Stone fragment of a frieze with only portion of pillar having Yakshini has a bird on her shoulder preserved other two standing figures visible. The Yakshini is standing on the pot wearing *dhoti* and a scarp draped around the shoulders and hanging free at the sides. Her upper body is nude up to waist. She only wears a necklace.

Above the Yakshini is a bell-shaped member enriched with acanthus leaves, the hemispheres above have grooved lotus petals. Adorsed humped bulls and a rectangular lion's-head die support a bracket.



Figure 31. Corner pilaster of panel (Photo by Researcher from Taxila Museum).

Description:

The panel pilaster is depicted with two yakshas. The frontal one shows a naked yaksha standing on water pot with stepped water pot/Indo-Persepolitan within framing. A conventionalized palm tree is depicted above his head. He has long hair and topknot, round face, long nose, prominent eyes and thick lips. He wears bracelet and anklet. He is standing on side turned to his right with up raised right hand while the palm of the left hand is touching the border of the framing. He is standing on his right leg and his left leg is bent at knee only the toe touching the ground. He is shown in movement posing.

The second yaksha on the face of the panel is sitting on ground with his left leg while the right leg is bent with the sole on a ground. His right hand is up raised and touching the palm tree while the left one is hanging down freely. His hair is arranged backward, his small eyes looking upward with head turned slightly upwards. He has thick nose and thick lips. He wears armlet on both arms, Tenon on the top edge.



Figure 32. Persepolitian Pilaster (Photo by researcher, From Taxila Museum).

Description:

The Indo- Persepolitan pilaster, showing square stepped base and round, tapering shaft with capital missing. A yaksha is standing on the fillet of the pilaster, above the water pot which is supported by the square stepped base. The head of the yaksha is defaced. His ornaments consist of a neckband, a long hanging necklace and heavy anklets in the feet. He holds an unidentifiable object in both hands in front of the chest, probably a musical instrument. The image is defaced but the traces of short *Paridhana* are visible on his right thigh.



Figure 33. Corner pilaster of a panel of votive stupa (Khan, et. al.2005: Fig. No. 279).

Description:

The Corner pilaster of a panel with top and left side are broken irregularly on the right side are traces of a broken panel with one defaced figure. A naked Yakshini is depicted on the front side, standing cross legged on a water pot which is supported by stepped pedestal base of an Indo-Corinthian pillar. She holds a palm leaf with her right hand and her left hand is resting on her hip. Her long hair with topknot is descending over shoulders. She wears a neckband armlets and anklets. At the other sides the figures are so much defaced that cannot be identified.



Figure 34. Corner pilaster of a panel of votive stupa (Khan, et. al.2005: Fig. No. 280).

Description:

Top and bottom broken corner pilaster of a panel depicting framed figures on both sides. A yaksha is standing on the left under palm tree. He wears tunic over a *Paridhana*. His long hair is descending on his both shoulders and a round topknot. His right hand is raised touching his shoulder while left hand is hanging down.

On the right side is a male figure with elaborate turban, large eyes, long nose, long curve moustache and curly beard. He holds a rectangular object in his both hands and clad in long Kushana's tunic.



Figure 35. Corner pilaster of panel (Khan, et. al.2005: Fig. No. 281).

Description:

Corner pilaster of panel with top and bottom broken having figures on both sides. The front one is Yakshini standing cross legged on water pot which is supported by stepped base. The features of the Yakshini are disfigured. She wears a headdress beneath the arboreal canopy. She has round eyes; hair arranged backward and elongated face. Her right hand is raised up while the left is resting on her hip. She is standing slightly turned to her right.

On the right side a defaced figure standing on the base of an Indo-Persepolitan pilaster with long hair arranged backward, heavy face large eyes and thick lips. Probably wears a tunic but much defaced, left leg missing.



Figure 36. Drum framing element (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 349).

Description:

The broken stupa drum framing element is depicted with a standing Yakshini. She is turned to her left and holding a mirror in her left hand at shoulder level. She has segmented headdress. She is clad in a sleeved tunic and *Paridhana* over it. Her scarf is passing behind her shoulders and over both upper arms. She has earrings, bracelets, collar and anklets. Her face is oval with narrow eyes. She stands on a pot base with everted rim and lotus-petal enrichment on the lower half which is lying on a stepped plinth. The usual tree branches spread out upwards from behind her head. The ovolo cornice has the sharply cut and pointed-leaf enrichment.



Figure 37. The Stupa drum framing element (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 350).

Description:

The Stupa drum framing element is depicted with a standing Yakshini. This figure is very similar to previous one. Here the Yakshini holds foliage with her left hand instead of a mirror in the previous one and with her head turned towards right here. In this case the face is long with protruding eyes. The remaining features are identical with the previous figure.



Figure 38. Framing Element of a Stupa Drum Panel. (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 351).

Description:

The broken framing element of a Stupa drum panel is depicted with a Yakshini and part of an adjacent scene which is missing now. The features of this Yakshini are also like the previous one except for; she wears a knee-length tunic, grasping the branch of tree with her right hand, double bracelets and her scarf is hanging down from her left arm behind her hand. The Yakshini looks to her left with one flexed leg in front of the other. She has long face with round and protruding eyes.

To the right on an incomplete scene is male standing figure with head missing clad in an *uttariya* with neckband and armlet. He perhaps throws flowers from a bag with his right hand, stands under a tree facing into the center of his scene.



Figure 39. Framing Element. (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 352).

Description:

The broken and exfoliated framing element has a Standing Yakshini under the leafy branches with left hand raised and holds a pendent flower in her right hand against her thigh. She is clad in a short-sleeved tunic and *Paridhana* over it. The *Paridhana* has a knotted girdle from which a long scarf is tied which passes over both upper arms and the top of the headdress. She wears a headdress like a floral crown with a loop of hair above it, necklace with central jewel, earrings, bracelets and anklets. She is standing on a pot with averted rim lying on a stepped plinth. Above the leafy branches are two humped bulls sitting in opposite direction with lion mask between them. Above the humped bulls is a double-bracket capital with saw-tooth enrichment. The frame is enclosed in a bead-and-reel course.



Figure 40. Yakshini and damaged figures (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 353).

Description:

The damaged framing element of a panel depicted with a Yakshini, in next damaged frame only traces are visible of another standing figure and complete pot. The Yakshini stands under a damaged arboreal canopy. Her right knee is flexed a little and her both feet are on the pot similar to the previous ones. She holds a mirror in her damaged right hand at shoulder level while grasp the tree branch by her raised left hand. She is clad in short-sleeved jacket, joined only between the breasts by a circular clasp, a *Paridhana* and a scarf over both arms and stuck into the girdle from which one end hangs down. She has a broad necklace with beaded pattern, earrings, bracelets and double anklets made of beads. She wears a twisted headdress patterned of rising and falling beads. To the left side of the headdress is an opening flower bud. The sharply cut face is markedly asymmetrical between the sides.

The right scene is missing only an oblique and moulded doorway with acanthus enrichment over the lintel is survived. The surviving door leaf seems to have three rails and supported on a moulded plinth. Above the doorway is a balcony with a damaged figure throwing flowers through his/her right hand.



Figure 41. The Framing Element. (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 354).

Description:

The broken and chipped framing element is with a yaksha and Yakshini. The couple stands under upward-spreading branches. They stand on a rectangular solid platform which is supported on the everted rim of a globular pot with a beaded band round the middle. The yaksha leans with his left arm on the Yakshini's shoulder while her right arm round his shoulder and rests on his right upper arm. Yaksha's right hand is on his hip while Yakshini's left is on her hip.

The yaksha wears *uttariya* arranged round the middle of *Paridhana*. He has earrings, a collar and double bracelets. He has a chignon made up of his wavy hair and his fleshy torso shows raised

breasts and abdomen. The Yakshini wears a thin sleeved jacket joined only below her breasts thus her abdomen is bare, a *Paridhana* and a scarf. Her ornament contains an earring pendent, a necklace, bracelets and large anklets. She has a wreath headdress above her wavy hair and a hair loop above the wreath.



Figure 42. Corner pilaster with Corinthian capital (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 454).

Description:

The chipped and exfoliated Corner pilaster is depicted with two carved faces and a naked Amorino on each face. The amorini are standing on each on a standing lotus with downturned petals. One amorino is advancing to his left while the other to his right both have joined hands. They have earrings, bracelets, a necklace, a beaded girdle and abundant hair.

Each face of the pilaster has a Corinthian capital in three parts. High plinth is provided to the base.



Figure 43. Yakshini (Photo by researcher, From Peshawar Museum).

Description:

The body of a Yakshini is depicted with head, right hand and legs missing. The missing right hand is appeared to have raised upward for holding tree branch and the left hand is resting on hip. She is clad in short tunic with straight lines at lower part and wears a trouser as lower garment.



Figure 44. Yakshini. (John Marshal 1960: Fig. No. 64).

Description:

The Yakshini is standing under palm tree on a four stepped vase base. The base has lotus flower design. She is clad in local dress with long spear in her right hand and shield is resting on her left shoulder. Her hair at center is combed backwards and two locks tied near her both ears hanging downwards. She wears necklace hanging between her prominent breasts and local anklets. Her waist is tied with shawl and has right leg bent slightly.



Figure 45. Stair-riser length in three compartments (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 346).

Description:

The broken Stair-riser length is in three compartments, each containing presumably a damaged yakshinis. Each raises her arms to hold the cornice and wears a chignon by the first and elsewhere perhaps a wreath headdress and, where preserved, earrings and a short-sleeved tunic, apparently high-girt and with clasps at the shoulder and with drapery gathered between the breasts. Each figure rises out between the two sprays of acanthus leaves which are knotted together at bottom.

The first Yakshini from the right has with globular head wears a bracelet on her left arm. The central one is chipped off badly in same posture with bracelets on both arms and the third is also in the same features and dress. Part of the lower body appears in two cases between the acanthus leaves. Two tapering pilasters are provided between these compartments with usual mouldings and Corinthian capitals.



Figure 46. Architectural block (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 348).

Description:

Architectural block having a woman, presumably a Yakshini. A Yakshini framed in a deep architectural block, wearing a sleeved high-girt tunic with a headscarf on shoulders, emerges from acanthus leaves and her head is turned to her left. She holds a large flower by its stalk in right hand. She wears a wreath headdress with crosshatches. She is bedecked with earrings, collar and bracelet. The acanthus leaves which are knotted at the bottom, rising with touching each other at different points and also the borders of the frame. The frame has saw-tooth enrichments and top-bottom mouldings.

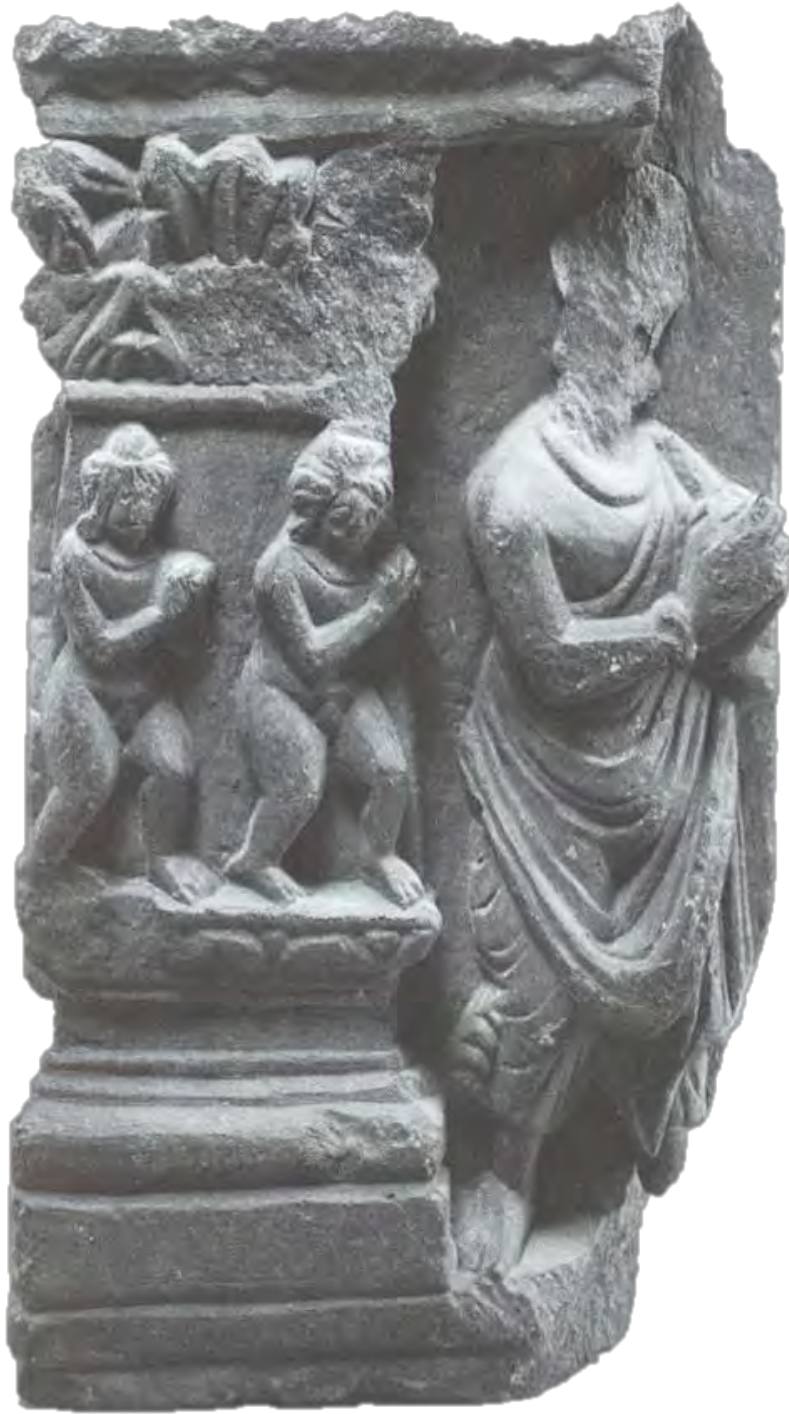


figure 47. Incomplete Part of a corner panel (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 486).

Description:

The broken Part of a corner panel showing amorini/ presumably yakshas and a worshipper. All the figures are facing to their left with joined hands. To the right is a large male figure standing in three quarter views wearing *uttariya* and *Paridhana*, necklace and bracelet.

The corner has a pilaster with Corinthian capital supporting a bracket capital with sawtooth enrichment. The base of the pilaster is consisting of a plinth and two fillets. The two naked amorini yakshas are standing on the shallow lotus of the shaft. Both have a neckband and chignon above the long hair. They are shown as advancing towards the central scene probably of Buddha.



Figure 48. Amorino (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 519).

Description:

The damaged fragment is showing a standing amorino. A vertical framing is depicted with a naked amorino with left leg cross the right, right hand is on the hip while holds a lotus by its long stalk with left hand. He holds the curving stalks against his chest and the lotus is above his head. His legs are almost missing beneath the knees and showing genitals.



Figure 49. Panel of a Caitya Arch Frieze. (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 397).

Description:

The broken and exfoliated Part of a panel probably of a *Caitya* arch frieze where part of a moulded arch survives having saw-tooth enrichment and a pendent bunch of grapes. Inside the half-missing arch are remnants of a door frame and probably a child looking up at another figure in the same frame. A Naked amorino is standing on the volute with playing the panpipes. The plump amorino has a round face, curled hair, chignon and wears a bracelet.

To the left is a Persepolitan column with a stepped plinth and has a groove round the middle of the pot. Adorsed bulls are provided as supporter of the bracket with the upper frame of the panel.



Figure 50. Garland bearers (Photo by researcher, From Taxila Museum).

Description:

The broken and defaced frieze of a stupa depicting a defaced scroll of vine leaves supported by three yakshas on their right shoulders and undulating garland decorated with varied foliate designs and bound by ribbons with flowing ends. The garland bearers are most probably the yakshas with winged celestials. The yaksha in the middle is standing with facing to his left

slightly, supporting the garland with his right shoulder and holds a mug in his left hand. He wears only upper garments which cover him up to his thighs, while the yakshas of both sides are shown naked and bedecked with necklaces and anklets. Both of them facing to their right with garland on their right shoulder and holding with their left hands. All the yakshas have shaved heads save for a little tuft of hair above the forehead.

From the bottom loop of the garland hangs a bunch of grapes half-hidden with a mug in the right hand, and in the corresponding space to the left is another winged figure, much defaced, with hands clasped in adoration. A fluttering parrot rests on the upper right edge of the garland.

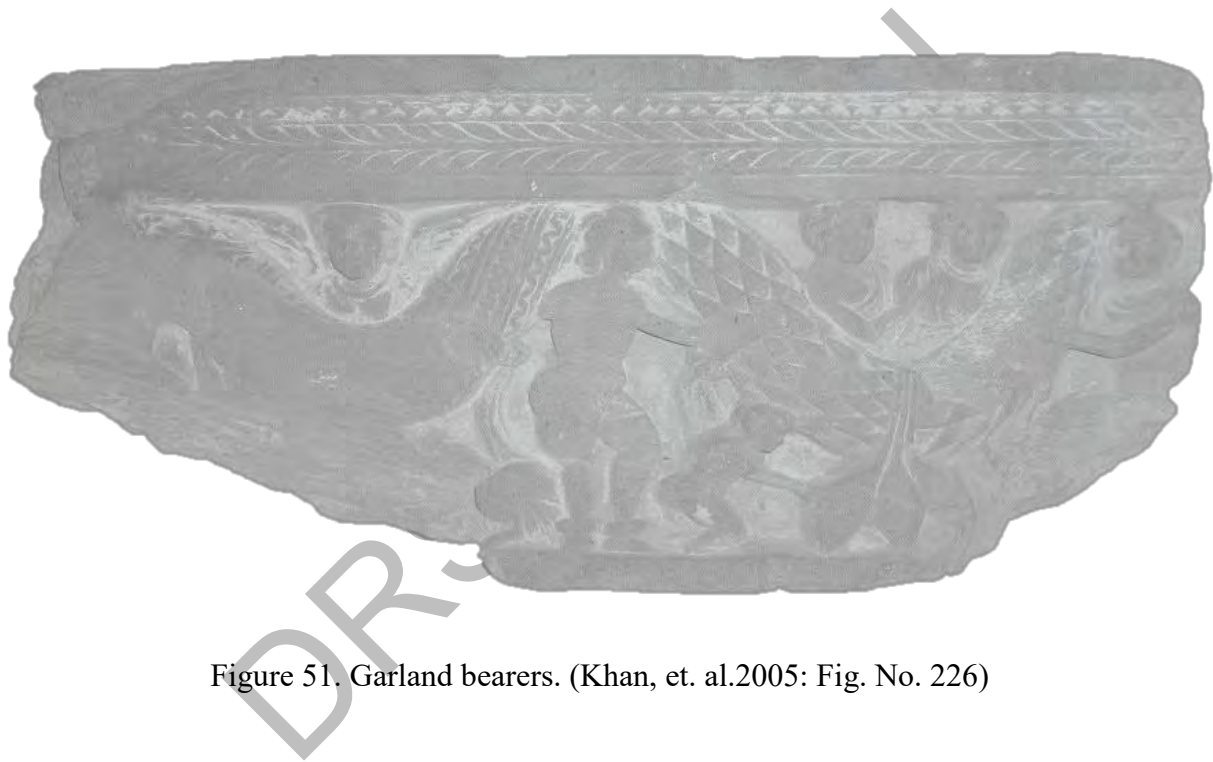


Figure 51. Garland bearers. (Khan, et. al.2005: Fig. No. 226)

Description:

The irregularly broken and defaced fragment of a panel is showing undulating garland. The garland is decorated with two different leaves design. A yaksha with long hair, small eyes, short nose, thin lips and a necklace is depicted, supporting the garland on his right shoulder while left extended hand is resting on the garland. His lower body is missing on the right is a nude Yakshini with long hair spread over the forehead, loop at the top and chignon on the backside, necked, prominent hips and thigh, slightly swallowed abdomen, heavy anklets. It supports the

garland on right. Between them at the bottom a nude figure is shown as he trying to pull the leaves. Two other figures are also visible above the garland between the yaksha and Yakshini.



Figure 52. Garland bearer (Zwalf 1980: fig. No. 414).

Description:

The broken and worn Part of a panel is with a rising and falling garland and amorini. From right to left; a half-length male is shown in the dip of the garland. His badly damaged head is probably turns to his left and his right hand is placed before his chest. The second figure is of Amorino seen from the back. The amorino is striding to his right with right arm on the garland and the left is under it. His head is turned backwards over the shoulder. The second dip of the garland also has a male figure holds bowl in his right hand and glancing at the amorino on his right. The last amorino is standing frontally with head turned to his left. His left hand is passing through the garland while the right is on the hip. He has round and protruding eyes with showin genitals.

The garland has four sections where two of leaf pattern, one of twisted beaded and undulating bands and the last one of rounded petals. All the sections are separated by the ribbons. At the right two flowers and bud are shown while the left bottom has a three lotus buds.

The garland running around the stupa may be seen as an offering with fertility imagery where the amorino is appropriately a yaksha (Zwalf. 1996: fig. 414, p. 276).



Figure 53. Garland bearer (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 415).

Description:

The broken and cracked Part of a panel shows an undulating garland, amorini and other figures. From right to left: the first figure is of a large damaged amorino in profile, striding to the right and supporting the garland on his left shoulder while his right arm Passes round it. His right leg is missing below the knee and naked except for the belt. The second one is a half-length winged figure, turned towards the first amorino with joined hands. He has curled hair and wears earrings. The third is a large amorino standing frontal with head turned to his left and genitals showing. He is supporting the garland on his right shoulder with right hand round it while his left hand is resting on hip. He wears probably an animal skin and ear pendent.

The next figure in the dip is again a half-length figure winged celestial with raised right hand. He has short hair, earrings and neckline. The last one is a muscular turbaned figure supporting the garland with his left shoulder and right-hand round it while his left is resting on the hip. He wears a short *Paridhana*.

The garland has two sections, one of squares diagonally bisected with indented triangles and the other is of cross-hatched pattern. It narrows on the left to a flower lying on the ground; at the bottom of each dip hang acanthus leaves knotted with ribbons to each side, knotted and falling to ground.



Figure 54. Garland bear (Zwalf 1996: fig. No. 416).

Description:

The broken and chipped Panel with amorini and an undulating garland. The amorino at the right is supporting the garland on his both shoulders. His left arm is passing round the garland while removing a thorn from his right sole with right hand. He wears anklets. In the dip of the garland a bird is sitting with outspread wings. Next one is amorino supporting the garland with both shoulders and his right arm passing round it while his left arm in front of the garland.

The garland has a scale pattern of rounded petals and ribbons are provided. At the bottom of the dip two fruits hang against a textile.



Figure 55. Garland bearers (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 418).

Description:

The broken and chipped Corner panel with Amorini and an undulating garland. To the right of the panel is a pilaster with Corinthian capital and has stepped base from which the garland begins. An amorino is shown, turning to his right and supporting the garland on his right shoulder, his arms behind it. In this panel instead of male/celestial/bird there is a standing lotus in the dip. Next one is another amorino supporting the garland on both shoulders and his both arms passing behind it.

The garland has cross-hatched leaf pattern without any fruit and ribbon. Here the projecting cornice has an alternating open half-rosette and standing flower instead of saw-tooth/plain cornice.



Figure 56. Garland Bearers (Zwalf 1996: 419-420).

Description:

The broken, very chipped, and damaged two panels are from a partly continuous frieze with an undulating garland and amorini. From right to left, an amorino is standing with playing a lute against his chest. His right hand is on the strings while holding the lute with his left hand from the narrow end. He is supporting the garland on both shoulders, wearing a loincloth with a length of drapery hanging from his girdle and anklets. The dip of the garland has the vestiges of probably of a damaged amorino having anklets.

The garland has pointed leaves and hang worn buds and a probably a large globular bunch of grapes at the bottom of the damaged dip to the right and on the left dip has radiating vine leaves hanging by their stalks.

The figure 57 contains: a standing amorino beating the barrel drum hanging diagonally with both hands. He is carrying the garland on his right shoulder. He wears a knotted loincloth with hanging down end, a neckline, bracelet and anklets. In the dip of the garland a winged figure shown with legs flexed at the knees. His arms are missing while his hands survived above the drum which indicates that once he beats it. The last is a naked amorino with head and left shoulder missing is seen from the back. He is encircling the garland with his right arm and wears anklets.

The garland is of pointed-leaf pattern and rounded petals. Four hanging buds from their stalk are shown at the bottom of the dip. At the right end is a hanging vine leaf.



Figure 57. Garland bearer (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 424).

Description:

The broken Panel with amorini and an undulating garland. All the amorini are plump, naked, showing genitals and wears necklace and anklets. Read from right to left; an amorino carrying the garland on his right shoulder, walking to his right with head turned to his left. He holds something in right hand while his left arm and left foot is missing. He has wavy and combed-back hair. A half-length figure is shown in the dip of the garland with raised right hand while holding the stalk of the eight fruits hanging from the dip of the garland. He has curled hair and a necklace. Next one is an amorino striding to his right with right hand encircling the garland while left hand is on the hip. He wears armlet, a bracelet and has combed back wavy hair. In the next dip is another half-length figure turned to his left with right raised hand and holding a large hanging fruit with two leaves by stalk in left hand. He has drapery over left shoulder and has wavy hair. The last amorino is supporting the garland on his both shoulders with right hand encircling the garland while the left is visible and striding to his left. He also has wavy and combed back hair.

The two sectioned garland has beaded motifs and pointed leaf pattern. The plain fillet is above and below.



Figure 58. Garland bearer (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 425).

Description:

The broken stair-riser length with amorini and an undulating garland. From right to left: a naked amorino in profile striding to his right. He carries the garland on his right shoulder; right arm is encircling it while left is on the outer surface of the garland. He has a bracelet and anklets. The dip of the garland has a winged celestial with a vessel like thing in both hands. The next amorino is supporting the garland on his left shoulder with holding something in his right hand against thigh and left hand is on the hip. He has anklets. The last figure is of a winged celestial musician/Gandharva visible down to the thigh with playing flute. He holds the flute's damaged end with right damaged hand while hold it in the middle by his left hand. His posture twisted with his head expressively turned over the mouthpiece.

The two sectioned garland has a leaf pattern and twisted beaded motifs. The central dip of the garland has three hanging buds by their stalks and the left has grapes and flanking leaves.



Figure 59. Garland bearers (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 426).

Description:

The broken and cracked stair-riser length is with Amorini, celestial figures and an undulating garland. From right to left the figure are; an amorino in profile striding to his left, supporting the garland on right shoulder with right hand encircling it while left hand holds it on the outer surface. He is naked except for a girdle and anklets. The knee-length winged figure is shown in the dip of the garland with right extended hand resting on the garland while holds a cup-like thing in the left. The next is amorino supporting the garland on both shoulders with both hand passes behind it. He is naked save for a necklace and anklets. In the next dip is a winged musician, visible to knee; head is turned to left and strikes a drum with a stick in his right hand. The drum is hanging from his left shoulder. The next amorino is carrying the garland on his right shouder and right hand passes behind it while left hand is hanging at knee level. He wears a bracelet, anklets and a necklace. In the next dip is a knee-length damaged winged musician turned to his right with playing a flute. Next one is a much damaged amorino supporting the garland with both shoulders and both hands passes behind the garland. The next dip has a damaged winged figure, holds a vessl in his both hands against the chest. He is standing frontally while head is turned to his right. At left end is a scratched amorino turned to his left with the garland over his left shoulder. Most of the amorini show genitals and all wear anklets.

The sections of the garland are of twisted beaded petals, a leaf pattern and undulating motifs. Each dip has at the bottom leaves and bunches of fruit hanging by their stalks.

Chapter 6 Depiction of gandharvas and apsaras in Buddhist Art of Gandhara



Figure 60. Maitrakanyaka Jataka (Photo by Researcher, From Peshawar Museum).

Description:

On the right of the top relief, Maitrakanyaka is shown. He is asking for information from the guardian of the place. In the center a musician is sitting with musical instrument. On the left a nude man is sitting on the ground with burning wheel on his head. The appointed time has come and the wheels of red-hot iron itself will move to the head of Maitrakanyaka who has hurt his mother. According to the texts the wheel came to rest upon his head when he vows to endure this terrible punishment forever with view to the salvation of humanity. Thus, he was immediately freed from all sufferings.

In the second relief are three scenes of the same story. On the right Maitrakanyaka is being received by nymph in the door with a garland in her hands. She is welcoming and requesting him to come in. In the center, he has entered the place in which a man and woman are sitting on highchairs. The Gandharva is playing on musical instrument and the Apsara is singing with her

right hand raised. Now Maitrakanyaka has placed his leg in the open door and enquiring from the guardian of the place who is again shown with the club in his hand about the strange scene of the setting man with burning wheel on his head. The guardian who is pointing at the wheel with his right hand is telling him that it is turn now.



Figure 61. Maitrakanyaka jataka. (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No.134).

Description:

According to the *Jataka*, the Bodhisattva as Maitrakanyaka was a seafaring merchant's, the only son who took up his late father's dangerous livelihood; as she clasped his feet to dissuade him, he kicked his mother's head. Shipwrecked on his first voyage, he reached land on a plank and was successively received and entertained in four cities by apsaras: in the first by four, in the second by eight, in the third by sixteen and in the fourth by thirty-two apsaras. Having escaped their attentions, he reached a city of iron in which a man was undergoing torment as a flaming metal wheel revolved upon his head, the blood, marrow and chyle from it forming his only sustenance. As this was the punishment for the disrespect to his mother. In the Pali tradition' a merchant's son, Mittavindaka was cast adrift on a raft to save the ship and met on successive islands, female spirits of the dead in numbers increasing by the same geometrical progression before encountering a man with a sharp wheel on his head and taking it on his own. But Mittavindaka was not the Bodhisattva, and he was obliged to expiate to the end.

The damaged stair-riser length is showing the *Matrakanyaka Jataka*. At the right damaged end, the hull of a ship consisting of floorboards with vertically tied ribs in water may show storm. There are traces of two figures most probably in the water between the ship and the diagonal ridge evidently representing the shore. Next to a small tree, a male figure clad in *Uttariya* and *Paridhana* with raised right hand near shoulder, turns towards two women/Apsaras, both facing him. They are wearing a sleeved tunic, a *Paridhana* round it and a scarf, one having the scarf over her head, the other a wreath headdress with an expanded loop of hair. The last one gestures towards the doorway. In the next scene, the same male figure is shown beyond the gate with same dress. He holds *Uttariya* in his left hand while his right arm is held by a lady and pointing with the other hand to the second door. It seems that the apsaras in the first scene brought him inside the door where he is greeted by young women. The second Apsara of the first scene is with damaged head also pointing towards the door while her left hand is holding *Paridhana*. The third is also standing in same position as the second with raised right hand. The last Apsara is standing with joined hands facing towards them. Beyond the second door is a standing male figure in *Uttariya* and *Paridhana* turned towards a woman dressed like those preceding.



Figure 62. Bath of Siddhartha (khan et. al. 2005: Fig. No. 8).

Description:

The broken stupa drum panel is showing the bath of Siddhartha in the lower register. Siddhartha is standing on a pedestal flanked by Indra and Brahma that pouring water on his head. To the left

of the Brahma is an encased Corinthian pilaster. Next to the Corinthian pilaster a defaced figure is visible.

The upper register depicted with four dancing figure and a palm tree with long leaves. These male figures are clad in *Uttariya* and *Paridhana*, and with waving bodies probably dancing. These are shown with wavy bodies and open legs in motion. The figure near the palm tree is shown with stretched right hand and left arm missing. His face is turned to his right while moving to his left. The second one is moving to his right while looking to the first one. He holds something probably tankard in his raised right hand near his shoulder and his left hand is resting on his hip. The third is standing frontally with face turned to his right with missing stretched right hand and his left hand is bent near his chest. The last one is shown moving towards his right with head turned to his left. His right hand is missing while his left hand is resting on his hip. They are shown in two dancing couples and looking towards one another. Their faces are much defaced. Top and bottom is framed with fillet.



Figure 63. Request to Preach the Doctrine and gandharvas. (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 197).

Description:

Panel is showing the Request to Preach the Doctrine. The central disc is rests on two stepped base pedestals with mouldings under leafy branches of lozenge-shaped has short rays, some

almost pointed. The disc is flanked by two worshippers most probably Indra and Brahma on either side. The bearded worshipper on the left is stands with joined hands and wears a *Paridhana* and *Uttariya*'s loop is only on his left shoulder. The figure to the right also joins his hands and wears a turban with a central ornament, earrings a neckband of flat pendants, an armlet and beaded bracelets and a similar *Uttariya*.

Above each Brahma and Indra are a damaged flying spirit/ gandharvas with wings, a necklace and what seems like a tail. Both of them holding a bag across the body for flowers and raising a hand to throw them.



Figure 64. Visit of Indra. (Photo by Researcher, from Lahore Museum).

Description:

The broken and damaged panel is showing the visit of Indra. The haloed Buddha is seated in meditation pose, facing to his left inside the cave. The harpist stands on the right of the Buddha

and Indra to his left. Panchasikha is standing closer to the Buddha with his musical instrument announcing the visit of Indra, who is standing behind him with hand clasped. The Gandharva is shown taller than Indra. His face is almost damaged wearing *Paridhana*, earrings and necklace. His right arm is raised as if he is singing the praise of Indra and announcing his arrival. He holds his harp in his left arm.

The animal figures on the cave represent the hilly area of Maghadha.



Figure 65. Buddha in Indrashala Cave (Photo by Researcher from Peshawar Museum).

Description:

The panel shows Buddha in Indrashala cave of Magadha in dhyana *mudra*. This cave is located in a rocky mountainous area suiNagas for meditation. Animals are depicted around the cave. Buddha is seated on a rocky throne, clad in monastic robe of Gandharan fashion. His hair is combed backward with low *Ushnisha* at the top. To the right of the Buddha a deva is visible in *Anjali mudra* with halo behind his head.

To the right of the deva, Gandharva Panchasika is depicted in standing with halo behind his head. Gandharva Panchasika is the messenger of Indra. His ornament consists of necklace and a beaded amulet string that crosses over his chest and left arm. He wears dhoti with wavy folds

tied at the waist. His upper body is nude. Panchasika holds a harp in his hand and is about to play - an indication of the impending arrival of the god Indra.

The Indra with Halo behind his head is standing in *namashkara mudra* behind the Gandharava to the extreme left of the scene. His ornaments consist of ear pendants, necklace and bracelets. He wears drapery which covers his left shoulder while his right shoulder is bare and dhoti is also visible under the drapery.



Figure 66. Buddha in Indrashala cave (Khan et.al. 2005: Fig. No. 38).

Description:

The broken, damaged and defaced panel depicts the visit of Indra. The haloed and defaced Buddha is seated in *dhyana mudra* in Indrashala cave. Buddha is surrounded by wild animals where two headless beast and unknown creatures are also shown. Human figures are depicted on

rocky ledges all around the Buddha mostly in standing position with defaced faces. These are facing towards Buddha. Near the top of the cave two couples of devas on either side is preserved. To the left of the Buddha, Panchika is depicted setting in European fashion, wearing a coat, elaborate turban with high fantail crest; ear pendants and necklaces, he holds a long spear between his legs.

To the left of the Buddha beneath Panchika the chipped off figures is Indra's musicians, Gandharva Pancasikha. Behind him a Naga is visible with six hoods, and a little higher up is a small figure, seated in meditation. The long panel below, on which Indra and his companions are shown, is so defaced that that among the twelve figures crowding the scene it is not possible to identify any; on the right, however, are clear indications of Indra's elephant, Airavata, and the royal umbrella. Indra, himself, is lost in the medley of gods forming his cortege. A fillet runs at the base.



Figure 67. Visit of Indra to Indrashala Cave. (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 219).

Description:

The broken panel is showing the remnant of an incomplete scene on the right and another scene, showing the Visit of Indra. Only two damaged figures are there in the incomplete scene.

The complete scene shows a haloed Buddha seated in *dhyana mudra* on grass in a deep recess, with curved opening, of a mountain. He is clad in monastic robe which covers his both hands and the robe spread out to lie in a straight edge below them. Beneath the Buddha there is a kneeling elephant, with a cloth on its back. The elephant holds umbrella by the shaft in its trunk.

On the Buddha's left Indra is standing with joined hands, wears *Uttariya* and *Paridhana*, neckline and a turban. Two other figures above the Indra are also worn crested turban and half-length, one with hands joined.

To the opposite side, the harpist Panchikha is standing with his right hand raised while he holds the harp in left arm. He wears a short *Paridhana* with a knotted *Uttariya* round his waist, a high chignon and a necklace. Balancing with the right there are also two figures above him.

Two pilasters are provided for framing the scene which has two seated Buddhas in same pose as the central one, but they are seated on an open lotus pedestals.

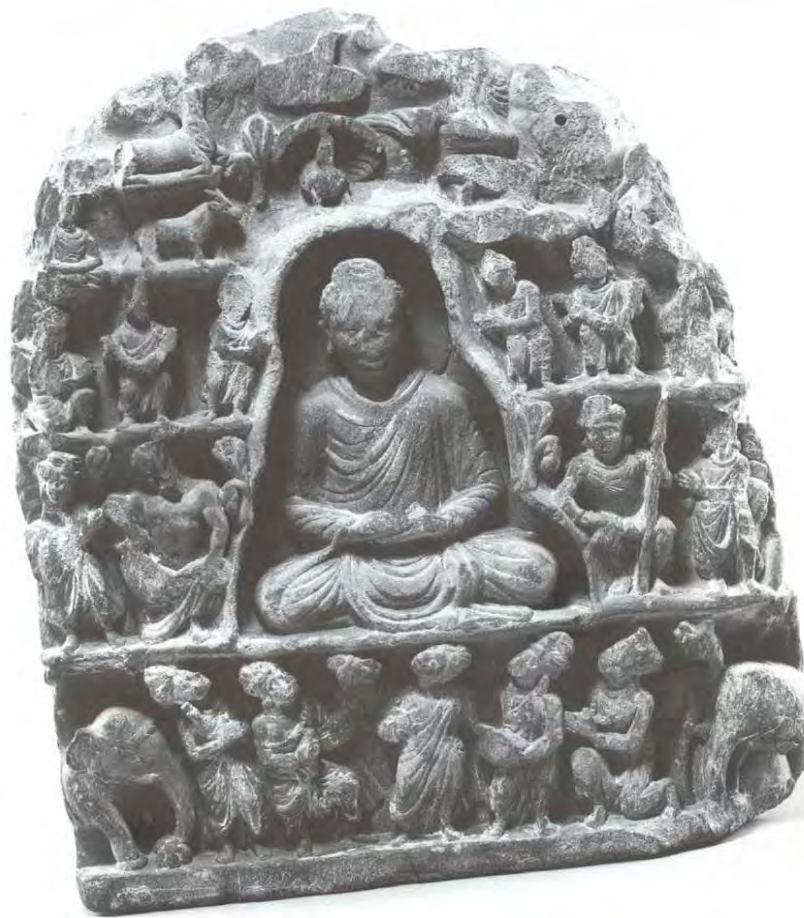


Figure 68. Visit of Indra to Indrashala cave (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 221).

Description:

The broken and chipped panel is showing the visit of Indra.

In center a large, haloed Buddha sits in dhyana inside a cave, his both shoulders are covered by his over-robe having thick folds. He has oval head, wavy hair and a large *Ushnisha*.

The surrounding of the cave is richly carved with different figures and animals. The lowest register has two elephants one at each corner with flowers in their tusks. There are six figures in *Uttariya* and usual ornaments. Read from right to left, the Indra is in kneeling posture with joined hand. He wears a turban and necklace. The second on is harpist Panchika wears a high turban. His one leg is bent a little. He holds a harp in his left hand and a plectrum in his right. The other figures are turbaned in *Uttariya* and the usual ornaments, standing in various postures, looking up, joining hands, carrying flowers and an offering.

Vajrapani is sitting to the left of the cave with bare torso and robe over his knees. His head and Vajra both are damage badly. Beside him there is a worshipping and ornamented turbaned figure. On opposite side a seated, ornamented, and turbaned figure with long spear in his left hand, wearing a sleeved and knee length tunic. His hand is also resting on his knee like the Vajrapani and having a similar worshipping figure beside him. Plants are shown in both opposite scenes.

The next register is showing three figures facing towards the Buddha, on each side; where four are standing with joined hands, two kneeling and two with garlands in their hands. They all wear turban and *Uttariya*.

The top register is chipped on right side while the left is showing a seated and damaged worshipping, two antelope standing on a ledge, a peacock with spread tails and another peacock or parrot.



Figure 69. Visit of sixteen worshippers and Indra to Indrashala cave (Photo by Researcher from Peshawar Museum).

Description:

The frieze is poorly preserved. This frieze depicts the visit of the sixteen worshippers to Indrashala cave. These worshippers visited the Buddha in order to ask his advice regarding their problems. The massive size Buddha's figure is missing above the abdomen, but it appears to have his right hand up in *abhaya* mudhra, assuring the ascetics that he will answer all their questions. These sixteen figures are depicted at the base of this frieze with variation of age and austerities. The cave is depicted with animal representation around it on the rocks. Spooner gives special attention to the surprisingly realistic representation of the Bauhinia leaves above the two worshippers at the extreme right. The frieze is also depicted with the Visit of Indra to the Indrashala cave.

Gandharva Panchasika is depicted in full armor at the top right. He is seated on a rock, wears headdress and dhoti. His right arm is missing near his shoulder while the right hand is also missing near his knee. He appears to have hold harp.

The left panel end and upper portion are entirely missing. Some of the faces of the figures in this relief are scratched.



Figure 70. Buddha and Gandharva. (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 239).

Description:

The broken and damaged Part of a stupa drum panel showing two incomplete scenes. The right scene is showing a bearded ascetic with prominent ribs in a bowed position. He wears a short animal as lower garment. A half-length, crested turbaned figure is shown above him who looks down. Another figure seen from the back is in movement, clad in *Uttariya* and *Paridhana* and other ornaments.

In the next scene a tall Buddha figure clad in monastic robe with damaged head turned towards the drummer or Gandharva. His both hands are missing where right one is seen in *Abhaya mudhra* while he holds his drapery from the left. A muscular and turbaned Gandharva is standing looking at Buddha, wearing a *paridhana* and an *Uttariya* perhaps tied round and hanging down from the waist. In ornaments he has a bracelet, an earring and a necklace. His right hand is raised to strike the barrel drum which is hanging from his left shoulder and further held below by his left hand.

Between them a half-length turbaned figure is looking at the Buddha. A tapering pilaster is provided with Corinthian capital inside a scene separating framing.



Figure 71. Buddha and Gandharva. (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 240).

Description:

The panel is showing an encounter with a drummer. The haloed Buddha showed standing in *Abhaya* gesture with his right and damaged hand while he holds the robe with the left hand. He wears monastic robe which covers his both shoulders. His hairs are tied at which making an usnisha which almost touch the upper border of the panel.

Buddha is facing towards the damaged Gandharva standing to his right. He is chipped off, but it seems that he wears a loincloth and the trace of a strap of banded barrel drum from his left shoulder. The drum hangs obliquely, and his right hand is on the upper side while he strikes it

from the lower side with his left hand. His muscular legs are bare beneath his thighs and stand with weight on left leg while the right leg is bent a little at knee.

Above him a half-length figure is shown with raised arm probably throwing flowers at the Buddha. A shaven headed monk is standing beside the Buddha in a similar dress as Buddha. Above the monk is another half-length figure with an arm raised and a bowl-crop hairstyle.



Figure 72. Stair-riser length showing Alter and musicians. (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 310).

Description:

The damaged and chipped off Stair-riser length showing musicians, alter and other figures with carrying an animal. Alter is shown in the middle with which resembles a pilaster. The alter is crossed obliquely by garland and below is a large globular object probably some fruit. To the extreme left a figure with head missing is standing, his right hand is raised while holds most probably a vessel wearing knee-length tunic. The next figure is shown standing wearing a knee-length tunic with trousers. He holds the animal and leading him towards alter with and chipped off figure behind the animal.

On the right of the altar a figure is standing wearing knee-length tunic and turned to his left. Next figure is standing frontally with same tunic but a trouser over shod feet. He holds a long spear in his raised left hand while his right is stretched behind the shoulder of the first one. The next two figure are musicians wearing same dress and holding their musical instruments. The one holds a barrel drum, while the second holds a lute. They wear high turbans too.

The next standing figure clad in similar dress is turned to his left with a sword hanging against his thigh. Beside him there more three figures one is seated with left hand on the shoulder of the last figure that holds most probably a cup in his right hand. Behind and above the third figure is shown with stretched right hand as if to throw flowers



Figure 73. Musicians, cart and other figures. (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 327).

Description:

The broken chipped with soil top panel showing dancers, a chariot with riders and other human figures. Read from right to left, there are four figures standing in different poses while only a vestige of a leg is there at the right and missing end. The first figure is under a creeper plant leaves, faces to his left, wears only a loincloth with a plain armlet. He holds something in his right hand. Beside him a figure with long hair and a knee-length, holds a lute across the body. His right hand is on the strings as if he is striking it and holds the narrow end of the instrument through left hand around it. Between him and the next figure there is a vine slant. The next figure

is apparently dancing. His both arms are raised above his head with left leg raised and wearing only a paridhana. Beside him another musician in similar dress blows into pipe played with both hands. All the figures are male suggestive of minions but somewhat crude and rustic.

A cart is shown facing the left with two seated figures. The frontal one is naked except for thick anklets in feet. Another naked figure is pulling the cart on his shoulders.

Next to his there are three figures facing towards the cart. The first on seated with chignon, right hand is on his bent knee while left hand is on his thigh. The next two naked figures are one on the other back coming towards the cart.

The right scene is probably also having this cart as the first figure is offering something to them while the other three offer a musical welcome.



Figure 74. The Stair-riser Panel with haloed deity. (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 332).

Description:

The broken at both ends, stair-riser Panel is depicted with various figures, including gandharvas and an apsara. A chipped off haloed figure is seated on a chair probably in *Uttariya* and paridhdna and turbaned. His right and damaged hand is raised in *Abhaya* while his left hand rests on thigh/lap. His head is slightly turns to his left. To his right are the vestiges of a standing male with upper body damaged. To his left is a standing woman with braid behind her head, seen from back with holding an object like a flywhisk. The deity is flanked by two figures near

his halo. Next to the standing lady an apsara in dancing pose with one leg raised wearing lower garment and the upper is chipped off. Beside her is a standing and much defaced figure with hands in motion. Next is a Gandharva seated and beating two vertical and banded barrel drums. His right hand is raised while the left one is on the drum. The remaining figures are much damaged only their traces can show them as turn away. Behind them there are two protruding faces and open flowers in low relief.



Figure 75. Corner panel displaying three couples. (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 411).

Description:

The Broken and worn Corner panel displaying three couples in three rectangular compartments. Read from right to left; the male is seeming in movement with stretched hands and legs apart. His right hand is touching the left stretched hand of the female while her left hand is bent against her left breast. They are moving towards each other. In the second scene the male is moving to his left with head turned back towards his partner. His left hand is stretched while left is bent against the chest. The female is standing frontally with crossed legs. In the next scene a female is standing with body turned towards the male. She seems holding something in both hands as offering it to her partner. The male is standing frontally with hands on his chest.

The columns with Corinthian capitals are provided as scene separator between the compartments. A pilaster in low relief is provided on the right edge with a Corinthian capital.



Figure 76. Garland Bearers. (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 425).

Description:

The broken stair-riser length with amorini and an undulating garland. From right to left: a naked amorino in profile striding to his right. He is carrying the garland on his right shoulder; right arm is encircling it while left is on the outer surface of the garland. He has a bracelet and anklets. The dip of the garland has a winged celestial with a vessel like thing in both hands. The next amorino is supporting the garland on his left shoulder with holding something in his right hand against thigh and left hand is on the hip. He has anklets. The last figure is of a winged celestial musician/Gandharva visible down to the thigh with playing flute. He holds the flute's damaged end with right damaged hand while hold it in the middle by his left hand. His posture twisted with his head expressively turned.

The two sectioned garland has a leaf pattern and twisted beaded motifs. The central dip of the garland has three hanging buds by their stalks and the left has grapes and flanking leaves.



Figure 77. Garland bearers. (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 426).

Description:

The broken and cracked stair-riser length is depicted with Amorini, celestial figures and an undulating garland. From right to left, the figures are: an amorino in profile striding to his left, supporting the garland on right shoulder with right hand encircling it while left hand holds it on the outer surface. He is naked except for a girdle and anklets. The knee-length winged figure is shown in the dip of the garland with right extended hand resting on the garland while holds a cup-like thing in the left. The next is amorino supporting the garland on both shoulders with both hand passes behind it. He is naked save for a necklace and anklets. In the next dip is a winged musician, visible to knee; head is turned to left and strikes a drum with a stick in his right hand. The drum is hanging from his left shoulder. The next amorino is carrying the garland on his right shoulder and right hand passes behind it while left hand is hanging at knee level. He wears a bracelet, anklets and a necklace. In the next dip is a knee-length damaged winged musician turned to his right with playing a flute. Next one is a much damaged amorino supporting the garland with both shoulders and both hands passes behind the garland. The next dip has a damaged winged figure, holds a vessel in his both hands against the chest. He is standing frontally

while head is turned to his right. At left end is a scratched amorino turned to his left with the garland over his left shoulder. Most of the amorini show genitals and all wear anklets.

The sections of the garland are of twisted beaded petals, a leaf pattern and undulating motifs. Each dip has at the bottom leaves and bunches of fruit hanging by their stalks.



Figure 78. Stupa drum framing element with a Persepolitan column. (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 455).

Description:

The broken and rejoined Stupa drum framing element with a Persepolitan column and standing musician. A male musician is standing on the pot wearing girt knee-length tunic, earrings and necklace. He strikes a circular drum with both hands. His head is turned to his left while advancing to his right.

Above the musician is a bell-shaped member enriched with acanthus leaves, the hemispheres above have grooved lotus petals. Addorsed humped bulls and a rectangular lion's-head die support a voluted double bracket with sawtooth enrichment. The pot base, with an everted rim and lotus-petal enrichment under an undulating border round the middle, rests on a stepped plinth.



Figure 79. Visit of sixteen worshippers and Indra to Indrashala cave (Photo by Researcher, From Peshawar Museum).

Description:

The relief depicts the expedition of Maitrakanyaka. The right of panel is depicted with a defaced bullock moving towards the right. Two turbaned figures sitting inside the bullock while a lady is standing behind with her left hand raised probably saying farewell.

To the left of the panel, a Gandharva and Apsara are standing with their musical instruments in a square frame. The Gandharva to the right of the Apsara wears short tunic and headdress. He is standing on his left leg and with right bent knee, only right toe touching the ground. His right hand is near his left shoulder while left one is hanging freely. Probably he is dancing. The Apsara wears short tunic with trouser and headdress playing flute. She holds flute in her hands and facing towards the Gandharva.



Figure 80. Dancing Figure/ Gandharva (Photo by Researcher, from Peshawar Museum).

Description:

The Broken stone Panel is showing a dancing figure. The legs of the figure are missing and have a belt behind his waist. His upper body is nude and muscular. His right hand is touching his wavy hairs and face is turned upwards near his right shoulder. His left hand is resting on hip with holding a money bag.



Figure 81. seated Musician. (Photo by Researcher, from Peshawar Museum).

Description:

Stone seated musician holding his musical instrument in his lap with both hands.



Figure 82. Seated musician (Photo by Researcher, from Peshawar Museum).

Description:

A seated musician or Gandharva is holding his musical instrument in his both hands.



Figure 83. Gandharva (Photo by Researcher, from Peshawar Museum).

Description:

A male figure with lower body missing is standing, playing with a musical instrument.



Figure 84. Musician. (Photo by Researcher, from Peshawar Museum).

Description:

Stone fragment with standing nude figure holding musical instrument.



Figure 85. Framing Element (Marshall 1960: Fig. No. 65).

Description:

The standing Musician or Gandharva is clad in Greek dress, playing on lute.



Figure 86. Guarding of the relics. (Khan et.al. 2005: Fig. No. 49).

Description:

The broken fragment of the left side of a relief is showing guarding of the holy relics of the Buddha. The relic vessel is placed on a nagas covered with a cloth hanging between the legs of the nagas both ends of the cloth have graceful folds. Legs of the nagas are turned in bead-and-reel pattern. A pedestal is placed in the center of the nagas covered with a pleated cloth; above the pedestal is placed relic vessel with round top and covered with cloth having similar pleats. The relics are placed under a parasol with hanging frill.

On right side is female musician and a bust of another female is visible behind her with long curly hairs and chignon. Almost in Gandharan art the relics are shown guarded by two males with spears but here we can see a female with musical instrument. The Apsara wears short tunic and *Paridhana*. She holds most probably a flute in her left hand in front of her breasts, palm of the right hand is placed on the side of the flute; lower end of the object rests on one side of the relic's pedestal. She is adorned with a chaplet on forehead, ear pendants and bracelets.

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Chapter 7 Depiction of Naga and Nagini in Buddhist Art of Gandhara



Figure 87. Hymn Naga-Kalika. (Photo by Researcher, from Peshawar Museum).

Description:

The panel is depicted with two scenes. The lower portion of the panel is depicted with Bodhisattva Siddhartha in *abhaya mudra*. He holds *sanghati* or his outer robe in his left hand. His both shoulders are covered with a drapery of wavy folds. He is depicted with oval shaped face. Bodhisattva's hair is wavy and is organized in a raised *Ushnisha* and halo behind his head. Vajrapani to the left of the Siddhartha is visible with Vajra in his left hand. Two busts are visible to both sides behind the Siddhartha, the one to his left with a raised hand holding something while the other is in *Anjali mudra*.

Naga-Kalika and his queen are standing inside the railing of water tank in *Anjalimudra* facing to their left towards Bodhisattva Sidhartha. The Naga wears a high turban while Nagini wears a wreath headdress and hoods are visible behind their heads. The shoulders of Naga-Kalika and his wife are covered with robes. There is a fountain visible in the middle of the tank in shape of a lion's head. The lower portion is framed with the Corinthian pilasters at both sides. The shaft of the pilaster just above the base has a lotus-shaped seat, over which two figures of the Buddha are depicted. The front one to the left of the relief is in *abhayamudra*, while the right one is in *dhyana mudra*. In both cases, their shoulders and feet are covered by drapery. The upper portion is also framed by Corinthian pilaster with Buddha seated in *dhyana mudra*. The Corinthian capitals are crowned by architraves with a row of saw-tooth designs. The two scenes are divided through a series of brackets.

The upper portion depicted in the center a headless Buddha, seated on a throne in *abhaya mudra* with both shoulders covered by drapery. The throne have some geometrical designs. Buddha is flanked by two worshippers in *abhaya mudra* wearing short tunics with belts and long trousers. A figure is shown at either side behind the Buddha.



Figure 88. Hymns of Naga-Kalika. (Photo by Researcher, from Peshawar Museum).

Description:

The frieze depicted the hymn of the Naga Kalika. In the left scene there are six figures, all facing towards Siddhartha (missing) are playing hymns. Naga Kalika and the queen are standing in *Anjali mudra*, inside a tank with a denticulate design. Both the Naga Kalika and his queen have hoods above their heads with knotted turban. A figure is standing in *Anjali mudra* behind them. Above the Naga-Kalika and his queen three busts are visible in different poses. All the three wear headdresses with knot above it. At the extreme right a bust holds something in his raised hand while the left one has raised right hand in front of his chest. Siddhartha's figure is broken

off and missing from the frieze. The defaced traces indicate that the tank beneath is supported by a lion's head.

At the right is a framed figure of a Yakshini standing on a large pot as scene-separator instead of a pilaster. There are acanthus leaves above her head which form a canopy. She wears headdress. Her right hand is raised and holding something in it while her left-hand rests on her hip and wears large anklets in both feet. With left leg bare up to the knee.



Figure 89. Hymns of Naga-Kalika's queen. (Photo by Researcher, from Peshawar Museum).

Description:

This panel depicts the hymns of Naga-Kalika's queen. Nagani is standing in *Anjali mudra* facing towards her right in a water tank fenced with a railing. She wears headdress with wreath, a necklace, ear pendants and bracelets. Her left shoulder is covered with a shawl up to her ankle and a thin shirt is also visible under her shawl. Serpent hoods are impressively depicted above her head. To the left of the Nagini, a defaced figure is standing might be Padmapani; wears ornaments with a lotus flower in his right hand and a water flask in his left. Padmapani's left shoulder is covered with garment and the lower garment has folds in wavy fashion. A turbaned head is depicted behind the Padmapani. To the left of the Padmapani is a worshipper in *namashkara mudra* is visible facing to his right. He wears garment which covers his left shoulder having wavy folds and he wears a high turban, a necklace, ear pendants and bracelets.

The cornice is decorated with a bead and reel design. The panel to the right of the Nagini is missing which of sure have depicted Naga-Kalika alongside his wife facing toward the Bodhisattva Siddhartha who, in other examples of this scene, stands along with Vajrapani in *abhaya mudra*. The right side is intact and clearly indicates the legend of Kalika and his wife's hymns before the figure of Siddhartha.



Figure 90. Hymns of Naga Kalika and other scene. (Photo by Researcher, from Peshawar Museum).

Description:

The panel showing two different scenes and is decorated with a bead and reel design at the top. The left one depicts the first sermon, while the right one illustrates the hymns of Naga Kalika and his chief queen Suvernaprabhasha. The two scenes are separated by Persepolitan pilaster.

The first scene is of the hymns of Naga-Kalika and his wife. The Naga and Nagini are standing in a framed water tank. They are in *Anjali mudra* and having serpent-hoods behind their heads. Above the Nagānd Nagini two busts are shown where the right one with their right hand raised and holds something. Another Naga is shown to the left of the tank with left knee bents upward and the right bent knee touching the ground in *Anjali Mudra*. Next to the sitting Naga the Bodhisattva is shown standing in *abhayamudra* and dressed in a monastic robe with wavy folds, is sporting curly hair style with a raised *Ushnisha*, and elongated ears. He holds the hem of his robe in his left hand. He is carved to the full height of the panel. To the left of the bodhisattva Vajrapani is shown with Vajra in his left hand and kamandalu in his right hand. Another bust is shown behind the Vajrapani.

The left scene of the panel depicts the seated Buddha along with his five disciples. Buddha is in the pose of *abhayamudra*, clad in Gandharan dress and holds the edge of his monastic robe in his left. The pedestal of the throne is depicted with a wheel which is flanked by deer on either side. The deer symbolizes the first sermon which was delivered at Sarnath.



Figure 91. Hymns of Naga-Kalika. (Marshall 1960: Fig. No. 75).

Description:

The panel is depicted with the hymns of Naga-kalika. The haloed and defaced Buddha is standing in *Anjali mudra*, facing to his left towards the Nagaraja Kalika and his wife. Behind the

Buddha a youthful Vajrapani is standing with Vajra in his right hand and his left hand is resting on his hip.

To the left of the Buddha, Nagaraja Kalika and his wife are standing in *Anjali mudra* in water tank, facing toward Buddha. Serpent hoods are visible above their headdresses. The water tank has vertical and horizontal bars topped by a saw-tooth designed beam. Water is pouring from the corner towards the Buddha.

Above the Vajrapani and Nagini flying devas are depicted. The panel has two Corinthian pilasters at both ends decorated with acanthus leaf capitals.



Figure 92. Panel Pilaster: (Photo by Researcher from Taxila Museum).

Description:

The incomplete paneled pilaster is depicted with a Yakshini figure under a stylized palm tree, framed in a bead-and-reel molding. She is standing on her right foot and the left leg is bent at the knee and her left toe is touching the ground behind her right foot. She grasps the palm leaf with her raised left hand while she holds her shawl in right hand near her hip. She wears dhoti and a scarp draped around the shoulders and hanging free at the sides. Her upper body is nude up to waist. She only wears a necklace. The water pot on three steps on which she stands is the normal base for yakshinis and *yakshas* portrayed under a palm tree.

To right of the framed Yakshini, only the left end of another panel is visible which depicts the hymn of the Naga Kalika and his wife. Here only the Nagini is preserved while the Naga and the right scene are missing. The Nagini wears *uttariya* and *Paridhana* and emerging from the water tank. She has Naga-hood behind her head, and she wears ear pendants.



Figure 93. Hymns of Naga Kalika (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 183).

Description:

The broken and chipped panel showing two scenes, the lower and incomplete scene is depicted with the hymn of the Naga Kalika.

In the lower scene Bodhisattva is shown standing, wears the monastic robe over both shoulders with two undergarments. His right hand is in *abhaya*. Naga Kalika and his consort Suvarnaprabhasa are shown in standing with joined hands and looking at Bodhisattva. The crested turbaned Kalika is clad in *uttariya* and *Paridhana*, with one thick robe end swinging forward and a five-headed serpent rising above his head. Suvarnaprabhasa wears a wreath headdress, a garment, a *Paridhana* round it and a scarf, and above her head a broken, probably single-headed serpent indicates her nature. Behind Kalika's arms rise two lotuses on separate stalks and below him, incomplete, is the blown-petal ornament on the side of the nagas' pool from which the flowers may be supposed to rise.

Vajrapani is standing with his Vajra in left hand view from the backside. He is naked to the waist. Beside the Vajrapani there are two figures which are damaged badly. Above the Vajrapani there are two barely half-length, turbaned deities visible. On both sides the lost shafts of the pilasters probably also once had worshipping amorini, as in the upper scene.



Figure 94. Miracle of Śravastī. (Photo by Researcher, from Peshawar Museum).

Description:

In this large panel Buddha is shown in *dharmacakra mudra* above a full blossom lotus under a mango canopy surrounded by many devas and Bodhisattvas. The Buddha is depicted with a snail shell hairstyle, raised *Ushnisha*, elongated ears and half-closed eyes. Some portions of his hands are missing. His left shoulder is covered by *sanghati* with wavy folds. Many seated and standing bodhisattvas and devas with Indian style drapery, high headdresses and bejeweled with different type of jewelry are depicted of either side of the Buddha. Under the trefoil arch at the upper right portion a princely figure is shown. A sunken belly figure under a broken arch with prominent ribs and *dhyana mudra* is depicted.

Both Nanda and Upananda nagas are visible to the right below the throne, near the stalk. Serpent hoods are visible behind their heads.



Figure 95. Miracle at Śravastī (Photo by researcher, From Taxila Museum).

Description:

The broken and chipped large panel is depicted with miracle of Śravastī. The Buddha is seated on a lotus throne at the center in *dharmacakra mudra* surrounded by standing and seated figures. His hair is combed backwards with *Ushnisha* at the top. He wears monastic robe with bare right shoulder and upturned feet. The upper bodies of a Naga couple are shown, most probably Nanda and Upananda, with clasped hands on either side below the throne. They are slightly bent backward as looking upward.

On both ends at the bottom a female is seated in European fashion, holds a cornucopia in their hands with their second hand supporting it at the bottom. Next to them is a male figure, seated

cross legged on a high pedestal, feet rests on a lotus pedestal; headdress of the figure is defaced. Wears *uttariya* and *Paridhana*, hold vine cup in their hands, the other hand placed in their laps and hold a budding lotus in, between the fingers.

Above to the extreme right is a male figure seated cross legged on a high lotus pedestal, with clasped hands. To his right is a figure standing in *Anjali mudra* above the inverted lotus; clad in *uttariya* and *Paridhana*. Above the cornice is an arched balcony with a Buddha figure in meditation flanked by kneeling worshippers.

To the corresponding left of the panel, there are three figures. A figure near the right shoulder of the Buddha is defaced only traces are there. Behind the defaced figure is a princely figure seated in European. To his right is a figure seated on a pedestal and grasping his knees with both hands; wears a turban. Above is a balcony similar as on the corresponding side with Buddha in *dhyana mudra*.

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Figure 96. Miracle of Śravastī. (Photo by Researcher, from Peshawar Museum).

Description:

The relief panel shows the miracle of Śravastī, Buddha in *dharmachakra mudra* is depicted at the center, inside an arch. He is miraculously seated on an inverted lotus seat which is supported by three elephant heads. The middle one among the three elephants is chipped off. The elephant's seat is identified by Foucher as the elephant nagas. He identified that same term in Sanskrit used for both elephant and Naga. In this depiction these are the elephant-Nagas .

A haloed figure of Bodhisattva Siddhartha stands on an inverted lotus to the Buddha's left with pendants, necklace, torque, amulet string and bracelets. His wavy folded robe covers only his left shoulder. His right is raised with open palm and the left is rest on his hip. He is flanked by two persepolitan pillars with back-to-back bull. While to the right of the Buddha is a haloed Bodhisattva Padmapani stands in *abhayamudra* on an inverted lotus with pendants, long

necklace and an amulet string. His wavy robe covers only his left shoulder. He holds a lotus flower stalk in his left hand and is flanked by Persepolitan pillars. The pillars are topped by back-to-back bulls. The shaft of the right pillar is missing. Two balconies above the Bodhisattvas have six female figures with elaborate headdresses.

Above the balcony, six arches are depicted with the Buddha seated on inverted lotus. Above this, seven arches are depicted with seated Buddhas and bodhisattvas. The top row is depicted with niches on either side which are flanked by two bejeweled standing figures. A stupa model under broken arch is depicted at the center which contains of a base, two tiers of railing around a double *pradikshanapatha*, a dome, harmika and chatras. The two scenes are depicted between the niches one is offering handful of dust by a child while this is suggested as the scene of Sumati homage to Depankara Buddha.



Figure 97. Buddha in IndraSala cave (Khan et. al. 2005: Fig. No. 38).

Description:

The broken and defaced panel depicts the visit of Indra. The haloed and defaced Buddha is seated in *dhyana mudra* in Indrashala cave. Buddha is surrounded by wild animals where two headless beast and unknown creatures are also shown. Human figures are depicted on rocky ledges all around the Buddha mostly in standing position with defaced faces. These are facing towards Buddha. Near the top of the cave two couples of devas on either side is preserved. To the left of the Buddha, Panchika is depicted setting in European fashion, wearing a coat, elaborate turban with high fantail crest, ear pendants and necklaces, he holds a long spear between his legs. To the left of the Buddha beneath Panchika the chipped off figures can be Indra's musicians. Behind him a Naga is visible with six hoods, and a little higher up is a small figure, seated in meditation. The long panel below, on which Indra and his companions are shown, is so defaced that that among the twelve figures crowding the scene. It is not possible to identify any; on the right, however, are clear indications of Indra's elephant, Airavata, and the royal umbrella. Indra, himself, is lost in the medley of gods forming his cortege. A fillet runs at the base.



Figure 98. Naga Apalala and other scenes. (Photo by Researcher, from Peshawar Museum).

Description:

The arched panel depicts four scenes one above the other. In the lower scene, the Buddha is depicted under a royal canopy, standing with a raised right hand wearing monastic robe which covers his entire body except his feet.

This scene is depicted with the subjugation of Naga Apalala. According to Buddhist traditions the Naga Apalala flooded the nearby area of present-day Swat and Buddha came to save the people. Vajrapani hurled a thunderbolt and frightened Naga Apalala with the order of Buddha. After subjugating the Naga Raja, he promised to discontinue the flooding. Some Buddhist traditions say that Naga Apalala was agreed to bring the flood only once a year.

The scene depicts the Nagaraja Apalala is kneeling before Buddha in *Anjali mudra*. Behind the Naga Apalala a princely-dressed person is depicted which helped by a third person behind him. This third person may be a victim of the flood, who is shown as mostly undressed with only a shawl held in his left hand that covers his legs. Another man stands with his right hand raised on behind the third person.

To the right of the Buddha a man is standing with a lotus flower in his right-hand wearing dhoti which covers up to his knees while his legs and upper body are bare. Three worshipers are shown with shaven heads behind this figure.

The middle scene is depicting the seated Buddha under acanthus leaf canopy in *dhyana mudra*. Buddha is flanked by worshipers on either side. Ichthyocentaurs are depicted on the extreme right and left corner of the scene in *Anjali mudra*.

The uppermost scene depicts an alms bowl on a royal seat flanked by worshipers at either side. All these scenes are carved inside laurel leaf borders. However, another border shows naked worshipers in different poses all facing towards the standing Buddha. The outer circular border bears an acanthus leaf design.



Figure 99. Nagaraja Apalala. (Photo by Researcher, from Peshawar Museum).

Description:

This relief panel is depicted with the kneeling Nagaraja Apalala and his wife Nagini in *Anjali mudra* to the right of the Buddha. The serpent hoods are visible behind their heads. The Naga Apalala has elaborate turban, wearing ear pendants and a robe which covers his body completely except for his hands in *Anjali mudra* while the Nagini has the ornamented headdress, ear pendants and a necklace. The Buddha is standing in *abhaya mudra* with left leg slightly bend keeps his weight on his right foot and wearing the monastic robe. His hairstyle is wavy with a raised *Ushnisha*. He is seems as looking on the ascetics who likely stand behind the Naga and Nagini. A damaged figure is shown behind the queen standing with left hand raised and wearing dhoti.

A flying yaksha holding thunderbolt in his right hand is striking the mountain. Vajrapani is standing to the left of the Buddha holding his Vajra in both hands. Behind the Buddha a turbaned figure is standing who wears pendants. A Corinthian pilaster to the left of Vajrapani is depicted with a seated Buddha which is chipped off may be in *dhyana mudra*. The upper border of the panel has acanthus leaves carved in low relief.



Figure 100. Nagaraja Apalala. (Photo by Researcher, from Peshawar Museum).

Description:

The broken panel is showing four scenes one above the other. The lower scene depicts Siddhartha in a reassurance poses along with Naga Apalala and Nagini behind him. The Naga is kneeling in *anjali mudra* wearing turban, earring and dhoti while the Nagini is defaced may also be in *anjali mudra*. Above the Nagaraja and to the right of the Buddha a flying yaksha is shown

with thunderbolt in his right hand, smiting the mountain to frightened Nagarajāpalala. To the left of the Buddha a shaven headed monk is depicted in monastic robe. Behind the monk there are four other worshippers are shown in *anjali mudra*. Above the monk and to the left side of the Buddha vajrapani is shown holding Vajra in his left hand. Behind the Vajrapani two more figures are visible.

The second scene depicts Buddha with his right hand missing, may be seated in *dhyana mudra* under acanthus leaf canopy. Ichthyocentaurs is depicted on the extreme left corner in *Anjali mudra* along five other worshippers in *Anjali mudra*. The third scene is broken but it is suggested that there may be alms bowl on the throne. Ichthyocentaurs is on the extreme left corner and worshippers to the left of the alms bowl. The most upper scene is depicted with attendance and bodhisattva padmapani.



Figure 101. Naga Apalala. (Marshall 1960: Fig. No. 45)

Description:

The panel depicts the submission of Naga Apalala. The haloed Buddha with curly hair and *Ushnisha* is standing. His right hand is raised while hold the hem of his drapery with his left hand. Buddha is clad in monastic robe which covers his entire body from neck to legs. Vajrapani is standing behind the Buddha holding Vajra in his left hand and wear the monastic robe like his master which covers his entire body. Above the Vajrapani there is another monk visible in background. The forehead of Vajrapani has a curious mark which appears to be the third eye, suggesting an Indian origin.

To the right of the Buddha in foreground the Naga Apalala and his wife are depicted, emerging from the water tank. The water tank is decorated with arboreal design. The Naga and Nagini shown in *Anjali mudra*, wears ear pendants and necklace. Serpent hoods are visble behind their heads. Above them is a dwarf-like yaksha is depicted with thunderbolt in his right hand, smiting the mountains to terrify the Naga Apalala by trembling the earth.

This Vajrapani beside the Buddha is quite distinct from the yaksha engaged in striking the mountain. The fact that the latter has a Vajra or thunderbolt was an attribute of Indra, as, from time immemorial, it had been of the Greek Zeus. But, as the weapon par excellence of irresistible force, it was put into the hands of other deities or semi-divine beings, of Athena and Poseidon, for example, among the Greeks; of the vajrapani and of this earth-shaking yaksha among the Buddhist.



Figure 102. submission of Naga-Apalala (Khan et. al 2005: Fig.No 42).

Description:

The chipped and defaced panel depicts the submission of Naga Apalala. The right of the panel with the Corinthian pilaster, a youthful Vajrapani is standing with Vajra his left hand. To the right of Vajrapani, the haloed Buddha is standing in *abhaya mudra* and holds the edge of his drapery in his left hand. His hair arranged backward in natural way with a circular large *Ushnisha* fastened with a cord at its base.

To the right of the Buddha the kneeling figure of the Naga king and his wife with two other females with Naga hoods are depicted all in *Anjali mudra*. The Naga-Apalal wears *uttariya* and *Paridhana*, elaborate turban with high crest, ear pendants, a necklace of beads and bracelets. His face is clean-shaven with short pointed moustache. A high Naga-hood is visible behind his head. His queen is depicted behind him with a hood. She wears shawl and *Paridhana*, her headdress consists of a chaplet at the top of the head and locks of hair spread over the forehead. Her jewelry consists of ear pendants and bracelets. Behind the queen are two other nagninis with hoods with hair arranged backward. They wear ear pendants, necklace, armlet and bracelets, and clad in close fitting garments and looking towards the Buddha.

Above the naginis on rocky formation a yakshais visible with vajra in right hand is smiting the mountain to make the earth tremble and terrify the Nagaraja. The yaksha is clad in lion cloth, standing with a left leg bent and resting on a rock while his right leg is on the ground below. The yaksha is shown with a muscular body. Above the Buddha five other figures are also depicted in attacking position.



Figure 103. Submission of Naga Apalala. (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 214).

Description:

The Panel broken a little at the top is showing submission of Naga Apalala between two pilasters with Corinthian capitals.

The standing haloed Buddha, clad in monastic robe over his both shoulders with neckline. His right hand is raised towards Naga Apalala while he holds the robe at waist level. Behind the Buddha a bearded Vajrapani is standing with his Vajra in left hand and clad in *uttariya* and *Paridhana*. Three nagas are standing with joined hands in front of the Buddha in a small, fenced tank each with a serpent rising from behind. The first is Naga Apalala wears a crested turban with large globular ornament, an *uttariya* and a five-headed serpent is raising behind his head. Behind Apalala is his wife, wears a sleeved tunic and another garment from her left shoulder. She is bedecked with a necklace, earring, bracelet, and a wreath headdress. A serpent-hood is

visible above her head. Behind the queen is another female, similarly, dressed and under a single serpent-hood. Her right hand is on the queen shoulder and head is turned back in fear and looking at another Vajrapudi. The rectangular tank where nagas are standing in is enclosed by a plain wall. The tank has upright crossed bars and has sawtooth enrichment at its foot and mouldings.

A muscular Vajrapani is shown with threatening expression, stands with one foot on a higher ledge, both arms stretched out, holding Vajra in his right hand. Two standing figures, one male and female are shown in the left scene with chipped heads. The female is clad in a tunic and *Paridhana* with bowl in her hand(s), the other, a male figure lacing, a *Paridhana* and a twisted scarf curled twice across the torso, and with his right hand appears to hold something like the hilt of a sword. There are two trees one is between them, and the other is behind the male figure.



Figure 104. Submission of Naga Apalala. (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 215).

Description:

The Panel is broken at the top, showing the Submission of Naga Apalala.

The standing Buddha is shown at the center of the scene in *abhaya mudra* with his right hand while his left hand is securing the robe. His wavy hair continues into the large *Ushnisha*. Near the Buddha's right leg, a kneeling Naga with joined hand is shown. He wears a turban with a high crest, *uttariya* in the wide mode. Far above a prominent five headed serpent is joined to the side of his turban by a neck in very low relief. He is looking with upward head at the Buddha. Beside him the Naga Apalala and his wife stands side by side in a crescentic curve, their visible arms curved above their heads. Naga Apalala with five-headed serpent hoods just above his turban. He wears a turban with a high crest, a long earring, a neckline and necklace, a *Paridhana* and an *uttariya*. His wife has a wreath headdress, on wavy hair an earring, necklace, anklets a transparent sleeved blouse leaving a bare waist, a *Paridhana* and a scarf twisting from the arms across the lower body. In her raised arm she may hold flowers. Behind her is another female holds something like basket of flowers in both hands and is similarly dressed.

The conventional Mountainous terrain is shown behind and above the nagas. In the top left corner, a half-length male figure holds a spear in both hand, opposite to him and beside the Buddha a small bare-backed Vajrapani is shown with outstretched and raised arms, holding a Vajra. Below the vajrapani a small bust of a figure emerges and turns towards the Buddha.

A taller Vajrapani stands to the left of the Buddha seem from the back, with his long overgarment looped across the legs, a small chignon is visible on the top of his head and his vajra emerging behind his left shoulder. Beside Vajrapani a monk standing with right arm across the chest is wrapped in the robe. Beside the monk a figure standing with joined hands, having a crested turban, a *Paridhana* and a scarf. Four half-length figures above, some turbaned and all wearing an *uttariya*, raise their hands with flowers or join them in homage.

Above the scene is a register of caitya arches resting on railings and containing a bust of a figure with a hand raised may be holding flowers. Between the arches birds are shown.



Figure 105. Submission of Naga Apalala and offering of dust (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 216).

Description:

The broken and chipped stupa drum panel is depicted with two scenes, the right one is incomplete while the second one showing the Submission of Apalala.

The incomplete scene showing two boys standing under a dome/three rows of acanthus with facing to their left, the one to the right is badly damaged. This may be the remaining part of an Offering of Dust.

In the complete scene, the haloed Buddha is standing frontal in *abhaya mudra* while he holds his robe with his left hand. Beside him is Vajrapani standing with one hand on hip, the other holding the top of the vajra as it rests on the thick twisted *uttariya* twisting round his middle and *Paridhana*. A tree is shown behind him with a branch bent to the ground.

Three half-length figures are emerging from a surface/water. The first and tallest among them is Apalala shown with joined hands. He wears a necklace and a turban. A serpent hood is shown behind his head whose underside is marked with sloping grooves and rise from the ground-line. Beside Apalala is his wife who is shorter in comparison to him and also under a similar serpent hood. A male figure is shown naked with raised hand touching his head.

A wall of conventional mountainous terrain is shown with rounded projections above them. Above the terrain another Vajrapani is emerging with a stretched arm holding a Vajra. At the left corner a tree is shown which frame the scene.

A framed amorino/ yaksha is standing cross-legged at the knees as a scene separator. The amorino is naked with genital indicated. His right hand is resting on his hip while grasping the branch of the tree with his left hand near the head. A saw-tooth cornice runs above and the framing fillet below is plain.



Figure 106. Conversion of Naga Elapatra. (Photo by Researcher, from Peshawar Museum).

Description:

The panel depicts the conversion of Naga-Elapatra. At the center of the panel, Buddha is shown seated on a throne in *abhaya mudra* under an arboreal canopy. Buddha wears a drapery of Gandharan style which covers his entire body except for his feet and hands. Buddha has elongated ears and low *Ushnisha*. He is flanked by four seated shaven headed monks seated on thrones. His throne has the serpents at the center symbolize the representation of the Naga Elapatra prior to his incarnation in human form. At the extreme left of the panel Naga-Elapata is

depicted in *anjali mudra*, wearing dhoti which covers his lower body while his upper body is bare. Naga-Elapatraturns to his left, facing towards the Buddha and wears an elaborate turban and a Naga-hood behind his head.

At the background worshippers are shown to both sides of the Buddha. The upper border of the panel is depicted with the Acanthus leaves design.



Figure 107. Buddha and Naga worshippers. (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 250).

Description:

The drum panel is showing the Buddha worshipped by nagas. The haloed Buddha is seated on a rectangular seat which is covered with cloth. He is in *dhyana* with hands covered in the robe. He is flanked by four nagas on each side. All of them wearing crested turbans with a circular ornament and each have the hooded serpents rising from their backs. They are clad in *uttariya* and *Paridhana* with earrings and a collar. Among the four on the left of the Buddha, two are with joined hand and two holds flowers at their shoulder level. To the right of the Buddha three are standing with joined hands while one has a garland across the body. They have rounded eyes with bulging eyelids.

The corresponding framing on left and right contains a vertical branch with paired leaves.



Figure 108. Dancing and musiciannaginis. (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 334).

Description:

The broken Stair-riser length is showing naginis making music and dancing. All the figures wear a tunic with a *Paridhana* round it, save for the left one. Where undamaged, Serpent-hoods are rising from behind their backs save for the last figure, where a serpent seems to rise from her front. Read from right to left, a flowering tree near the framing. The first three figures are headless, and the first figure is badly damaged. The second figure holds a bunch of flowers in her right hand at shoulder level while her left hand is resting on her hip. Figure three holds a garland in her right hand while the left is on the hip. The remaining figures with undamaged heads wear a wreath headdress, necklace and anklets. The fourth Nagini is standing with joined hands. The fifth and sixth hold bunches of flowers in their right hands while their left on their hips. The seventh is piper while the eighth one is playing a flute through both hands. The last one is dancer seen from the back, wearing a knee-length tunic over a *Paridhana*.



Figure 109. Naga andnaginis musicians. (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 335).

Description:

The irregular broken Stair-riser length showing nagas andnaginis musicians and dancers, probably lost part of the preceding piece.

From right to left, a much-scratched figure holds her damaged right hand rose, and her left hand is on her hip. Next to her is a lutenist standing with her right hand on the strings while holds the narrow side in left hand round it. Next is a drummer, striking the drum with her right hand and her left hand is on the bottom of the drum. The two figures are turned towards the Nagini dancing. The dancing Nagini has one leg raise an arm flung out and head turned. The last figure is a male harpist, holds his harp in his left hand while playing it by the right hand. All the figures are turned towards the dancing Nagini. He wears crested turban and *uttariya*. All thenaginis have Naga-hood rising from behind their heads as may the harpist, and wear wreath headdresses, neckbands, anklets and bracelets.



Figure 110. Nagas and Naginis dancers and Musicians. (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 336)

Description:

The broken and chipped off Stair-riser length showing Nagas and Naginis musicians and dancers, probably connected with the preceding piece. All of them appear to have serpent-hoods behind their heads wear a *paridhdna* probably round a tunic, a wreath headdress, a scarf, necklace and anklets. From right to left two Nagas standing almost in the same posture, holding flowers in their right hands while holds drapery in their left hands. They are turned to towards an unrecognizable object is missing now. Beside the object three more figures are standing facing towards it. The first one seems to hold something in his right and broken hand while holds his drapery in left hand. The second holds flowers in her both hands while the third is standing frontly with head turned towards them. Her right hand is raised at shoulder level and the left is resting on the hip. Next is Nagini, a lutenist standing frontally. Her right hand is on the string and holds the narrow side of the lute in her left hand. The next group contains a damaged Naga and a Nagini piper flanking a dancer between them. Both arms of the dancer are flung out. The next dancer is flanking by a female drummer on the right, and a lutenist and a musician holding a simple string instrument. On the left, flank another similar dancer, and a damaged Naga and a Nagini piper form part of the group around the dancer at the beginning of the following piece.



Figure 111. Naginis dancers and musicians. (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 337).

Description:

The broken and chipped off Stair-riser length showing naginis playing music and dancing, probably connected with the preceding piece. All the naginis seem to wear tunic and *Paridhana* round it, scarf, anklets, wreath headdresses, and have serpent-hoods behind their backs. From right to left, a Nagini is standing frontally with head turned towards a dancer. The dancing Nagini is shown with her left leg raised and left arm flung out, turns towards a figure playing, with finger or plectrum, its neck or rod too held in the left hand. Beside her a drummer and cymbalist look to their right, the former striking her cross-hatched drum with her right hand, and the last figures, both very damaged, are a dancer and a flautist.



Figure 112. Wine drinking scene. (Zwalf 1996: Fig. No. 338).

Description:

Stupa drum panel showing naginis offering wine to a Naga couple. From right to left, a Nagini standing, holds a large bowl with grooved rim. She wears a garment over her left shoulder with a *Paridhana* round it, a scarf, a wreath headdress, earrings, necklace, bracelets and anklets. Next to her is Nagini standing in similar dress and ornaments, holds a plain rhyton in right hand while a wide bowl in left hand. Beside her is another Nagini standing with a large and wide rhyton/vessel in right hand at shoulder level and secured her drapery with the left. Next to her is the central scene where a royal couple of Naga and Nagini seated on a broad draped seat. The Nagini is clad in *uttariya* and *Paridhana* with *tueban* and usual ornaments. She holds a beaker in right hand and her left hand is resting in her lap. The Naga wears an *uttariya* and *Paridhana* with a crest or knot to the side of his turban and the usual ornaments. He holds a bowl in his palm and turns towards his spouse. They have seven serpent hoods rising behind their heads in shape of arched canopy.

To the right of the couple is a Nagini standing with beaker in her hands as if she is offering wine to the couple. She and the last Nagini are also in similar dresses and ornament as the three on the right of the panel. Beside her is a large vessel with lid and enriched with lotus-petal ornament on a stand. Next one is male figure in girt knee-length tunic, standing and carrying a wine-skin on his shoulder. The last figure is of frontal Nagini with bunch of lotuses in her right raised hand while her left hand is resting on her hips

All the naginis have the single serpent-hoods behind their heads. Both the ends of the panel are decorated one with three full and a half-rosette and the other one with open half-lotuses in triangles.



Figure 113. Stone panel. (Photo by Researcher from Peshawar Museum).

Description:

Stone panel, two scenes separated by Corinthian pillar on right proper side Buddha in *abhaya mudra*, Vajrapani monk and other, while on left proper side nagas and Buddha with his followers. Lower portion cut off.



Figure 114. Naga Raja (Marshall 1960: Fig. No. 256).

Description:

A Naga Raja is seen seated on his throne beneath his canopy of multiple snake heads, with Nagini musicians and attendants to right and left, each distinguished by the single hood behind her head. The hoods are not very convincing but a comparison with other sculptures of the same kind leaves no doubt as to what they were intended to represent.

Conclusion

The Aryans thought of the gods as the ones who spoke to the things hazardous to people and the religion had a moral concern to keep things on the correct way. The earliest religious text is witness of their veneration and several religious practices. The archaeological findings of Indus valley also contain many objects of religious concern so these also cannot be ignored. On the basis of these objects like, bull, altar, yogic postures of the seated wild buffalo man and figurines of other creatures found there, some scholars are of the opinion that Hinduism originated from that time. It is also believed that Puranic Hinduism and Shaktism were present in its embryonic stage during Indus Valley civilization. But the exact starting point of Hinduism is unknown. Thus, the most agreeable period of its beginning was during the initial stage, when the Dravidian and Aryan divinities came under the Brahmin priests.

Brahman is considered in Hinduism as the ultimate reality and self-existent power or god. The belief of universal unity developed during *Upanishads* and further explained by Vedantists. Hindus worship their concerned god and goddesses, their Avatars and those divinities which are related to these main gods and goddesses. A large number of gods and goddesses worshiped but the main gods are the Hindu Trinity (Indra, Brahma and Shiva). Along with divine beings the semi-divine beings are mentioned in almost all the Hindu religious texts especially in Vedic, Epics, Puranic and Kavya literatures. These semi-divine beings are mentioned both in benevolent and malevolent nature and also in changing nature with the passage of time. These semi-divine beings are believed as mortal and subject to rebirth in accordance with their deeds. Some classes of the semi-divine beings are mentioned in prominence while some are not. According to Hindu mythologies they inhabit various realms of the heaven and earth. They are mentioned in connection with various gods and important events of earth and heaven. They were also mentioned as entertainers and assistants of gods against their enemies and also assisted the humans on the instructions of gods.

In Buddhist mythology the gods and humans are subjects of rebirths, and the gods are considered those unseen force that has their part with the people on earth. Several gods are mentioned in Buddhist text of Vinaya that living on earth, in trees and health-giving herbs. They cursed those who damage their houses or trees. The heavenly creatures are overall seen to have

little degree for doing either righteous or pernicious, and most fundamentally value the eventual outcomes of the past extraordinary exercises which incited their current presence. The divine beings of the Buddhist pantheon are no longer seen to have supreme divine power and role and they are considered actually as mortal beings. The gods of Buddhist belief system are believed as predicNagas as common men with only distinction of their birth and end from the common men. Their ultimate goal in life is moreover obtained line with the Buddhist doctrinal perspective of the acknowledgment of *nirvana*.

According to Buddhist mythology one can acquire *nirvana* through service of the Bodhisattvas, divine and semi-divine beings. The Hindu divinities have persevered through no abatement in measure of worship. They exist in their philosophical established structure and have been incorporated with assortments in Mahayana Buddhism. The god Indra with some modifications was transmitted into Buddhism as a prominent god of the heaven. Thus the already prevailing venerated beings of Hindu origin were accommodated into Buddhist pantheon.

The female divinities have an important status in Buddhism like other religions of the land. The female divinities that are described in texts are seen in contradiction with its physical depiction. The several depicted goddesses on the Stupas and Viharas have a very little information in Buddhist texts which indicates that these were absorbed into Buddhism from the pre-Buddhist rich traditions of feminine divinities. However, we have some references from Pali literature that testify the absorption of the local divinities into Buddhist belief system. So, as the Buddhist imagery has a variety of local divine and semi-divine beings were basically accommodated in Buddhist pantheon from the pre-Buddhist prevailing traditions. For example, the story of Hariti is present in both Buddhist literary and imagery sources. She was not initially a Buddhist Goddess but converted to Buddhism by the Buddha. Aparajita could be traced in the Mauryan period as a great goddess while in the Buddhist Tantra she is believed as parallel to Shakta. In Buddhist Tantra, those goddesses who got enlightenment are considered as the mothers of the Buddhas and believed as they would lead their followers to the Buddhahood in the present life.

In the Buddhist mythology semi-divine beings are also considered as mortal and subject to the cycle of rebirths in accordance with their deeds. According to Buddhist beliefs, the semi-divine beings cannot disturb the usual laws, but they can disturb the normal progress of

activities. Most of these semi-divine beings have their origin in Vedic period with rural background or even before, in Indus valley cultures. Later on the worship of these semi-divine beings was spread throughout the Indian subcontinent. During early transitional period of Buddhism, the prevailing semi-divine beings like, nagas, yaksha and Surya were incorporated into Buddhist belief system because there were a large number of its followers who embraced Buddhism. The Semi-divine beings of Hindu origin that were depicted in Gandharan Buddhist Art, analyzed in this research are yakshas and yakshinis, gandharvas and apsaras and nagas and naginis.

The yakshas of *Rig-Veda* and *Atharva-Veda* are described as the supernatural and extraordinary beings that radiate with beauty and light but not were clearly defined. They are mentioned both in demonic and divine character. They are believed that resides and manifests itself in the tree of life and thus, the tree worshipping cult was started. Yakshas were thought that they can take any form and shape in accordance with situations. They were believed to have taken control of men therefore the people had their fear in their hearts and started worshipping them for their appeasement.

Yakshas are mostly described as reliable beings in ancient Sanskrit and Pali literature and even sometimes they are shown equal to Sanskrit deities/*Devatas*, heavenly beings, lower class of beings and demons. But in any form, shape and status they were regarded as deities.

The veneration of the yakshas as uncertain protector deities was well-known during the epic time. When the principle of Brahmanic Hinduism was adopted by the followers of yaksha cult, their images became gradually anthropomorphized and Hinduized. The benevolence and loving character of a yaksha is identified through the depiction a flower bud or parrot with its image. The yakshas have their residence on mountains, on the bank of rivers, on city gates, in grooves, in Chaityas outside the city, in water tanks and in the palaces.

During Mauryan period, the images of yakshas were venerated as a separate cult object and their images were adopted in Buddhist imagery from third to second century B.C. On the other hand, it's freely penetration into the Brahmanical traditions is evident from its depiction along with Shiva-lingams. The yakshas were depicted as Semi-divine beings and protector deities in classical Hindu iconographic traditions during Gupta period. Kubera was portrayed as the guardian of northern direction, the god of wealth and the chief of the yakshas. The yakshas

are believed that roam in the dark and help in childbirth. Yaksha manibhadra was a protector deity of travelers and worshiped at almost all the main trade centers.

The yakshas and yakshinis of Buddhism are linked with fertility and prayed especially at the time of marriage. They were offered with wine and meat and other things during marriage and their residence was at city gates. The concept of mother goddess was also incorporated to Buddhist belief system and imagery from the prevailing cultures. The concept of tree-goddess/*Shalabhanjika* was the popular representation of art that incorporated in Buddhist art.

Kubera is treated in Hinduism as the malevolent being, god of fertility, protector of prosperity, the lord of riches in the role of Indra, friend of Shiva, defender of the northern quarter, the son of Vaishravana and the divine cow, possessor of beloved things, giver of sight to the blind and immortality to the mortals. He is also mentioned as sharing his abode with Indra and taking a share of Indra's role of riches. While in the depiction of Gandharan Buddhist art he is portrayed with a plump body, adorned with jewels, and carrying a money-bag and a club. It seems that he has been incorporated into Buddhist art as the lord of riches.

The yakshas and Yakshinies are depicted in Gandharan Buddhist art mostly on the panels of the Buddha life stories and sometimes alone. They are mostly depicted on the shafts of the pilaster, standing on pots, on lotus or on a stepped Pedestal with different poses and gestures mostly beneath the arboreal canopy. The yakshas were depicted on pilasters; in joined hands facing toward Buddha, standing frontally sometimes with spear in hands or with spear looking outside the scene as he is guarding and a sitting yaksha with touching the branch of a tree. The yaksha is depicted inside the Buddha life stories as; lifting the Bodhisattva's Horse, holding thunderbolt striking the mountains to terrify the Naga-Apalala, and alone shown standing with Yakshini. In Amorini form they are portrayed extensively with Buddha life stories on the pilaster or around the main scene and as garland bearers mostly naked and in different poses. While yakshinis are depicted mostly on the pilasters or inside the scene-separating frames mostly standing on water pot with lotus-petaled designs, grasping tree branches above their heads, sometimes cross-legged, sometimes holding pendant flower or mirror, one hand on hip.

The yakshas and yakshinis in Gandharna Buddhist art were portrayed mostly in the scenes of: Mahamaya dream (Fig.2), interpretation of the dream (Fig.3), tournament (Fig.4), the great departure(Fig.6), exchange of clothes (Fig.8), farewell of Kantaka (Fig.9), , hymn of Naga

Kalika (Fig.10), attack of Mara (Fig.13), Shrigupta's welcoming the Buddha (Fig.15), with Buddha and Kashyapa (Fig.14),Indrashala cave (Fig.16 submission of Naga Apalala (Fig.18), miracle of Śravasti (Fig.95), with celestial beings (Fig.115), and with musicians (Fig.25) etc.

Gandharvas are mentioned as a class of gods in Vedic literature where they are sky-beings that linked with the preparation of Soma. They were celestial musicians and dancers and living with apsaras. They also seem in Vedic literature as the assistants of Indra against many sages and rakshasas. In later mythology they are the off-spring of Kashyapa-parjapati and his spouse Arishta. In Mahabharata they were born from the nose of the Brahma while in Vishnu-Purana they are the sons of Brahma. In Upanishad the two categories of gandharvas are the human gandharvas/ *Manushya gandharvas* and heavenly gandharvas/ *Dev-Gandharvas*. No specific abode is mentioned for the residence of gandharvas. While they were described living within many abodes of yakshas and Rakshas, living in Himalayas, beyond in the Uttarkand kuru kingdom and in Sarasvati basin. They were the guardians of the gold mines under the leadership of yaksha Kubera.

Apsaras were described in *Rig-Veda* as residing in heavens with gandharvas, water-spirit, semi-divine beings while in *Atharva-Veda* they live in the waters, linked with stars, lightening and clouds, fond of dice and the protective deities of gamblers. According to Satapatha Brahmana they can transform themselves into a seabird. They are believed in post Vedic literature as the regular visitors of forest lakes and rivers and their abode is inside the ocean in the Varuna palace. apsaras were believed as the protector deities of virgin girls and fertility goddesses.

In Buddhist depictions of Gandhara, the gandharvas and Afsaras were portrayed in many scenes from Buddha life stories: expedition of Maitrakanyaka (60-61), first bath (Fig. 62), request to preach the doctrine to gandharvas (Fig.63), Indrashala cave (Fig.66), and guarding of relics (Fig. 86). Apart from Buddha life stories they were portrayed in other scenes like, standing around the altar (Fig.72), with haloed deity (Fig.74), as dancing couples (Fig.72), and with garland bearers (Fig.76). In Buddhist art the human gandharvas and apsaras are shown with Siddharatha at many events of his princely life, and the heavenly gandharvas and apsaras are also portrayed with Buddha as; messenger of Indra to him, guardian deity of relics, shown behind Indra, Brahma and of Buddha and entertainer of a Haloed deity. The gandharvas and apsaras are

also depicted separately both in seated and standing position with their musical instruments and different dancing positions. In an instance a Gandharva is shown in a frame with a pilaster standing on a pot with striking a round drum beneath a bill decorated with acanthus leave and lotus petal which is topped by two bulls and lion head.

Nagas in Indian mythology were portrayed as half-god and half-man with wearing a crown residing under the earth and guarded the wealth and fertility. In Vedic literature Vrhtra was the first-born Naga while Indra was their slayer. But there is no reference in *Rig-Veda* about their worship while in Sutra period Naga worship is mentioned frequently. The worship of Naga was also a popular practice in northern India and a large number of literatures are available about the worship of Naga like, Nila Naga of Kashmir. Nila was believed as the protector deity of the area. As *Rig-Veda* describes many gods belonged to Dravidian as the rival of their gods. In the similar way the famous Naga god is mentioned with name of Ahi Vrhtra as the rival of the Aryan god Indra. So, Naga was the pre-Aryan god of Dravidian culture mostly associated with earth and ocean. Later on, gradually adopted by the Aryans and transformed the Naga into a beautiful, mysterious Half-god and Half-man. The nagas are believed as living in neither world and having great magical power. The purer kind worship of Naga became a well-known practice during the time of *Atharva-Veda*. Naga was for the first time mentioned in Satapatha Brahmana with unclear character and form. Nagas were associated with the water and earth.

When Naga was associated with Rudra thus the cult of Naga made their way into Shaivism. The Naga got that much importance in Shaivism that in some Shrines the nagas replaced the images of Shiva as an object of veneration. But nagas were also linked with Vishnu, Indra and other divinities. We can have references from literature as well as art when Vishnu was giving reverence to Buddha was reclining on Ananda-Naga. Indra used Naga Nagendra as vehicle which shows his suzerainty over Naga world. The Shesha-Naga is believed as the manifestation of Vishnu. The references of Naga's association with Vaishnavism are extensively portrayed in Indian iconography, where Vishnu is reclining on Shesha-Naga and thinking on the creation of the world. The nagas had close connection with the main three deities of Shaktism; Mahishamardini Durga, Chamunda and Kali. In the Buddhist literature the popular Naga Elaptra of takshasila is mentioned in connection of the revenge of his father from the Naga Takshaka by the Kuru King Janamejaya.

In Buddhist Art of Gandhara nagas and neginis are portrayed in human form with snake-hood above their heads in the scenes of Buddha life stores. They are shown as; playing hymn of Buddha standing in a pond with joined hands (Fig.87-93), as elephant Naga below the throne, in subjugation to Buddha (Fig.94-96), conversion of Naga-Elapatra (Fig.107), in Indrashala cave, half-nude Naga, as worshippers of the Buddha (Fig.107), as Dancers and musicians (Fig.108-111), as wine drinkers (Fig.112), and Naga as a king with his attendants and musicians (Fig.114).

The present research revealed that the semi-divine beings that mentioned in Hindu literatures are more in number than depicted into the Buddhist art of Gandhara. In Gandharna Buddhist art only the chiefs and most worshipped semi-divine were incorporated in connection to Lord Buddha.

Yakshas and yakshinis, gandharvas and apsaras and nagas and neginis are depicted in Gandhran Buddhist art in different roles and status. They are mostly present invisibly as the witness to the Buddha life events. Yakshas and yakshinis are portrayed in Buddhist iconography of Gandhara as tree spirits, attendants and assistants of the Buddha, protector deities, guardians of the treasures and humans, facilitators and devotees. While Gnadarvas and apsaras are musicians and dancers, entertainers, sometimes as protectors of riches and relics and messenger of Indra in Buddhist art of Gandhara. The nagas and neginis are pond-spirits, worshippers, kings of the nagas and also shown as musicians and dancers.

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